

Unit Title: The Coming of the Civil War in Virginia

Author: Marti MacKenzie	Grade Level: Elementary
School: Indian Hollow Elementary School (Frederick County)	Time Estimated: 6 days (50-minute periods)

Overview:

This unit picks up Virginia Studies in the mid 1800s, following the founding of the new country; the Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe presidencies; and slavery in Virginia. Using many available resources, including on-line primary resources, students will understand that by the mid 1800s there were differences and conflicts between the North and the South in the United States and, furthermore, Virginia was divided in itself. Students will begin to relate and understand various events, issues, and conflicts that contributed to Virginia's secession from the Union and, in turn, the Civil War. Students will examine the differences between Northern and Southern states, focusing on the existence of these differences within the state of Virginia. The unit will begin with study of the North (manufacturing-based) and the South (agricultural-based), abolition, Nat Turner's rebellion, the Underground Railroad, John Brown's raid, and the slavery question in the western territory. Specifically, students will analyze photos, letters, and other documents from the period in order to see that Virginians were not 100% aligned with southern or northern states. It will conclude by studying Lincoln's election and the firing on Fort Sumter, and the formation of West Virginia.

Historical Background:

By the mid 1800s, the United States was quickly developing into a grand, progressive nation. The foundations of freedom and liberty which had been won decades before had laid the way for advances in manufacturing, agriculture, transportation, and communications. As the young nation grew, differences began to cause conflicts between northern and southern states. There were numerous failed compromises on major issues and a resulting polarization. In the North industrial centers were creating larger cities and a growing, urban lifestyle was thriving on trade and commerce. The South, where the population was more stable, remained mostly agricultural as cotton had become king and quickly took the place of the former cash crop, tobacco. Like tobacco, however, growing cotton was labor intensive, and even with new technologies like the cotton gin, the booming life on southern plantations was highly dependent on the hard work of slaves.

With Northern factories using free, wage-earning workers, many people there became more and more critical of slavery and of the southern states where slavery was widespread. This became known as the abolition movement and many famous abolitionists (Douglass, Tubman, John Brown, and Nat Turner) were critically involved in campaigns to try to end slavery. Those in the South,

however, felt slavery a necessity and espoused the belief that states had the right to decide such important issues.

Eventually the states became known as “free” or “slave” states. Furthermore, northern states wanted the new states created out of the western territory to be “free states,” while the southern states wanted the new states to be “slave states.” This made the differences between the North and South seem even greater.

In Virginia, slavery was not a simple issue. Conflict grew between the eastern counties that relied on slavery and the western counties that favored abolition of slavery. In some parts of the state, like the Shenandoah Valley, neighbors had different views about the issue. In these areas there were some slave owners, but others who did not rely on slaves.

These differences eventually led to the secession of the southern states from the union, the formation of the Confederate States of America, and the great Civil War. In Virginia, the disagreements led to the formation of West Virginia. Like the country, the state became divided.

Major Understanding:

Virginia was torn by the issues that divided the North and the South and led to the Civil War. Even though Virginia eventually joined the Confederacy, part of the state could not side with the South. The result was the formation of West Virginia.

Objectives: Students will:

1. Interpret primary and secondary source documents such as letters, newspaper articles, and broadsides, to understand events leading to the Civil War including Nat Turner’s rebellion, the abolitionist movement, John Brown’s raid, the Underground Railroad, and industrial vs. agricultural life.
2. Determine cause and effect relationships by examining the causes of the Civil War including the differences between the North and the South (cause) that led to different ways of life and opinions about slavery (effect).
3. Compare and contrast the views on slavery and secession of people in eastern and western counties in Virginia, as well as northern and southern states.
4. Draw conclusions and make generalizations about whether the western counties of Virginia should secede from the state.
5. Sequence events leading to the Civil War from Nat Turner’s Rebellion in 1830 to the election of 1860.
6. Interpret ideas and events from the perspectives of historical writers to writers of primary sources (diaries, letters, newspapers) of the period.
7. Evaluate and discuss issues relating to the period orally and in writing.

Standards of Learning:

Skills

VS.1 The student will develop skills for historical and geographical analysis including the ability to

- a) 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) sequence events in Virginia history;
- f) interpret ideas and events from different historical perspectives;
- g) evaluate and discuss issues orally and in writing.

Content

VS.7 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.

Culminating Assessment:

The students will participate in a meeting of the Virginia General Assembly, representing various counties and cities in 1863 Virginia, to debate and vote on the secession of the western counties from Virginia. They will be asked to write and submit debate points in advance and will be graded on their ability to identify the issues that divided the country and are dividing Virginia.

Bibliography for teachers

Berson, Charles. *Virginia*. New York: Harcourt. 2002.

Basic text for fourth grade for basis of instruction. Any other basal would also be applicable.

Foner, Eric . "Slavery, the Civil War, and Reconstruction" in *The New American History*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997.

Chapter offers a good overview and shares multiple perspectives on the subject.

Gevinson, Alan, Kelly Schrum and Roy Rosenzweig. *History Matters: A Student guide to US History Online*. Boston: St. Martins, 2005.

Useful to consult, as well as the History Matters website, for descriptions of vetted websites on the period.

Websites for teacher reference

http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/activists/tubman/rail_1

Wonderful easy-to read narrative of Tubman and Underground Railroad with broadside and drawings.

<http://chumby.dlib.vt.edu/melissa/posters/vastudiesposter.html>

Use for posters of abolition movement and Nat Turner.

<http://www.germantown.k12.il.us/html/CivilWar.html>

This site includes information on the abolitionist movement, sectionalism, and major events of the war.

<http://historymatters.gmu.edu>

Used to locate relevant web sites on causes of the Civil War. Also has numerous primary sources and ideas. Digital Blackboard links helpful.

<http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/vcdh/vahistory/reconfiguring/index.html>

Used for Virginia secessionist debates of 1860-61 and creation of West Virginia. Links to newspapers, maps, images.

<http://library.cornell.edu/mayantislaavery>

Used for 1832 slavery debate in the Virginia General Assembly and other primary sources for and against slavery.

http://library.thinkquest.org/J0112391/nat_turner.htm

Used for a Nat Turner exploration, this is an interesting site of winning student-created sites.

