# A Nation Divided: the Civil War

**Target audience – U.S. History learners**

**Time required – 15 minutes**

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Investigate a geographic overview of the American Civil War.</th>
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</table>
| **C3 Standards** | C3: D2.His.1.9-12. Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.  
C3: D2.His.2.9-12. Analyze change and continuity in historical eras.  
C3: D2.His.3.9-12. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context. |
| **Learning Outcomes** | Students will compare and contrast the chronology of Civil War battle locations and Union-controlled land between 1861 and 1865.  
Students will identify Confederate states, Union states, border states, Richmond, and Washington, D.C. |

**Map URL:** [http://esriurl.com/historygeoinquiry6](http://esriurl.com/historygeoinquiry6)

## Ask

**Who fought in the Civil War?**

- Click the link above to launch the map.
- Click the orange, blue, and gray states to answer the following questions.
  - How were states classified during the Civil War? [Union/North, Confederate/South, or border states]
  - Which states allowed slavery? Did all states allowing slavery secede? [Confederate/South and border states allowed slavery, but border states did not secede.]

## Acquire

**How close were the capital cities?**

- With the Details button underlined, click the button Show Contents of Map (Content).
- Turn on the layer, Civil War Cities.
- Click Bookmarks, and choose Capitals.
- What was the Union’s capital? [Washington, D.C.]
- What was the Confederacy’s? [Richmond, Virginia.]
- Using the Measure tool, how many miles separate these cities? (See ToolTip on page 2) ~100 miles
- Why do you think this proximity was significant to the Civil War? [Because the capitals were close together, and each side was either attacking or defending a capital.]
- Turn on Key US Civil War Battles – Decisive, Key US Civil War Battles – Major, and Union Blockade.
- Click Bookmarks, and choose Civil War Battles.

## Explore

**Where did the armies fight?**

- Which coastlines did the Union blockade close? Why was a blockade important? [It closed the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico, cutting off trading and transportation.]
- On the time slider, press Play to watch the battle locations change between 1861 and 1865. Press Pause at the end of the slider so that all battles appear.
- What patterns do you notice around battle locations? [The locations were close to the capitals; many occurred in Virginia; many occurred along rivers or coast lines.]
- In which direction(s) did the battles move during the Civil War? [They mostly moved south and were clustered around the two capitals.]
- What patterns do you notice in Georgia? [Battles in Georgia form a linear pattern showing General Sherman and the Union’s “March to the Sea.”]

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### C3 Standards

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- **C3: D2.His.2.9-12.** Analyze change and continuity in historical eras.
- **C3: D2.His.3.9-12.** Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context.

### Learning Outcomes

- Students will compare and contrast the chronology of Civil War battle locations and Union-controlled land between 1861 and 1865.
- Students will identify Confederate states, Union states, border states, Richmond, and Washington, D.C.
How did the Union gain control of the Confederacy?

- Turn on the layer, Union Control. Click the layer’s button, Show Legend.
- Turn off the Battle layers.

? In which year did the Union gain complete control of the Mississippi River and New Orleans? [The Union gained control in 1863.]

? In which year was the Confederacy “split in two” because Georgia came under Union control? [This division occurred in 1864.]

? In which year did the Union gain control of Richmond, Virginia? [The Union gained control in 1865.]

Act

Which area was most important to the Confederacy?

? Which area or event had the most impact on allowing the Union to take control of the Confederacy: the Union blockade (1861-1865), the Mississippi River (1863 – 1865), splitting the Confederacy (1864-1865), or the Union taking control of Richmond, Virginia (1865)? Support your answer. [Answers will vary.]

Next Steps

DID YOU KNOW?
ArcGIS Online is a mapping platform freely available to public, private, and home schools. A school subscription provides additional security, privacy, and content features. Learn more about ArcGIS Online and how to get a school subscription at http://www.esri.com/schools.

THEN TRY THIS...
• Create a heat map showing where the highest concentration of Civil War battles occurred.
• Create 60-mile buffers around the capital cities and major rivers to show the relationship between these features and battles.

This GIS map has been cross-referenced to material in sections of chapters from these texts.

• The Americans by McDougal Littell — Chapter 10
• History Alive! The United States by TCI — Chapter 22
• American History: A Survey by McGraw Hill — Chapter 14