

How do we know what we know? *Advanced*

Unit 8: Civil War

Name:

Date:

Period:

Part I: Texas Leaves the United States

As an independent nation, the Republic of Texas had worked tirelessly for nine years to be annexed to the United States. In 1845, the Republic of Texas finally achieved its goal, becoming the 28th state in the Union. Then, just sixteen years later, the people of Texas voted overwhelmingly in favor of seceding from the United States. Most Texans no longer wanted to be part of the nation they had worked so hard to join.

Texas was one of eleven Southern states that seceded from the Union. These Southern states, united by their common slave-based agricultural economies, called themselves the Confederate States of America, or simply, the Confederacy. The secession of those eleven Southern states led to the bloodiest war in all of American history as Northerners and Southerners fought each other in battle after battle for four long years during the Civil War.

Studying the Civil War can bring up a lot of questions. What drove hundreds of thousands of men to take up arms against their countrymen, and in some cases, their own families? What was life like for those soldiers who experienced so much death and violence? How did families survive the devastation that occurred around them? What did this war mean for the enslaved people in the South? What could have caused this violent conflict within the United States only 85 years after the young country had declared its independence from Great Britain on July 4, 1776? What was the outcome of the war? And how did all of this affect Texas and Texans?

As always, we can find answers to many of our questions about the past from the people who lived through the events themselves.

What types of materials and what kind of information do you expect to see in this lesson about primary source materials from the Civil War?

Part II: Primary Source Analysis

Directions: Choose 8 of the 10 available primary source materials that accompany this lesson. Analyze each material and record your response in the chart below.

Letter of Source	Summary of Source (2 – 4 sentences)	What inferences can you make about the Civil War era based on this source?

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