

**2025–2026 Grade 8
Social Studies
PreAssessment Unit 4**

Question 1.

Which major technological advancement in water transportation allowed the Union to enforce a naval blockade during the Civil War, and how did this impact the Southern economy?

- A. Clipper ships, increasing Southern trade
- B. Steamboats, making river transport faster
- C. Ironclad ships, restricting Confederate trade
- D. Submarines, disrupting Union supply lines

Question 2.

How did improvements in land transportation, such as railroads, impact the economy of the Civil War era?

- A. Railroads made it easier for the Confederacy to import goods from Europe.
- B. The North's superior railroad network helped supply its armies more efficiently.
- C. Railroads were not widely used in the Civil War due to unreliable tracks.
- D. The South had a stronger railroad system than the North, giving it an advantage.

Question 3.

How did the Louisiana Purchase contribute to tensions that eventually led to the Civil War?

- A. It increased British control over American lands.
- B. It led to conflicts over whether new territories should allow slavery.
- C. It ended westward expansion, reducing sectional tensions.
- D. It forced Native American tribes to join the Union Army.

Question 4.

Use the excerpt below to answer the question.

"The vast, unclaimed lands of the West offer opportunities for farming, trade, and settlement. However, we must decide whether these new lands will be free or slave-holding territories." (modified, 1845)

How did the debate described in the excerpt contribute to the Civil War?

- A. It led to compromises that temporarily delayed conflict but increased tensions.
- B. It encouraged all new territories to ban slavery, reducing sectional tensions.
- C. It resulted in immediate southern secession.
- D. It caused western states to refuse to join the Union.

Question 5.

Which of the following was a major economic difference between the North and South that contributed to tensions before the Civil War?

- A. The North depended on agriculture, while the South relied on industry.
- B. The North had an industrial economy, while the South depended on plantation agriculture.
- C. Both the North and South relied on enslaved labor for their economies.
- D. The North and South had identical economic structures but different religious beliefs.

Question 6.

Match each event with its correct impact on tensions leading to the Civil War.

Kansas-Nebraska Act	Election of 1860	Fugitive Slave Act
Dred Scott Decision		

Led to South Carolina and other Southern states seceding from the Union.

Increased tensions by allowing territories to decide on slavery, leading to violent conflicts.

Angered abolitionists by requiring citizens to return escaped enslaved people.

Declared that enslaved people were not citizens and could not sue for freedom.

Question 7.

How did the human cost of the Civil War impact both the North and the South?

- A. It led to an increase in immigration to replace lost workers.
- B. Millions of enslaved people were sent back to Africa.
- C. Many families lost fathers, brothers, and sons, creating long-term hardships.
- D. Both sides experienced a population increase due to wartime industry.

Question 8.

What was one major material consequence of the Civil War for the South?

- A. Many cities, farms, and railroads were destroyed.
- B. The South became the leading industrial region of the U.S.
- C. Factories and railroads were mostly left undamaged.
- D. The plantation system remained unchanged.

Question 9.

How did geography play a role in the outcome of the Civil War?

- A. The South's extensive railroad network allowed Confederate troops to move supplies more efficiently than the Union.
- B. The Union's control of major rivers, such as the Mississippi, split the Confederacy and limited its ability to transport goods and troops.
- C. The Appalachian Mountains made it easier for Confederate forces to invade northern states.
- D. The Union's reliance on naval power was ineffective due to the lack of major waterways in the South.

Question 10.

What was one major advantage the North had over the South in terms of natural resources?

- A. The North had a larger supply of cotton, which was essential for making uniforms and weapons.
- B. The South had more coal and iron mines, allowing for stronger industrial production.
- C. The North had more factories and access to raw materials needed for weapons and transportation.
- D. The South had larger reserves of gold and silver, which helped finance the war effort.

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