<http://loc.gov/rr/print/list/picamer/pabrown.html>

Used for John Brown pictures and song.

<http://pbs.org/wgbh/aia/search.html>

Used for students matching the three abolitionists.

<http://pbs.org/wgbh/amex/brown>

Used for more John Brown narratives and maps. Also covers Nat Turner and Harriet Tubman.

<http://www.vahistorical.org/sva2003.html>

This incredible site details the story of Virginia in simple terms. The "Becoming Southerners" area offers great background. The "Becoming Confederates" area begins with an east-to-understand explanation of the Compromise of 1850 through Dread Scott and also has a brief overview of John Brown. The discussion of the 1860 election could be a postscript to this unit.

<http://www.vahistory.org/reconfiguring/convention.html>

Used for talking points and map of vote on West Virginia secession. Part of a video series.

<http://www.valley.vcdh.virginia.edu.html>

Valley of the Shadow website used for Thompson and Brammer letters and Harper's Ferry picture.

Lesson 1: Introduction: Differences Between North and South

Time Estimated: 1 day

Objectives:

1. Connect what they have learned about the new nation to infer how, by the mid 1800s, differences could be occurring between Northern and Southern states.
2. Examine, compare, and contrast photographs or drawings of Northern and Southern sections of the United States to identify differences in the two.
3. Identify agriculture as the base of the economy in the South.
4. Identify industry as the base of the economy in the North.
5. Determine that the need for slaves was important in the South, but not in the North.
6. Define agricultural, industrial, free state, and slave states.

Materials:

- Classroom set, transparency of, and enlarged (2'x3') [map of the U.S. as of 1850](#). Enlarged map should be marked with Northern states in blue and Southern states in gray.
- A bulletin board (or large poster) divided into two sections with blue background on top section and gray background on lower section. Leave room in middle to place enlarged map.
- Vocabulary words written on cards to go in pocket chart or on strips with magnets to go on board: *agricultural, industrial, free states, slaves states*.
- Card stock cut into various sizes; markers.
- Class set and transparency of standard [Venn diagram graphic organizer](#).
- [Talking points](#) for teacher reference on differences between the North and the South.
- Overhead projector and markers.
- [Vocabulary sheets](#).
- [Alternate assignment](#).
- [Picture sheet](#) contrasting southern plantation and northern factory

Strategies:

1. **Hook:** Place [picture sheet](#) of southern plantation (lower half) and northern factory (upper half) on overhead and project.
2. Ask students to
 - pair (with regular partners) and share what they see in the two scenes;
 - report to class what is shown in lower half (plantation) and upper half (factory);
 - predict with partners where each would be found in the United States in 1860;

- report answers to class to draw a consensus as to where each would be found (try to draw from them that there is more *agricultural* land in the South (put agricultural vocabulary word in pocket or place on board), so plantations would be there, and there were more big cities in the North so they would be *industrial* (factories) (put industrial vocabulary up).
3. Distribute [maps](#). Ask students to take 5 minutes to predict which states would be agricultural and which would be industrial by putting “a” in each state where they think there would be more agriculture (plantations or farms) and “i” in each state where they think there would be more factories.
 - After 5 minutes, take possible answers and record correctly on map on transparency.
 - Explain that land and the climate in the South was better for growing things.
 - Ask students if one could conclude that states in the South were more agricultural and states in the North were more industrial.
 4. Draw a two-column chart on board or transparency with North on one column and South on other.
 - Ask students to brainstorm words that could go with the way life would be in each area. Accept and record all responses.
 - When finished circle key words if there or add them (agricultural, industrial, have or need slaves, paid to work so no slaves). Even if slavery does not come up, connect to prior knowledge that slaves were necessary to work the plantations and farms.
 - Question if slaves would be needed in industrial areas, explaining that like today industrial workers were paid for their work.
 - Explain that the states with slaves became known as “slave states” and put up vocabulary word, and the states without slaves became known as “free states” and put up that vocabulary word.
 5. Place enlarged map on bulletin board. Explain that you used the different colors to show the North and South and you will explain why later. They can use the same colors to show their “a” and “I” states.
 6. Have various students write the key words on card stock and have others place (staple, tape, pin) on bulletin board in the North or South sections.
 7. Hand out [Venn diagrams](#). Ask students to write North on left side, South on right side. Assign to be completed with at least two ways the sections of the U.S. were different and two ways they were alike. (If students have not had experience with Venn diagrams, explain the concept.) Ask them to draw on prior knowledge to find ways all the states were alike.
 8. Assess understanding by watching students complete the worksheet.
 - Help struggling students as needed, pointing out that they can use the vocabulary words and words on the cards on the bulletin board.

