

## Unit 3: Ideals Reading Packet

### The American Revolution:



### The Mexican American War:



### The American Civil War:



## Level 2: Major U.S. Wars 1776 - 1865

### **The American Revolution:**

Great Britain's policy(rules) toward its North American colonies changed dramatically after the conclusion of the French and Indian War in 1763. Britain spent a lot of money during the French and Indian War. The Prime Minister (similar to a president) of Britain, George Grenville, suggested raising funds by taxing the colonies. The colonists, were used to low taxes and little interference from the British government.

The Stamp Act/Law imposed taxes on a wide variety of printed materials, from playing cards to newspapers to college diplomas. It also had absolutely nothing to do with trade. Colonists all over North America, but particularly in large cities, organized protests against the hated tax. With these protests usually taking the form of mob actions, the most violent incident occurred in Boston in August 1765, when a mob literally pulled down the home of Lieutenant Governor Thomas Hutchinson, who was believed to have supported the Stamp Act.

Slowly, a new ideology began to emerge from this struggle to defend colonial rights of independence. It was a truly revolutionary idea for the colonies to reject Britain's government and establish their own government to rule themselves instead. By 1776, the idea had become increasingly attractive to many colonists, in part because of a powerful pamphlet titled Common Sense, written by Thomas Paine, which advocated a complete overthrow of British authority in North America.

### **The Mexican American War:**

At first glance, it would seem that Mexico and the United States should have been good neighbors in the 19th century—they were both relatively young countries that had rebelled against a mother nation to establish republics (type of government). As American and Mexico grew, they both had to deal with states with populations that believed their needs were not being met by the federal (national or central) government.

In the United States, the war had important consequences for slavery. People in the North objected to the war, warning all Northerners about the increasing strength of plantation owners and slavery. After the U.S. victory brought Mexican land into the United States, Congress questioned how to organize the territory. Law makers debated furiously over slavery and distrust between North and South grew. The issues arising over the Mexican-American War contributed to the coming of the Civil War in 1861.

### **The American Civil War:**

The issue of slavery grew to become the most important economic, social, and political problem for the United States. If new territories from Mexico became slave states, then the South would have more votes in legislative branch than the free states in the North, making it easier for the South to keep slavery by law.

Some abolitionists promoted violent methods to end slavery. This included John Brown, a controversial figure who led a raid of a federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry in hopes of starting an armed slave revolt. As a result, the episode provoked more tension between the North and South.

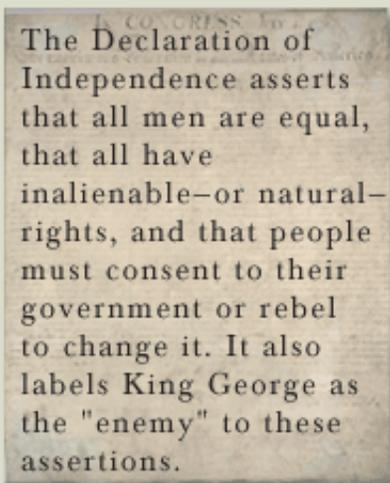
By the time Abraham Lincoln became president in 1860, South Carolina seceded from the United States. They and other southern states seceded, choosing to try and start their own country in which slavery was allowed. When won the election, John Brown's final words, that slavery would "never be purged away, but with blood," would be prophetic as the congress declared a civil war against the southern states that seceded.

## Topics / The American Revolution, 1774-1783 / Declaring Independence / Declaring Independence (Visual)

The Declaration of Independence stands out in history as a turning point for democracy. However, it traces roots far back into history and has also left its own imprint on the years since its writing.

### Influences

- Roman natural law stated that certain principles of justice applied to all people.
- John Locke's fundamental belief in natural rights and in government by the people's consent formed the core philosophy in the Declaration of Independence.
- Emerich de Vattel stressed civic duty—labeled as "pursuit of happiness"—over property ownership in his list of natural rights.



### Effects

- Americans rally around the cause, feeling their individual hopes and independent outlook validated, while also viewing King George as a recognizable foe.
- Other nations, especially France, support the American cause with words, money, and even military aid. Democracy based on the American model builds in many nations.



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## Level 3: American Revolutionary War



The American Revolution lasted for nearly 10 years and ranged across all of the 13 colonies and into parts of Canada. The American victory over formidable (very challenging) odds became a symbol of people's fight for freedom all over the world.

Great Britain's policy(rules) toward its North American colonies changed dramatically after the conclusion of the French and Indian War in 1763. Britain spent a lot of money during the French and Indian War. The Prime Minister (similar to a president) of Britain, George Grenville, suggested raising funds by taxing the colonies.

The colonists, however, had become accustomed to (use to) low taxes and little interference from the British government. Since the first settlements established in British North

America in the 1600s, the British government rarely regulated colonial businesses and trade.

