



Suggested Activity: *Documents of Freedom: Are We the People?*

Chicago History Museum

Grade level: Middle school through high school

Estimated time: Three class periods

Specific topic:

Examining public opinion at the time of the issuing of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Emancipation Proclamation

Subtopic: Document analysis of the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence.

Access Full Lesson Plan Here:

http://www.chicagohistory.org/static_media/pdf/historylab/chm-historylabdof1.pdf

2. America's Growing Pains

The Early 1800s in America: Setting the Stage for Civil War

Mini-Activity: Early 1800s Timeline

Objective

Introduce students to some of the major events in the early 1800s in America that occurred before and led up to the Civil War.

Directions

Introduce the activity by asking students what they know about America after the American Revolution. What happened in the early 1800s?

The teacher can introduce events that had an impact on the Civil War in the early and mid-1800s by separating students into groups to conduct short research projects on the following:

Eli Whitney and the cotton gin

Missouri Compromise

Fugitive Slave Law

Dred Scott decision

John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry

Discussion

Ask students to conduct research on the above events and identify the five most important points that happened.

Guiding Question

How did this event impact the issue of slavery and the Civil War?

Closure

Have one student from the group present their findings. Ask how these events may have impacted the Civil War.

Extension

Create a writing activity based on their research. Out of the five topics that were presented, which one had the most impact? Why?

Lincoln's Election & the Confederacy

1860: Abraham Lincoln elected to presidency

1860, December 20: South Carolina first state to secede

1861: February 9: A Constitutional convention at Montgomery, Alabama named Jefferson Davis provisional President of the **Confederate States of America**. He was inaugurated on February 18, 1861

Seven states declared their secession from the United States before Lincoln took office on March 4, 1861:

1. South Carolina (December 20, 1860)
2. Mississippi (January 9, 1861)
3. Florida (January 10, 1861)
4. Alabama (January 11, 1861)
5. Georgia (January 19, 1861)
6. Louisiana (January 26, 1861)
7. Texas (February 1, 1861)

March 4: Abraham Lincoln inaugurated president

March 11: The Confederate States of America adopts a Constitution.

April 12: South Carolina troops fire on Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861 and **the Civil War begins**. After Lincoln's subsequent call for troops on April 15, four more states secede:

1. Virginia (April 17, 1861; ratified by voters May 23, 1861)
2. Arkansas (May 6, 1861)
3. Tennessee (May 7, 1861; ratified by voters June 8, 1861)
4. North Carolina (May 20, 1861)

The Border states (and slaves states) that remain loyal to the Union include:
Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky and Missouri

July 22, 1861:

U.S. Congress passes resolution declaring that the war is being fought to "**preserve the Union**," not to destroy slavery