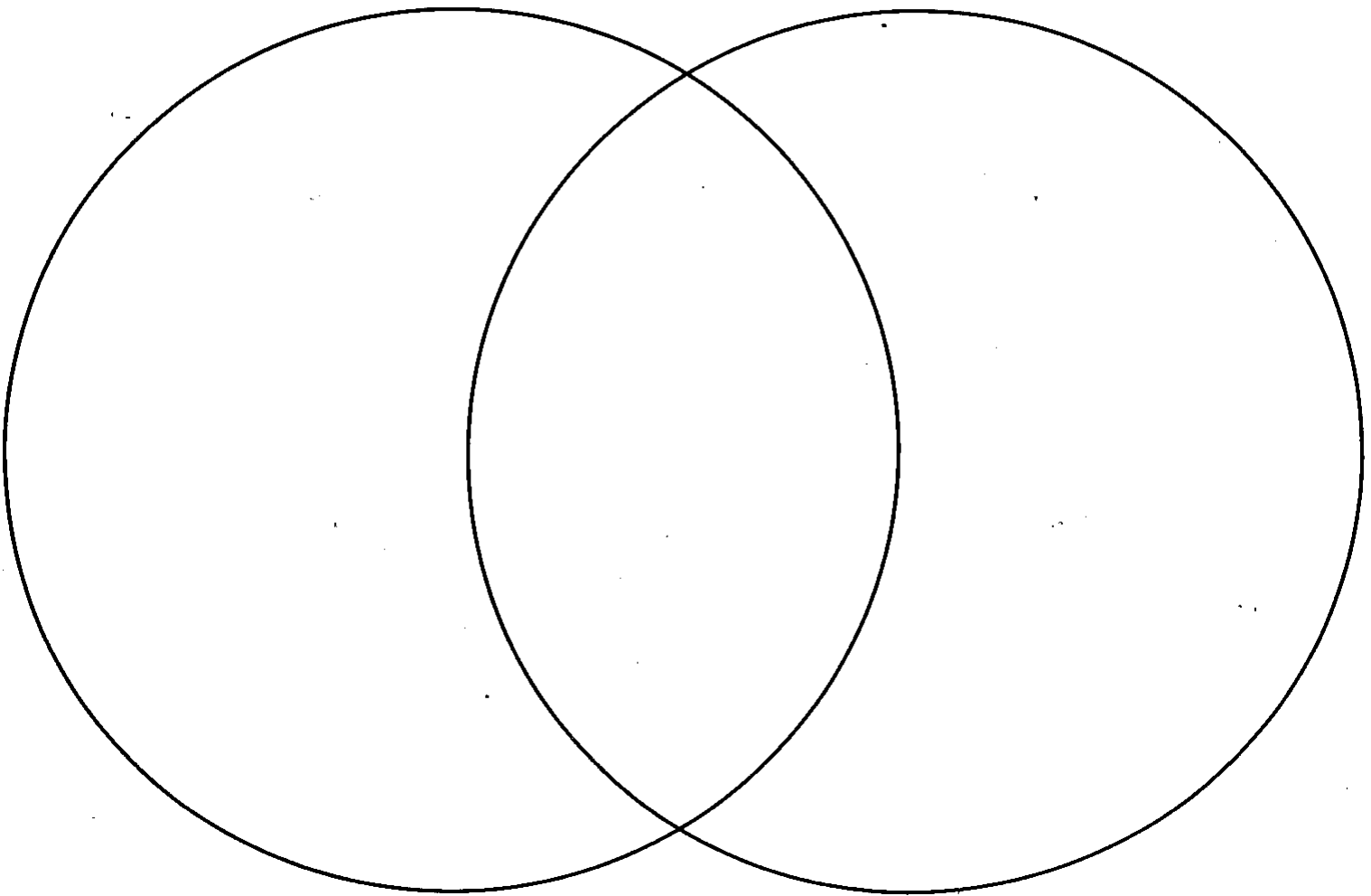
- Ask advanced students to add at least one additional thing in each area.
9. After about 5 minutes, let students share their responses. Record the correct ones on the Venn transparency and let students correct their diagrams if needed.
 10. If you don't already have student social studies folders, create them. Ask students to save their maps and Venn diagrams in a social studies folder for use later.
 11. **Homework:** using glossary in text or dictionary, write definitions on [vocabulary sheet](#) for first 4 words.
 12. **Wrap up:** Project map again, showing agricultural and industrial states.
 - Review what they learned today about the North and South and how there are differences between the two areas.
 - Point to the territories. Assign students to think about those areas. Would they be more like the North or the South? Would they become free states or slave states?
 - Write in big letters over the territories: "Mystery to be solved tomorrow!"

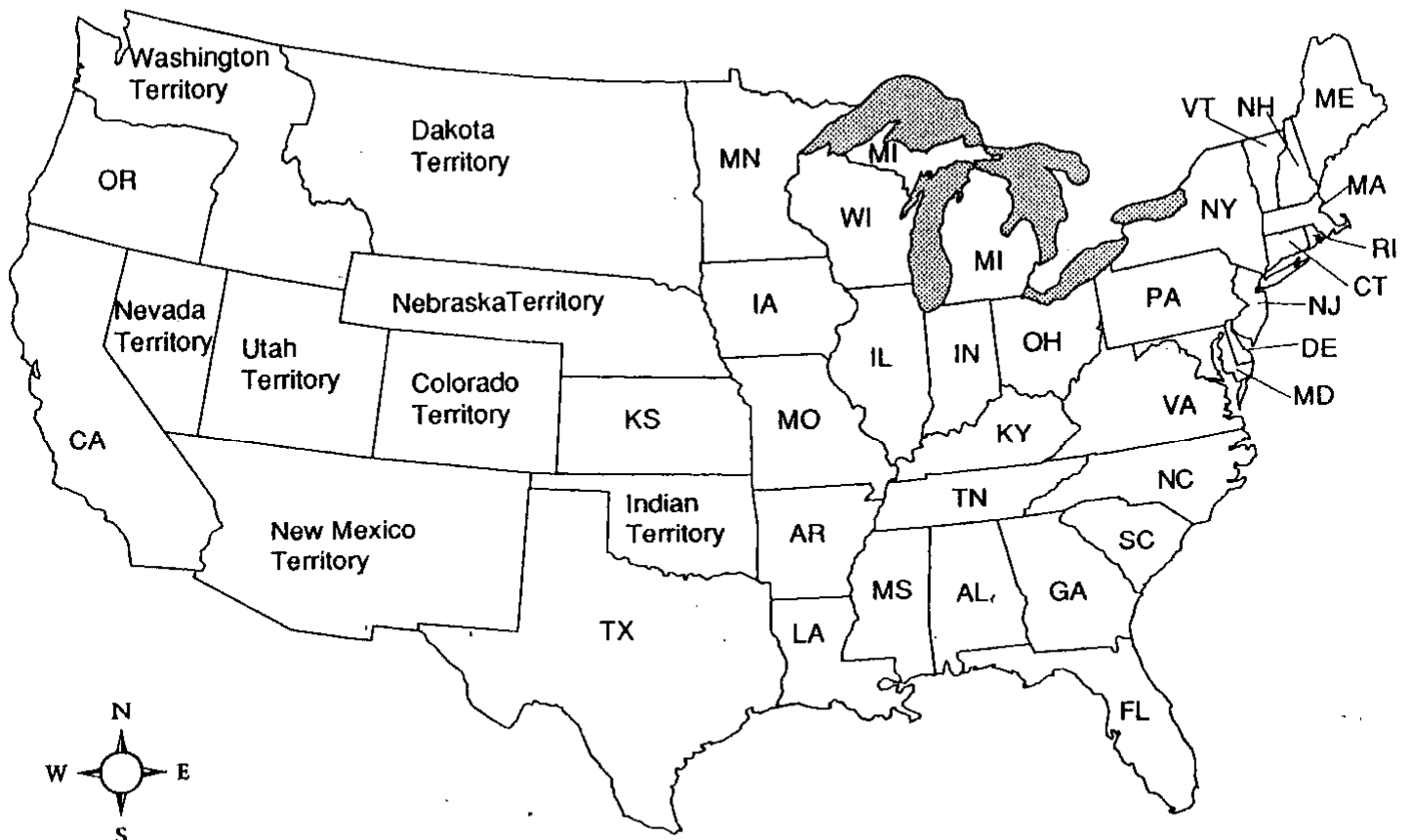
Differentiation:

