



A Nation Divided: the Civil War

from the Esri Geolnquiries™ collection for U.S. History

Target audience – U.S. History learners

Time required – 15 minutes

Activity

Investigate a geographic overview of the American Civil War.

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>

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."*]

more ►

Analyze

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.*]

MEASURE

- Click Measure.
- Click the Distance button.
- Click the map, and release the button.
- Drag your mouse, and then click to draw a vertex.

PLAY AND PAUSE ANIMATED LAYER

- On the left side of the time slider, press Play.
- On the left side of the time slider, press Pause.

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.

TEXT REFERENCES

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