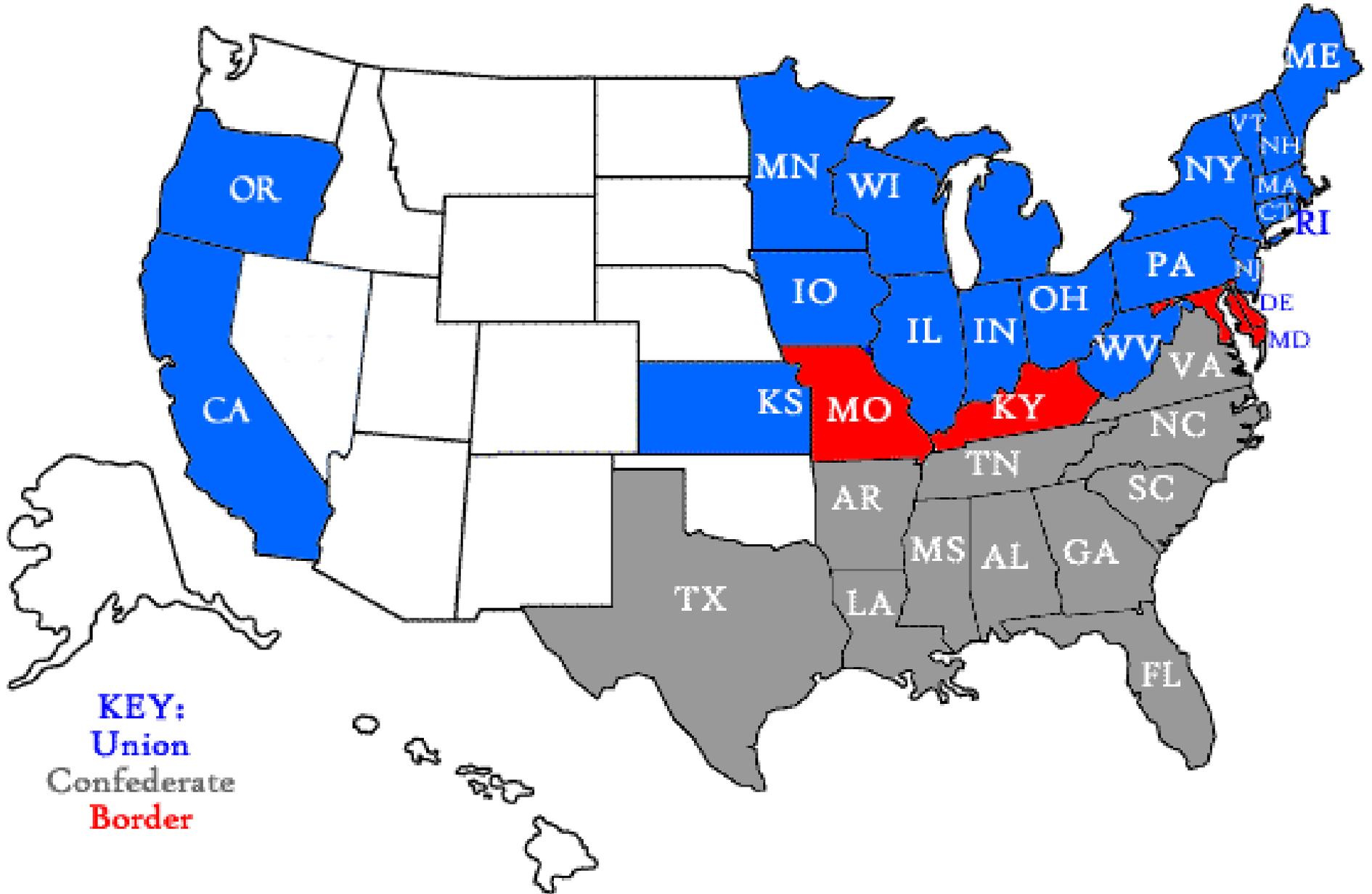
In 1861, a Unionist legislature in Wheeling, Virginia seceded from Virginia, eventually claiming 50 counties for a new state, **West Virginia**. It joined the United States in 1863 with a constitution that gradually abolished slavery



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4. The Price of Freedom

Background Information

It's important for students to understand the debates and perspectives that developed on the critical question of slavery:

**If the slaves were freed, where would they go?
How would the freed slaves support themselves?**

Many believed that African Americans were unable to support themselves. What would happen if they could not support themselves? Lincoln himself was unsure if they could adapt into society or serve as soldiers.

Lincoln's Views & Colonization

In the beginning of his administration, Lincoln's policies promoted gradual abolition and colonization. The idea of colonization is often overlooked as a policy choice that Lincoln advocated. Weeks before issuing the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln hosted a "Deputation of Free Negroes," meeting with abolitionist leaders at the White House, purportedly to "sell" his colonization plan.

Lincoln also supported compensation for slaveowners (which was successful with the District of Columbia Compensated Emancipation Act).

The administration established a \$600,000 budget to begin evacuation and relocation of former slaves.

Objective

Students will understand that colonization was created as one potential solution to the problem of ending slavery in America.

Activity

Illustrate where the country Liberia is on a world map, projection, or use the map below. Explain that the Colonization Society in America was founded to promote the settlement of freed slaves in other countries, including Liberia.

Discussion

In the early 1800s, about how long do you think slaves lived in America?

[the first slave arrived in Jamestown in 1619]

Slaves were forcibly removed from their countries, but established families and new generations in America. As a young person, how would you feel if you had to return to a country that you had never known nor seen?

Colonization

In 1817, the **American Colonization Society** was founded to encourage sending freed slaves to settle in Africa and contributed to the establishment of the country Liberia in Africa.

Liberia