When possible in partner work, pair weak and strong students or students with different learning styles. The lesson has visual, oral, and written aspects, with visual learning being created on the bulletin board as continued learning/reminder. Let students with kinesthetic needs place the key point cards on the bulletin board. On Venn diagram work, show weaker students the "clues" (vocabulary words and bulletin board). Give advanced students the challenge to add extra items in each area of the Venn diagram.

<i>abolition</i>	
<i>agricultural</i>	
<i>campaigned</i>	
<i>civil</i>	
<i>economy</i>	
<i>free state</i>	
<i>industrialized</i>	
<i>secession</i>	
<i>slave state</i>	

Compare and Contrast





(Alternate assessment)

NAME _____

By 1860, the North (northern states) and the South (southern states) were very different. Read the statements below. If the statement describes the North, put an N in the blank. If it describes the South, put an S in the blank.

___ They were slave states where slavery was allowed.

___ There were many abolitionists there that wanted to end slavery.

___ It was an industrialized area with many factories in big cities.

___ Some states were South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia.

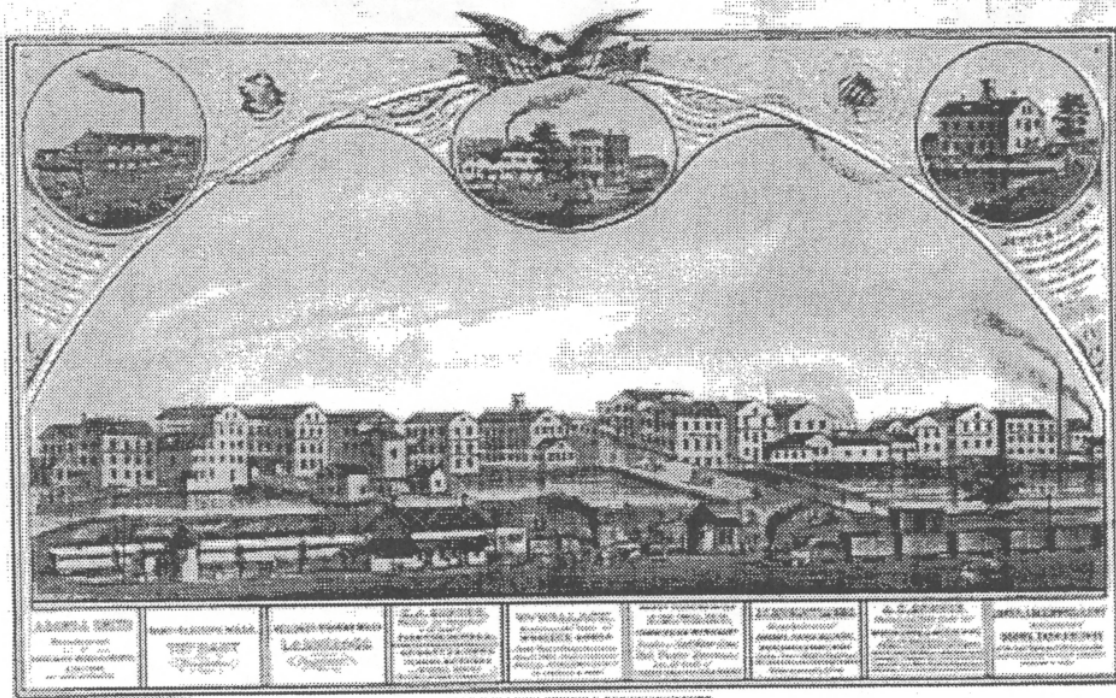
___ They were free states where slavery was not allowed.

___ Some states were New York, Pennsylvania, and Maine.

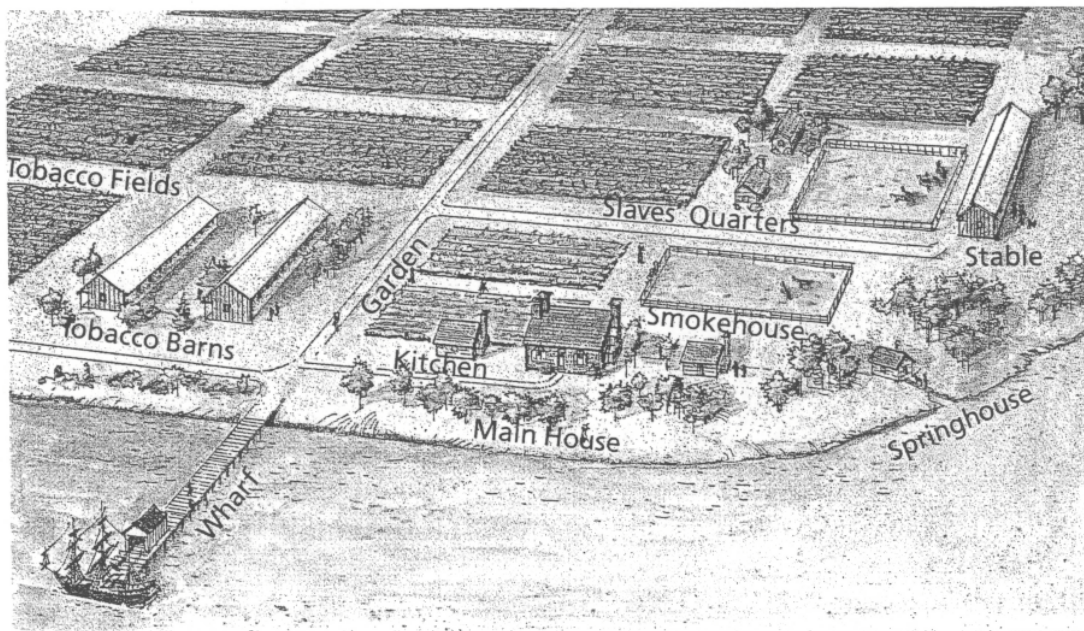
___ Here there was more agriculture. There were farms and big plantations.

