**SSUSH9 – Evaluate key events, issues, and individuals related to the Civil War**

**SSUSH9b: Discuss Lincoln’s purpose in using emergency powers to suspend habeas corpus, issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, and delivering the Gettysburg and Second Inaugural Addresses**

President Abraham Lincoln was elected President in 1860. The immediate reaction by the states of the Deep South was secession. The eleven states that eventually formed the Confederate States of America (the "Confederacy") viewed themselves as a separate nation. Over the course of the Civil War, President Lincoln repeatedly demonstrated and spoke about his primary objective and purpose in the war, which was preserving the Union.

In Lincoln's first inaugural address, he tried to conciliate Southerners by saying that he was not going to abolish slavery and that he only wanted to preserve the Union. He went on to urge Southerners to abandon the idea of secession and rejoin the United States. President Lincoln believed preservation of the United States (the "Union") was the most important task for any President. He did not believe the southern states had the right to secede from the Union and thought they were merely rebelling against the government.

As a result, Lincoln never considered the Confederacy a separate country. Confederate forces attacked the Fort Sumter, South Carolina United States Army fortification in April 1861, which marked the beginning of the long-feared Civil War. When Lincoln called for a large volunteer army to preserve the Union, more states - Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee - seceded to join the Confederacy. Although Lincoln often stated that he wished only to restrict the spread of slavery, not to abolish it, he did over the course of the war come to embrace the idea of ending slavery in the United States.

**Suspension of Habeas Corpus**

Not all Northerners supported President Lincoln's efforts to preserve the Union. Some were Confederate sympathizers (just as some Southerners were Union sympathizers). Throughout the war, in some states Lincoln suspended the constitutional right of ***habeas corpus*** - ***the legal rule that anyone imprisoned must be taken before a judge to determine if the prisoner is being legally held in custody***. The Constitution allows a President to suspend habeas corpus during a national emergency. Lincoln used his emergency powers to legalize the holding of Confederate sympathizers without trial and without a judge to agree they were legally imprisoned. Over 13,000 Confederate sympathizers were arrested in the North. After the war, Lincoln's actions were partially repudiated by the Supreme Court decision Ex parte Milligan, 1866, which upheld the suspension of habeas corpus in times of national crisis. Lincoln's purpose in suspending habeas corpus was to help ensure victory in the war - even if it meant restricting individual liberties- and ultimately preserve the Union as he had stated many times.

**Emancipation Proclamation**

Although Lincoln's objective was to preserve the United States, he also became more intent on ending slavery through the course of the war. In 1862, after the bloody battle at Antietam, Lincoln used executive powers to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. The policy ***emancipated (freed) all slaves held in the states engaged in rebellion***. Lincoln did not expect Confederate slaveholders to free their slaves, but he thought news of the proclamation would reach southern slaves and encourage them to flee to the North. Lincoln believed one reason southern Whites were free to join the Confederate Army was because slaves were doing their work at home on southern farms. Encouraging slaves to flee to the North would hurt the Southern war effort.

Although the Emancipation Proclamation did not free slaves held in the North or in the Border States, free Blacks living in Union states warmly welcomed Lincoln's statement. The proclamation enlarged the purpose of the Civil War to include abolishing slavery and also opened the way for Blacks to join the Union Army.

**Gettysburg Address**

Lincoln's desire to preserve the Union can also be seen in his speech at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The occasion was the dedication of a military cemetery at the Gettysburg battlefield in November 1863, just four months after 51,000 Union and Confederate soldiers were killed there in battle. When Lincoln rose to speak, starting with his famous words "Four score and seven years ago...," he spoke for just two minutes. Lincoln thought the speech was a failure because of the poor crowd response. It was not until the next day, when the Gettysburg Address was widely published by Northern newspapers, that Lincoln's words caught the imagination of the North. ***Lincoln's call to continue on with the fight for the fallen and to help preserve "...government of the people, by the people, and for the people..." helped to raise the spirits of Northerners*** who had grown weary of the war and were dismayed by Confederate victories over the larger Union armies. Lincoln did not support giving up the fight, which would have dissolved the Union created by the Patriots "four score and seven years" before.

**Second Inaugural Address**

President Lincoln was reelected in 1864. His Second Inaugural Address is another example of a speech where his determination to preserve the union of states is evident. When the Second Inaugural was given, Union victory over the Confederacy was eminent and Americans foresaw an end to slavery. Instead of boasting about the victory, Lincoln expressed sorrow that the states had not been able to resolve their differences peacefully. However, he clearly ***stated that slavery was such an evil that the North was right to have gone to war over the issue***. Nevertheless, he urged Americans ***not to seek revenge on slaveholders***, their supporters, or the Confederate military. Instead, he urged reconstruction of the South in a spirit of ***"malice toward none; with charity for all."*** Lincoln formed what would become the popular memory of why the war was necessary. He said it had been fought to ***preserve the Union*** as an indivisible nation of citizens who would no longer profit from "wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces" - ***from taking their earnings from the labor of slaves***.