When the British Parliament passed the Sugar Act/Law(1764), it marked a change in Britain's colonial policy (rules). Ironically, it lowered the existing tax on sugar and molasses, but it called for more stringent efforts to enforce the tax and stop smuggling (piracy). The colonists became angry about the new law and taxes but did little at first to resist them.

The Stamp Act/Law imposed taxes on a wide variety of printed materials, from playing cards to newspapers to college diplomas. It also had absolutely nothing to do with trade. Colonists all over North America, but particularly in large cities, organized protests against the hated tax. With these protests usually taking the form of mob actions, the most violent incident occurred in Boston in August 1765, when a mob literally pulled down the home of Lieutenant Governor Thomas Hutchinson, who was believed to have supported the Stamp Act.

Slowly, a new ideology began to emerge from this struggle to defend colonial rights of independence. It was a truly revolutionary idea for the colonies to reject Britain's government and establish their own government to rule themselves instead. By 1776, the idea had become increasingly attractive to many colonists, in part because of a powerful pamphlet titled Common Sense, written by Thomas Paine, which advocated a complete overthrow of British authority in North America.

Although the cost of the American victory was substantial, with about 25,000 deaths from wounds and disease and serious economic disruption from the waste and carnage of several years of war, the Americans quickly set about erecting the institutions to govern their new nation. The revolution, with its Enlightenment principles of equality and natural rights, has since served as an inspiration to other peoples around the world attempting to secure their rights through the mechanism of self-government.

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*SOURCE: Sowards, Adam M. "American Revolution." American History, ABC-CLIO, 2016, americanhistory.abc-clio.com/Search/Display/263186. Accessed 14 Oct. 2016.*

## Level 3: Mexican American War



A short and victorious war for the United States, the Mexican-American War (1846–1848) marked the top of U.S. Manifest Destiny and expansion. This war resulted in the annexation (takeover) of millions of acres of land that stretched from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. The war prompted enormous controversy, and forcing the issue of slavery into the national spotlight. In the long run, it proved a dark foreshadowing of the Civil War. The country split along geographical lines in its support for this war and the battle for Texas. Most of

the military leaders of the Mexican American War would become military leaders in the Civil War.

At first glance, it would seem that Mexico and the United States should have been good neighbors in the 19th century—they were both relatively young countries that had rebelled against a mother nation to establish republics (type of government). As American and Mexico grew, they both had to deal with states with populations that believed their needs were not being met by the federal (national or central) government.

However, one of the biggest differences was that the U.S. population was mostly European in origin. They had come to "America" as political or economic refugees and banded together to drive out the British, French, Spanish, and Native American cultures. Feeling morally and religiously superior, they were swept up by the concept of manifest destiny. In the United States, the economy, especially industry and transportation, was growing quickly.

In Mexico, on the other hand, the European settlers had established a strict class system and people were isolated in small towns. The country's immigrant population was largely Spanish and in Mexico primarily as an occupational force. Mexico's northern frontier was huge, politically unsure, and difficult to govern. The communication, transportation, social, and economic ties among the provinces were limited since Mexico lacked the navigable waterways that characterized the United States. Mexico's new fragile republic, founded in 1821, was wracked by political revolutions for its first 25 years as different factions tried to wrest control of the government. That instability damaged economic and industrial development, and the treasury department was often in a state of near-bankruptcy.

In the United States, the war had tremendously important consequences in the growing sectional controversy over whether or not to allow slavery. Vocal factions in the North had objected to the war, loudly denouncing the U.S. effort in the press and warning Northerners about the increasing strength of plantation owners and their "slave power." After the U.S. victory brought such a massive tract of land, known as the Mexican Cession, to the United States, Congress wrestled with the question of how to organize the territory and determine the status of slavery within it. Such issues prompted furious debates that irrevocably deepened the mutual distrust between North and South. Despite the passage of the Compromise of 1850, which offered a temporary solution, the issues arising over the Mexican-American War contributed substantially to the coming of the Civil War in 1861.

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*SOURCE: Crawford, Mark. "Mexican-American War." American History, ABC-CLIO, 2016, americanhistory.abc-clio.com/Search/Display/263240. Accessed 14 Oct. 2016.*

## Level 3: Civil War



In the period before the Civil War, commonly known as the antebellum era, the United States experienced a crisis of **sectionalism**. That is, the regions of North and South, were defined by different economic, political, and social agendas. Each region became very loyal to their region's own interests and beliefs. In particular, the question of whether slavery should be extended to new western territories was a key source of conflict. Despite varying efforts at compromise, these **sectional** tensions continued to divide the nation and helped contribute to the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861.

The roots of **sectionalism** go back to the colonial era, when the northern and southern regions of the United States developed contrasting economic structures largely due to geographical differences. With a terrain

and climate unsuitable for farming, northern states built an economy that relied mostly on manufacturing and trade. Meanwhile, the fertile soil and relative warmth of the south made agriculture, driven by slave labor, a profitable business venture.