Write a 2-3 sentence answer about one of these:

- ✓ Explain why the western counties of Virginia separated (seceded) from the eastern counties to form the state of West Virginia.
- ✓ Explain why the southern state separated (seceded) from the northern states to form the Confederate States of America.
- ✓ Explain why some people did not like Abraham Lincoln.



memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/map-image.pl?data=/home/www/detel
gmd/gmd411/g4114/g... 4/5/2005



Lesson 2: Western Territories Divide Americans: Abolitionists Work Hard

Time Estimated: 2 days

Objectives:

Students will:

7. Restate their understanding of the prior day's learning of the differences between the North and the South.
8. Predict the possible fates of the Western Territories of the United States regarding slavery.
9. Demonstrate an understanding of abolition.
10. Identify the roles of Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman, and John Brown.
11. Create an abolitionists' pamphlet.

Materials:

- Transparency of [map of the U.S. as of 1850](#) (color in Northern States blue and Southern States gray, leave border states and Western Territories blank).
- Vocabulary words written on cards to go in pocket chart or on strips with magnets to go on board: abolition, abolitionist
- [Talking points](#) for teacher reference on differences between the North and the South, slavery issues in the Western Territories, abolition, Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman, John Brown.
- [Matching abolitionists worksheet](#).
- Computer access for students (if possible).
- Mounted posters using primary source pictures of Turner (not available, so use general slavery grouping), Tubman, and Brown.
- Overhead projector and markers.
- Plain bond paper, pencils, crayons.
- [Vocabulary sheet](#).
- [Tri-fold Abolitionist pamphlet](#).
- Pictures of the [front](#) and [back](#) of an example pamphlet.

Strategies:

1st day

13. **Hook:** Place map of U.S. in 1850 back on overhead and begin shading in territories gray, wipe off, shade in blue, wipe off —
 - Look confused at class and ask what should you do?? Listen to their ideas;
 - Conclude with them that like them, different people at this time in history had different ideas about slavery and the territories.
 - Review day one learning — differences between the North and South, using the bulletin board.
14. Put up vocabulary words: *abolition*, *abolitionist*.
 - Explain that to understand how people felt differently, it helps to know these words.

- Seek responses to find root word (abolish) and possible meanings.
 - Write definition for abolition on board, have students add to their vocabulary sheets: “a movement or campaign to end slavery”. Study the “ist” suffix — abolitionist: “a person who worked to end slavery”.
15. Ask students in what part of the country would you find “abolitionists” at this time in history — to their response North, question would there be any abolitionists in Virginia? (Don’t answer yes or no)
16. Tell students they are going to study three important abolitionists.
- Hand out [matching sheets](#). Say the three names together (Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman, John Brown).
 - To find out which paragraph explains which person, they can do one of these:
 - A. Go to the [PBS Africans in America search page](#). Enter each name with quotes in the search box. Click on the first links for each and read about the person.
 - B. Go to an electronic encyclopedia or regular encyclopedia and read about each person.
 - C. Use the index of their text book to locate the people and read about them.
 - Assist lower level students with the first search.
 - Ask advanced students to find additional information about the three.
17. When all have finished, ask them to share the information about Nat Turner. Let one student read that paragraph.
- Ask (advanced) students if they found any additional information about him.
 - Conclude: Then there were abolitionists in Virginia.
 - Continue with John Brown and Harriet Tubman.
 - Ask students to keep sheets in social studies folder for later use.
18. Put U.S. map back on overhead. Point to territories.
- Explain that abolitionists wanted the territories to be free states. Depending on time, you can go into the fact that John Brown led abolitionists to create an uproar in Kansas about this idea.
 - Ask what students think the slave states would want to happen in the territories. Explain that some planters and farmers may want to move into these areas to farm some day.
19. **Wrap-Up:** On the map, draw a division creating Kansas and Nebraska. Explain that the idea of free and slave states in the west was beginning to divide the nation. Congress finally agreed that each new state could decide for itself if it would be a free state or a slave state. That’s why John Brown went to Kansas.
20. Tell the class that abolitionists were very important to our history. Tomorrow they will create a tribute to the three abolitionists they met today.

2nd day

1. **Hook:** Pass out copy of primary source of [John Brown Song](#). If you are the type, sing it as you do. Question: What kinds of people are songs written about? (They may feed back Santa Claus, etc. — or real people of today). Explain — after John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, this song was written about him and people in many parts of the United States sang it. (Sing song, if desired — tune of Battle Hymn of the Republic)
2. Today the class will prepare another way to remember the 3 famous abolitionists studied in the last class. (list or place posters on board as students recall Turner, Tubman, and Brown.)
3. First, place them on class timeline (or create one), from Nat Turner's Rebellion in 1831 to Harriet Tubman's work with the Underground Railroad (1850-1860) to Brown's Raid 1859.
4. Show class the [tri-fold Abolitionist pamphlet](#) and prepare for writing. Give them paper and help them fold. Write ABOLITIONISTS down the front center. Mark each of 3 inside panels as Turner, Tubman, and Brown. These pictures of the [front](#) and [back](#) of an example pamphlet may be helpful.
5. Students may use the information from the day before and drawings you have posted — or they may do additional research at these websites to gain the information they want to include in each panel. Each should also have a drawing of the person or something they did:
 - [Tubman: Conductor of the Underground Railroad](#)
Wonderful easy-to-read narrative of Tubman and Underground Railroad with broadside and drawings.
 - [Virginia Studies Poster Sets](#)
Use for posters of abolition movement and Nat Turner.
 - [The Civil War](#)
This site includes information on the abolitionist movement, sectionalism, and major events of the war.
 - [Nat Turner](#)
Used for a Nat Turner exploration, this is an interesting site of winning student-created sites.
 - [Nat Turner](#)
Used for a Nat Turner exploration, this is an interesting site of winning student-created sites.
 - [John Brown's song](#)
Used for John Brown pictures and song.
 - [Africans in America Search](#)
Used for students matching the three abolitionists.
 - [John Brown's Holy War](#)
Used for more John Brown narratives and maps. Also covers Nat Turner and Harriet Tubman.
6. Assess students as they work to see if they relate the three as abolitionists wanting to end slavery. Provide assistance as needed. Work with weaker students to include basic facts only. Encourage advanced students to write summaries of important things about each in their own words.