**SSUSH9c: Examine the influences of Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson, William T. Sherman, and Jefferson Davis**

***The Civil War was conducted through the leadership of some very successful military and political leaders. At the time of the war's opening shots, the Confederacy had the advantage in terms of military leadership. Commanders from both sides were very familiar with one another, as many had trained together at the West Point Military Academy or served together in the Mexican War.***

**Robert E. Lee**

Lincoln was frustrated early in the war by his Union commanders' inability to end the fighting quickly. Grant and Sherman finally emerged as the type of aggressive commanders Lincoln had been looking to promote. The Confederate commander, General Robert E. Lee, was thought to be one of the most capable military men in the United States. He was even offered a top position in the United States Army when the Civil War broke out. However, Lee resigned when his home state of Virginia seceded and joined the Confederacy. Lee's influence on the war was one of strong military leadership. Given all of the disadvantages the Confederacy faced going into the conflict, ***Lee was able to efficiently craft a military strategy that withstood larger Union armies and often a lack of supplies***.

**General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson**

was considered a brilliant military tactician and was a great commander for Robert E. Lee's Confederate Army. He led his forces to victory at both battles of Bull Run. Like Lee, he was very skilled in the field through maneuvering his forces against often larger and better-equipped opponents. Jackson was shot at the Battle of Chancellorsville in 1863 and died a few days later. His death was a tremendous loss to General Lee and the Confederate Army.

**General Ulysses S. Grant**

was promoted to full command of the Union Army in March 1864. He had demonstrated his skill and aggressive approach in battle through the difficult campaigns in the West. One of his greatest successes that earned him the promotion was at the siege of Vicksburg. His hard-fought victory to control the Mississippi River achieved one of the main military objectives of the Union's Anaconda Plan. The Union wanted to split the Confederacy to restrict its ability to mobilize forces. Grant's victory at Vicksburg achieved that goal. Robert E. Lee ultimately surrendered to General Grant at Appomattox Courthouse in Virginia on April 9, 1865 to end the war.

**William T. Sherman**

Grant and Sherman had fought together in the western campaigns at Shiloh and Vicksburg. When Grant was given full command of the Union Army, Sherman was also promoted to lead the forces in the West. Sherman is noted for capturing the key Confederate city of Atlanta and subsequently leading the Union March to the Sea through Georgia. Sherman's influence on the outcome of the war was to wear down the Confederate will to fight through the widespread destruction of property on his march through Georgia and the Carolinas.

**Jefferson Davis**

was not a military commander in the field but was President of the Confederate States of America. Davis did possess a military background, having graduated from West Point. He was also a well-respected United States Senator from Mississippi before the Civil War began. Davis was not able to secure for the Confederacy a diplomatic alliance with European countries. He was also at odds with many of the Confederate state governors regarding his war plans that strained the already scarce resources of the South. Davis's counterpart Abraham Lincoln proved to be a more capable political leader during the Civil War.

**SSUSH9d: Explain the importance of Fort Sumter, Antietam, Vicksburg, Gettysburg, and Atlanta**

***Civil War historians acknowledge that 50 major battles and 5000 minor battles were fought in the Civil War between 1861 and 1865. There were also countless skirmishes throughout the course of the war. Land battles were fought mostly in states east of the Mississippi River and south of the Ohio River. Sea battles were fought along the Atlantic coast and in the Gulf of Mexico. There were also major river battles fought on the Mississippi River. The battles listed in this element are representative of key strategies and moments in the Civil War.***

**Fort Sumter**

was fought in April 1861. Guarding the mouth of Charleston Harbor, Fort Sumter was one of the last forts within the seceding states that still remained under federal control. Because the South controlled the harbor, Fort Sumter was cut off from Union supplies and reinforcements. Lincoln had just taken office a few months earlier and the fort was quickly running out of food and supplies. The new President contacted the South Carolina leadership to alert them that the United States would be sending food - and only food - to the Union fortification isolated within Confederate territory. Thus, a critical juncture was reached. Either the Confederates would allow the fort to remain under Union control or begin the fight.

Confederate forces staged a 24-hour bombardment against the fort and, by attacking federal property, committed an act of open rebellion. To uphold the Constitution, President Lincoln believed he had no choice but to call for troops to respond against the Confederacy. As a direct result, the Civil War began. The Confederates won the battle at Fort Sumter after two days of relentless bombing from the Charleston shoreline. Not only did this battle begin the war, but it also prompted the states of the Upper South to join the Confederacy. Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas seceded within weeks of the Confederate victory at Fort Sumter.