The issue of slavery became an intense political battleground with the rapid (fast) land expansion that occurred during the antebellum period. If new territories became slave states, then the South would have more votes in Congress than the North, making it easier for the South to keep slavery by law.

The addition of land acquired from Mexico in 1848 required legislative negotiation. In the Compromise of 1850, California was admitted as a free state, while the question of slavery in the Utah and New Mexico territories would be determined by **popular sovereignty** (by vote of the local settlers).

Some abolitionists promoted violent methods to end slavery. This included John Brown, a controversial figure who led a raid of a federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry in hopes of starting an armed slave revolt. The attack stoked fears in the South of slave insurrections, and Brown's subsequent trial and hanging elevated him to martyrdom in the eyes of many Northerners. As a result, the episode provoked more sectional tension and left the North and South further unable to accommodate each other.

By the time of the presidential election of 1860, it was clear that deep divisions existed between North and South over the future course of the Union. The raid on Harpers Ferry, in particular, enabled Southerners to link the Republican Party to abolitionism and the overthrow of slavery. Thus, the election of Illinois Republican Abraham Lincoln set the stage for Southern rebellion. With the secession of South Carolina shortly following Lincoln's victory, Brown's final words, that slavery would "never be purged away, but with blood," would be prophetic as the nation marched closer to civil war.

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*SOURCE: Thomas, Lauren. "Prelude to the Civil War, 1840–1861." American History, ABC-CLIO, 2016, americanhistory.abc-clio.com/Topics/Display/12. Accessed 14 Oct. 2016.*

# Level 4: American Revolutionary War

## Declaration of Independence:

In Congress, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America, When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

... We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

# Level 4: Mexican American War - James K. Polk

President James K. Polk, To the Congress of the United States: A Special Message Calling for a Declaration of War against Mexico, Washington, May 11, 1846

To the Senate and the House of Representatives:

... The strong desire to establish peace with Mexico on liberal and honorable terms, and the readiness of this Government to regulate and adjust our boundary and other causes of difference with that power on such fair and equitable principles as would lead to permanent relations of the most friendly nature, induced me in September last to seek the reopening of diplomatic relations between the two countries. ... The Mexican Government not only refused to receive him or listen to his propositions, but after a long-continued series of menaces have at last invaded our territory and shed the blood of our fellow-citizens on our own soil.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Slidell, in obedience to my direction, addressed a note to the Mexican minister of foreign relations, under date of the 1st of March last, asking to be received by that Government in the diplomatic character to which he had been appointed. This minister in his reply, under date of the 12th of March, reiterated the arguments of his predecessor, and in terms that may be considered as giving just grounds of offense to the Government and people of the United States denied the application of Mr. Slidell. Nothing therefore remained for our envoy but to demand his passports and return to his own country.

...The grievous wrongs perpetrated by Mexico upon our citizens throughout a long period of years remain unredressed, and solemn treaties pledging her public faith for this redress have been disregarded. A government either unable or unwilling to enforce the execution of such treaties fails to perform one of its plainest duties.

Our commerce with Mexico has been almost annihilated. It was formerly highly beneficial to both nations, but our merchants have been deterred from prosecuting it by the system of outrage and extortion which the Mexican authorities have pursued against them, whilst their appeals through their own Government for indemnity have been made in vain. Our forbearance has gone to such an extreme as to be mistaken in its character. ...

In making these recommendations I deem it proper to declare that it is my anxious desire not only to terminate hostilities speedily, but to bring all matters in dispute between this Government and Mexico to an early and amicable adjustment; and in this view I shall be prepared to renew negotiations whenever Mexico shall be ready to receive propositions or to propositions of her own.

I transmit herewith a copy of the correspondence between our envoy to Mexico and the Mexican minister for foreign affairs, and so much of the correspondence between that envoy and the Secretary of State and between the Secretary of War and the general in command on the Del Norte as is necessary to a full understanding of the subject.

JAMES K. POLK.

# Level 4: Civil War - Abraham Lincoln

## Emancipation Proclamation:

A war measure signed by President Abraham Lincoln on September 22, 1862 to take effect on January 1, 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves in all areas rebelling against the Union at that point.

Whereas on the 22nd day of September, A.D. 1862, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

"That on the 1st day of January, A.D. 1863, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

And by virtue of the power and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States and parts of States are, and henceforward shall be, free; and that the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all case when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known that such persons of suitable condition will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God."

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*SOURCE: "Emancipation Proclamation (1863)." American History, ABC-CLIO, 2016, [americanhistory.abc-clio.com/Search/Display/254234](http://americanhistory.abc-clio.com/Search/Display/254234). Accessed 14 Oct. 2016.*