7. Collect and display tri-folds.
8. **Wrap-Up:** Ask students to pretend they were living in Virginia in 1830-1860. Ask them to stand if they thought they would have helped Turner, Tubman and/or Brown. (If time, explore the whys)

Differentiation:

Differentiate the lesson by letting students create their tri-folds with the amount of information they feel comfortable adding. Weaker students may only write the sentence or two from the prior day. Advanced students could include summaries about what the people did in their own words.

**MATCH THE ABOLITIONIST
WITH THE BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**
(DRAW A LINE FROM THE NAME TO THE BIOGRAPHICAL PARAGRAPH)

Harriet Tubman

An abolitionist from the North who fought to end slavery. He came to Harper's Ferry, Virginia, to raid the U.S. Arsenal where guns were made and stored. He and his followers were going to give the guns to slaves so they could free themselves. He was caught, arrested, and hanged.

John Brown

A slave and preacher from Southampton County, he organized a group of slaves in a rebellion against their owners. After killing more than 50 whites, Turner and his men were attacked by slave owners. More than 100 slaves were killed in this largest slave rebellion in U.S. history.

Nat Turner

An escaped slave from Maryland, she returned to the South and led others to freedom. She led 19 rescue missions on the "Underground Rail- road, a series of secret routes along which escaped slaves could make their way to the North and Canada where they could live free.

John Brown

Nat Turner

Harriet Tubman

Fact 1.

Fact 1.

Fact 1.

Fact 2.

Fact 2.

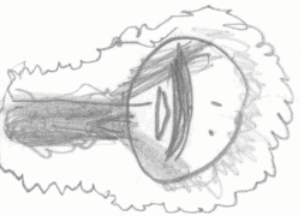
Fact 2.

John Brown

Fact 1. was a + ed

+ G O R D V H C G u n s
f o r a S l a v e
r e v o l +

Fact 2. He l o a n a i
f o r t h e W S, g u n s.



Nat Turner

Fact 1. i t d r e v o l +

k i l l e d m o r e
t h a n 50 p e o p l e
i n c l u d i n g o w n e r
J o s e p h T r a v i s

Fact 2. I n d o i n g
s o t h e y k i l l e d
m o r e t h a n 100
s l a v e s.



Harriet Tubman

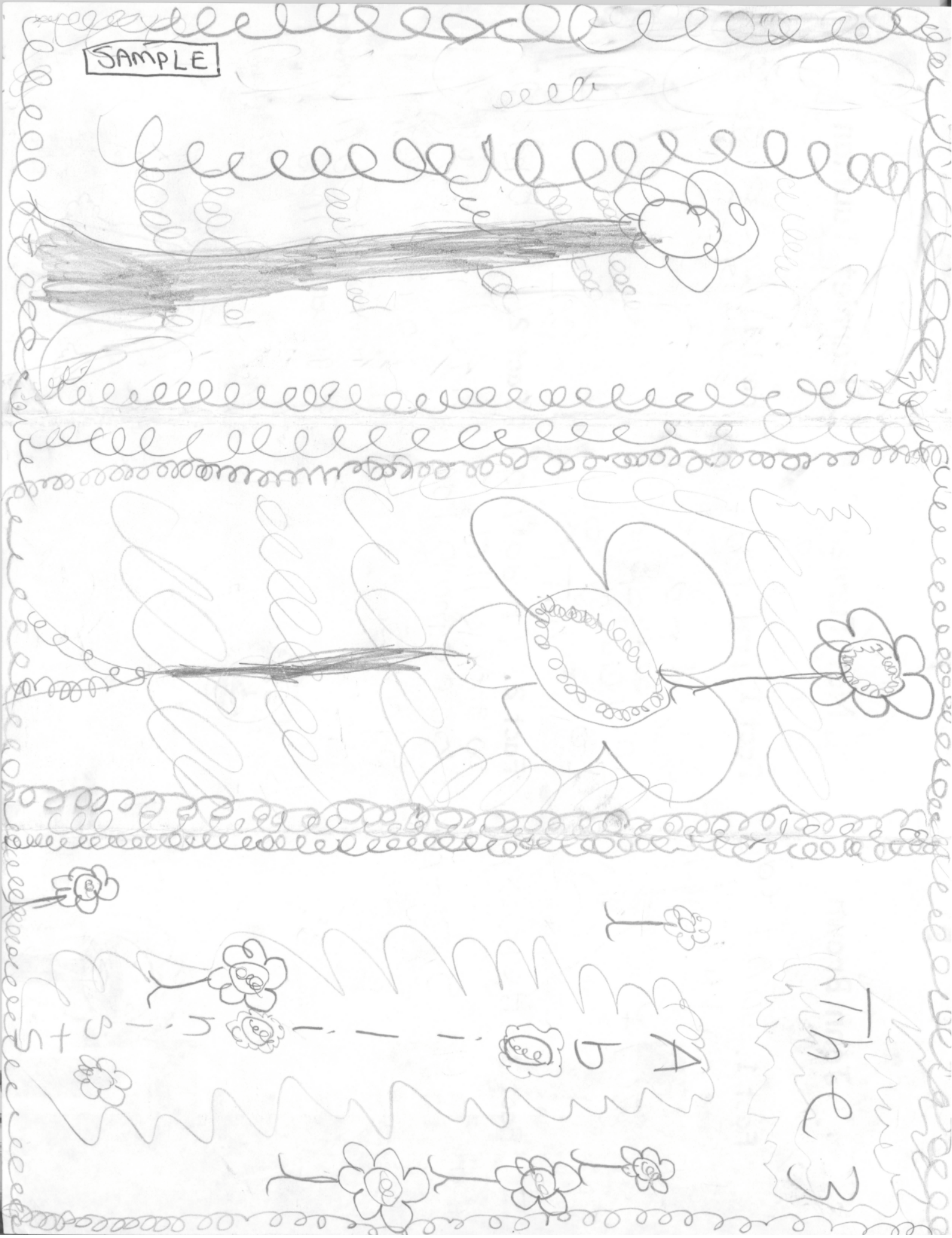
Fact 1. w a s a s l a v e
s l a v e s s.