**Battle of Antietam**

was fought in September 1862. Confederate General Robert E. Lee marched his forces to Antietam Creek, Maryland, where he fought the war's first major battle on Union soil. Maryland was a Border State, which meant that it was a state that allowed slavery but remained loyal to the Union. The state was geographically important as a Border State. The Confederate forces believed if the war pushed into Maryland, the state would join the Confederacy. The Confederacy also hoped that a victory in a Union state would encourage European nations to join in a desperately needed alliance with the South.

The outcome at Antietam was not what the Confederates had anticipated. There was not a significant Confederate following in Maryland to supplement the attack. It was instead the deadliest one-day battle in American history, with over 26,000 casualties. It was also shocking in that neither side, secured a victory. As Lee withdrew to the South, Union forces might have been able to end the entire war by pursuing the Confederates. However, the Union did not follow Lee, even though they outnumbered the Confederate forces two-to-one. The significance of the Battle of Antietam was that Lee's failure to win encouraged Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation.

**Battle of Gettysburg**

was fought in July 1863. Confederate General Robert E. Lee hoped once again that an invasion of Union territory would significantly weaken Northern support for the war effort. Lee's army was met by Union troops at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Approximately 51,000 soldiers were killed during the three-day battle. It was the deadliest battle of the American Civil War. Geography played a key role in the outcome of this particular battle. The small town of Gettysburg is surrounded by steep hills and rugged terrain. Once the Union Forces secured the high ground, it was difficult for the Confederates to overpower the enemy due to their fortified location. After three deadly days of fighting, the Confederates retreated in defeat.

Gettysburg marked the beginning of the end for the Confederate forces in the east. Lee gave up any further attempts to invade the Union territory. Four months later, Lincoln delivered his Gettysburg Address at the dedication of the Gettysburg National Cemetery. The geographic position of Gettysburg, being in the northern state of Pennsylvania and having a rugged topography, were key components of the battle there.

**Battle of Vicksburg**

was fought over a span of two months from May through July 1863. Union General Ulysses S. Grant laid siege to Vicksburg, Mississippi because whoever controlled the high ground there in the bend of the Mississippi River would control traffic on the whole river. Grant, aided by naval actions along the mouth of the Mississippi River during the seven-week siege, achieved one of the Union's major strategic goals in the west. Because the Union now controlled the Mississippi River, Confederate troops and supplies from Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas were cut off from the East.

This Union victory, coupled with the Union victory at Gettysburg, was the turning point of the war. The geographic significance of the Battle of Vicksburg is the proximity of the town to the logistically critical Mississippi River. The side that controlled the river had an incredible advantage in terms of transporting goods and soldiers. The Confederate loss of Vicksburg also meant they lost control of the Mississippi River and the ability to maneuver their forces and supplies efficiently

**Battle of Atlanta**

was fought from July through September 1864. Union General William Tecumseh Sherman besieged Atlanta, Georgia for six weeks before capturing the vitally important center of Confederate manufacturing and railway traffic. Geography made Atlanta a key location for the Confederate operation. The city had emerged as a transportation hub due to its location below the Appalachian Mountains and above the coastal plain. Atlanta, at the time of the Civil War, was one of the few locations in the South that had a significant concentration of railroad lines and industry.

Sherman's goal was to disrupt the Confederacy's capacity to resupply its troops throughout the South. Therefore, Atlanta was his prime target. Union troops burned Atlanta to the ground, then marched across Georgia to the Atlantic Ocean, and on through the Carolinas. During the March to the Sea, Sherman and his men destroyed the railways, roads, and bridges along the path. The Union force also destroyed the crops and livestock they did not harvest and butcher for their own nourishment. One result of this campaign that devastated the South was that the Confederates recognized that they would lose the war and the North recognized that it would win.

**US History**

**SSUSH9 Discussion Questions**

1. What message did Lincoln send to southern states in his first inaugural address?
2. Why did suspend Habeas Corpus during the Civil War?
3. What were the primary reasons for Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation?
4. What was the primary message in Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address?
5. What was Lincoln’s message regarding slavery and victory over the Confederacy during his second inaugural address?
6. What was General Robert E. Lee’s major influence on the Civil War?
7. What was General Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson’s major influence on the Civil War?
8. What was Ulysses S Grant’s major influence on the Civil War?
9. What was William T. Sherman’s major influence on the Civil War?
10. What was the importance of the Battle at Fort Sumter on the Civil War?
11. What was the importance of the Battle of Antietam on the Civil War?
12. What was the importance of the Battle of Gettysburg on the Civil War?
13. What was the importance of the Battle of Vicksburg on the Civil War?
14. What was the importance of the Battle at Atlanta and the March to the Sea on the Civil War?