

**CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS: LESSON PLAN 2**

**LESSON 2**

**WHAT WAS THE CENTRAL REASON FOR THE CIVIL WAR?**

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**Objectives**

- Students will identify slavery as the primary cause of the Civil War.
- Students will be able to locate and cite textual evidence that supports this argument.
- Students will learn about differing perspectives on slavery from the North and the South.
- Teacher will introduce, clarify and reinforce challenging terms that will support students' understanding of the materials.
- Teacher will introduce and/or review the use of primary source documents in supporting historical inquiry. Students will be able to distinguish between primary and secondary sources.

**Standards**

- **Common Core:** CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1; [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2](#); CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.9
- **Virginia History and Social Science Standards of Learning (SOL):** VS.1a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h; VS.7a; VS.7c

**Materials**

- "Confederate Monuments photoset" (primary sources)
- Lesson Plan 2
- Handout 1: Summary of Civil War (secondary source)
- Handout 2: Confederate Constitution: Sections Regarding Slavery (primary source)
- Handout 3a: Mississippi Secession Declaration (primary source)
- Handout 4a: Slavery as a Positive Good speech by John C. Calhoun (primary source)
- Handout 5: Alexander Stephens cornerstone speech (primary source)
- Discussion Questions and Writing Prompt
- Key Terms List
- Unit Graphic Organizer

**Additional Suggested Materials**

- <https://www.vox.com/2015/4/14/8396477/maps-explain-civil-war>

| Probing for Prior Knowledge<br>(5-10 minutes)  |
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| Activate Prior Knowledge (5 minutes): Have students use their graphic organizer to independently complete the pre-reading activity. Students can compare with their peers and then share with the class. |

| Civil War<br>Historical Background<br>(10 min)   |
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| <p>Ask students their thoughts about the cause of the Civil War. (There will likely be great variability of answers among students). Explain that over the next several days the class will be discussing what to do with Confederate Monuments. To do this, students will need to learn more about the Civil War and the Confederacy.</p> <p>As students navigate this lesson, make sure they understand that the main cause of the Confederacy’s decision to secede was, in fact, slavery. They should be able to determine this fact after examining primary source documents written by leaders of the Confederacy. Additionally, students should come to understand that the North’s position on slavery was more complicated than saying they were completely against it. For the Union, there were varying perspectives and motives for fighting the war—including keeping the country intact.</p> <p><i>Sample Language:</i></p> <p>“Today we will be reading about the Civil War between the North (the Union) and the South (the Confederacy). Many people have debated the cause of this war. We will be examining primary source documents created by Confederate states that outlined their decision to secede from the Union. We will also examine Northerners’ perspectives on the institution of slavery.”</p> |

| Key Terms<br>(10-15minutes)  |
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| Review terms and definitions as a class. Clarify any terms students may have had difficulty with. Make sure to reinforce the vocabulary as students read the material. |

| Reading Materials<br>(20-30 min)   |
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| <p>Break students into groups of 4-5. Students can read individually or together in groups/pairs. Students can use the graphic organizer provided while reading to help track their comprehension.</p> <p>Be sure to explain the difference between primary and secondary sources with students:</p> <p><i>Sample Language:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Primary sources are firsthand accounts of what happened during a particular historical time period. They can be letters, diary entries, speeches, newspapers (from that time period), photographs, etc.</li><li>• Secondary sources are not complete firsthand accounts, although they can contain primary source information such as quotes from people who lived during that time in history. Secondary sources are accounts recorded outside of (that is, after) the particular historical time period they discuss. They can be published research articles, books, and other forms of media on a particular historical topic.<sup>1</sup></li></ul> <p>Groups should be heterogeneous based on reading levels so that students can collaborate effectively with less assistance from the teacher. Circulate and offer help if needed.</p> |

<sup>1</sup> For more information, see: <https://umb.libguides.com/PrimarySources/secondary>

| Discussion<br>(30 minutes)  |
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| <p>After reading and reviewing documents, instruct students to begin answering discussion questions. Explain to students that they will be working together to determine the best argument/position for each question. To do this, they will engage in three rounds of dialogue (time permitting) with each question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In the first round, students will consider one position and come up with reasons or evidence to support it.</li><li>• In the second round, students will consider the opposing position, identifying reasons or evidence to refute the first position.</li><li>• In the third round, students will work together to come up with the best answer to the question.</li></ul> <p>Remind students that they are working together to come up with the most convincing argument.</p> <p>You can also assign roles within groups, such as question reader, note taker, reporter.</p> <p>Students will share responses with the whole class after the group discussion.</p> <p><i>Circulate while students discuss; do not necessarily provide answers but ask probing questions to proposed simple solutions.</i></p> |

| Writing Prompt  |
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| <p>Have students independently answer the writing prompt after whole class discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>The writing prompt can be assigned as homework if time does not permit completion.</i></li></ul> |

## Standards

### Common Core Social Studies Standards

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1](#)  
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2](#)  
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8](#)  
Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.9](#)  
Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

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### Virginia History and Social Science Standards of Learning (SOL)

- **VS.1a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h**  
identify and interpret artifacts and primary and secondary source documents to understand events in history; b.) determine cause-and-effect relationships; c.) compare and contrast historical events; d.) draw conclusions and make generalizations; e.) make connections between past and present; f.) sequence events in Virginia history; g.) interpret ideas and events from different historical perspectives; h.) evaluate and discuss issues orally and in writing.
- **VS.7a**  
The student will demonstrate knowledge of the issues that divided our nation and led to the Civil War by a.) identifying the events and differences between northern and southern states that divided Virginians and led to secession, war, and the creation of West Virginia.
- **VS.7c**  
The student will demonstrate knowledge of the issues that divided our nation and led to the Civil War by c.) describing the roles played by whites, enslaved African Americans, free African Americans, and American Indians.