Fact 2. I v b m a n
i t d 191-15 w a s
m i s s i n g S.

f o r s l a v e s o n u n d e r
g r a v e p a i l h o o d.



SAMPLE



Th-23

Lesson 3: A Divided Nation: A Divided State

Time Estimated: 3 days

Objectives:

Students will:

12. Read primary source letters from the mid 1800s written by Virginians to find different feelings about secession.
13. Identify the differences between northern and southern states that were also differences between the eastern and western sections of Virginia.
14. Research and debate the reasons Virginia should or should not divide into two states.

Materials:

- Vocabulary word strips (*civil, economy, industrialized, abolition, campaigned, secession, slave state, free state*)
- [Review worksheet](#)
- Projected computer with Internet access
- *Virginia* (Harcourt) Social Studies text or similar text used in class
- Copies of [Thompson](#) and [Branner](#) letters (modern spelling variant) from "The Valley of the Shadow"
- [List of group "jobs"](#) (reader, recorder, reporter, observer)
- [Worksheet "Guidelines for Analyzing Letters"](#)
- General Assembly cards (place cards on folded index cards) 2 each: Eastern Counties, Western Counties, James City, Frederick County, Chesterfield County, Augusta County, Northampton County, Rockbridge County, Hanover County, Botetourt County, Patrick County, Jefferson County, Elizabeth City. On the back put one of two options:
 - Virginia's economy depends on slave labor, so Virginia must secede with other southern states
 - Not all of Virginia is dependant on slaves, so Virginia cannot secede with other southern states
- Paper, pencil, drawing materials
- [Virginia General Assembly Debate activity](#)

Strategies:

1st day

21. **Hook:** Project [picture from Valley of the Shadow](#) of Harper's Ferry. Also ask students to turn to page 87 in text (Harcourt: Virginia — drawing of a plantation, or other plantation drawing from classroom text). First, ask which is a primary source document (Harper's Ferry) and which is a secondary source (drawing of plantation). Then ask them to tell you what each image tells them about Virginia in 1850. (Draw responses, acknowledging all as good, but emphasizing
 - parts of the state looked very different
 - plantations needed slaves and the South was for slavery, but the North was against it;

- the hilly areas like Harper's Ferry were not good for plantations, thus slaves were not as important;
 - John Brown tried to raid the arsenal at Harper's Ferry to get weapons for the slaves, but he was caught and hanged)
22. Give students the day's objective: Identify the differences between northern and southern states that divided Virginians (in the 1850s)
 23. Explain that much of what they learned in the days before will help them make the connections you want them to make today.
 24. Review the pre-Civil War vocabulary words introduced earlier: *civil, economy, industrialized, abolition, campaigned, secession, slave state, free state.*
 25. Distribute the [review worksheet](#) and allow them to work in mixed ability partners to complete. Set a fast time limit (3 minutes).
 - *Note: I try to arrange my student seating so that I can quickly assign pairs and groups that mix abilities. If you do not do this, make a list of your slower learners. Ask them to stand and each select a partner from those who are seated.*
 26. Quickly go over worksheet to see that all have correct answers.
 - *Note: Final paragraph of worksheet concludes the differences you are seeking.*
 - *Note: I often rotate student "teachers" to check such assignments.*
 27. Do quick review of what are primary source materials. Ask students to help you generate a list of what those can be: (pictures, drawings, newspapers, maps, artifacts, documents, LETTERS)
 28. Review Timeline posted in classroom, focus on Nat Turner's Rebellion, John Brown's Raid, as events that began to divide the nation.
 29. Explain that you are going to give out two letters. Explain where they came from, how they were collected, etc. Further explain that you want them to work in groups of four. You will give them a [guideline sheet](#) that will help them understand the letter. Each person in the group will have a job. List the jobs: (*reader* reads the letters out loud for the group, *recorder* completes the guideline sheet and writes down what the group says about the letters, *reporter* tells the class what the group said, *observer* tells the class how well the group worked). *Their task is to decide if the person writing each letter thinks that there should be secession (Virginia and other slave states SHOULD secede) or not!* Their reports will begin the class session tomorrow!
 30. **Wrap up:** After giving a two-minute warning for groups to finish, stop students and ask for an assessment of how well working as a group helped them understand the letters. Use a quick show of fingers from 1-5, 1 meaning the lowest (did not help me at all), 5 meaning the highest (helped me a lot)

2nd day

9. **Hook:** Read a few sentences of the letters. Do a quick review of the last several days lessons, the objective of yesterday which remains today.
10. Discuss any problems the groups had with the assignment. Ask observers for a quick report on how well the groups worked.

11. Let reporters report out for each group. Keep a running tab for each letter.
12. Class discusses the results. Did everyone agree? What were the clues?
13. Further discussion with how these feelings may be the same with other Virginians. Where would there be more people wanting secession; where would there be more opposing secession. Using a physical map, indicate where those would be (try to show in flatter land more suitable for planting slavery would be important so they may want to secede; in hilly, mountainous areas of the West with no big plantation areas there would be less need for slaves and more feelings against secession.
14. Using a standard student basal text, read about Lincoln's election, Virginia's first votes on secession, and the firing on Ft. Sumter.
15. Distribute the primary source of the Virginia Convention on secession. Discuss the counties, how they probably voted, and the final vote on secession. Explain that this led to another decision, because many in the western part of the state no longer wanted to be a part of Virginia.
16. Introduce the [Virginia General Assembly Debate](#) activity and distribute cards. Explain that the General Assembly debate will be held the next class period.

3rd day

1. Have classroom set up with two sides. In this case, eastern county representatives on one side, western counties on the other. As was the case, have more eastern county representatives. Put folded index cards with the names of counties on each set of desks to represent the members. You take the role of speaker of the house with a gavel and a podium at the front of the room. Should you have a "special" student (specific IEP, new to the class, etc.), they can serve as "Sergeant at Arms." If not, select a student for this task (they love it), but collect their speaking points. Review the rules of the General Assembly (have on chart or transparency if needed):
 - No one can talk until they are recognized by the Speaker.
 - They must address you, the Speaker of the House.
 - They must limit their remarks to one minute each time they are recognized.
 - Anyone speaking out of turn or breaking the rules will be removed from the meeting room by the sergeant at arms.
2. Open the session (the class) by explaining today's scheduled business is to debate whether or not the western counties of Virginia should secede from Virginia and form their own state. Each representative will have one minute to speak. You will alternate speakers from different counties. After all have spoken, you will recognize anyone with additional comments.
3. Let them have a lively debate. KEEP A NOTE PAD ON THE SIDE TO ASSESS THEIR PARTICIPATION. A simple check for adequate preparation; check minus for less than average participation, check plus for preparation above expectations, nothing marked for no participation, will allow you to covert to A=check plus; B=check; C=check minus but did have something prepared and did try; D=check minus, was obviously not prepared but did participate; F=had nothing prepared, did not participate.

4. Based on the debate, carry on a discussion with predictions as to what they think happened next.
5. **Culminating Assessment:** See [Virginia General Assembly Debate activity](#)

Differentiation:

1. The lessons are differentiated by using both visual and auditory modes whenever possible, reaching students with different learning styles.
2. Pairing and grouping students of mixed abilities and assigning “roles” that draw on different strengths and abilities allows each student to assume a job that he/she can do with success.
3. The assessment which can be done as a participant in the debate or observer with a written or conferenced report gives an option to the weaker or challenged speaker/writer.

Things that Could Lead to Civil War

Completed by _____

Word Bank:

abolitionists agricultural campaign civil
free states industrialized secession slave states

Complete the sentences below by writing the most correct word from the word bank above in each blank.

By the middle of the 1800s, the Northern and Southern states had developed many differences. The Southern states were still _____, and their economy depended on using slaves to help grow crops. The Northern states continued to open big factories in growing cities, so they were more _____ than those in the South.

The states in the South used enslaved African Americans, so they were called _____. The states in the North have very few slaves. These states were called _____.

Many people in the North joined with escaped slaves to try to end slavery. They were called _____, and they wrote articles and letters in newspapers, spoke at meetings and rallies, and joined in conventions to speak against slavery. This was called a _____, or a series of planned actions to convince people to think act on a cause.

Meanwhile, in the South, people were wondering if leaving the Northern States, or _____, was the only way to resolve the differences between the two parts of the United States. No one wanted a _____ war, or a war between the citizens of the country.

GROUP MEMBERS AND THEIR JOBS:

Reader _____

Recorder _____

Reporter _____

Observer _____

Virginia General Assembly Debate Lesson Plan:

- Students each receive a card assigning them to represent a county in Virginia in 1860. Each county card will have one talking point that they can use in a General Assembly debate on remaining one state and all seceding (eastern counties, “Virginia’s economy depends on slave labor, so Virginia must secede with other southern states;”) or dividing into two states (western counties, “Not all of Virginia is dependant on slaves, so they do not want to leave the Union and will become a separate state”).
- They are to add at least two additional talking points based on what they have learned about the divided feelings in Virginia over slavery, secession, and civil war.
- Students draw cards that will assign them to a western (anti-slavery) or an eastern (pro-slavery) county.
- Add that you will be grading them based on how they have used what they have learned in class to prepare their other talking points. You will give special notice to those who respond with good arguments to what another person said.
- *Differentiation option: Students may opt not to participate in the debate. Instead they will sit in the “gallery” and observe as citizens. After the debate they may either write a report on what they observed and how it could affect a vote on secession – or they may schedule a conference with the teacher to report on what they observed and how it could affect a vote on secession.*

1. Students may use the following web sites to research their talking points:
<http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/vcdh/vahistory/reconfiguring/index.html>

Used for Virginia secessionist debates of 1860-61 and creation of West Virginia. Links to newspapers, maps, images.

<http://library.cornell.edu/mayantislavery>

Used for 1832 slavery debate in the Virginia General Assembly and other primary sources for and against slavery.

<http://www.vahistorical.org/sva2003.html>

This incredible site details the story of Virginia in simple terms. The “Becoming Southerners” area offers great background. The “Becoming Confederates” area begins with an east-to-understand explanation of the Compromise of 1850 through Dread Scott and also has a brief overview of John Brown. The discussion of the 1860 election could be a postscript to this unit.

<http://www.vahistory.org/reconfiguring/convention.html>

Used for talking points and map of vote on West Virginia secession. Part of a video series.

NOTE: In a normal year this could be the 3rd or 4th General Assembly debate in my classroom. The first on Bacon's Rebellion; second, a debate on whether to remain loyal to England or join the cause of the Patriots. The 2nd or 3rd is on whether Virginia should or should not ratify the constitution. By this time they know the routine for debates and enjoy the opportunity.

This is the one debate plan. If time allows and unit can be extended another day, follow format for Day 3 of lesson, but debate if Virginia should seceded from the United States. Assign students to write about their experience. On Day 4 of lesson, switch students from eastern and western counties (there were more WESTERN representatives at the Wheeling Convention) and debate the statehood issue..

Guidelines for Analyzing the Letters

1. Who wrote the letter? _____
2. Who is the letter written to? _____
3. When was the letter written? _____
4. Write the sentence(s) or phrase(s) with the word secession:
5. Try to explain the sentence and those before or after it in your own words:
6. Does the writer want Virginia to secede? _____ Yes _____ No
7. Why did you answer question #6 the way you did?