



# **Eighth Grade Social Studies**

<b>8th Grade Social Studies</b>
<i>*There will be a short video lesson of a Knox County teacher to accompany this task available on the KCS YouTube Channel and KCS TV.</i>
<b>Grade:</b> 8th
<b>Topic:</b> Civil War Leaders
<b>Goal(s):</b> Identify the roles and significant contributions of Civil War leaders.
<b>Standards:</b> 8.62 & 8.63 (in part)
<b>The Better Leader Task Directions:</b> Using your background knowledge, information from the videoed lesson, the attached biographies, and from the <a href="#">Battlefields</a> website, complete the chart and questions below.

Write the three characteristics of a leader that you think are the most important.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

	Abraham Lincoln	Jefferson Davis	Ulysses S. Grant	Robert E. Lee
Union or Confederate?				
How did his leadership role change throughout the course of the war?				
How did he become a "national" leader?				
What was his major accomplishment(s) of the Civil War?				
What kind of impact did they have on their side/country?				
How could the war have been different if he didn't exist?				

Now that you have dug deeper into the leadership of the four most familiar leaders of the Civil War, consider each man's leadership during the war.

Which leader do you think best meets the characteristics of a good leader and explain why?

## United States President Abraham Lincoln Biography from the American Battlefield Trust

Abraham Lincoln, sixteenth President of the United States, was born near Hodgenville, Kentucky on February 12, 1809. His family moved to Indiana when he was seven and he grew up on the edge of the frontier. He had very little formal education, but read voraciously when not working on his father's farm.

After moving away from home, Lincoln co-owned a general store for several years before selling his stake and enlisting as a militia captain defending Illinois in the Black Hawk War of 1832. As a captain, he developed a reputation for pragmatism and integrity. After the war, he studied law and campaigned for a seat on the Illinois State Legislature. Although not elected in his first attempt, Lincoln persevered and won the position in 1834, serving as a Whig.

Abraham Lincoln met Mary Todd in Springfield, Illinois where he was practicing as a lawyer. They were married in 1842 over her family's objections and had four sons. Only one lived to adulthood. Lincoln, a self-described "prairie lawyer," focused on his all-embracing law practice in the early 1850s after one term in Congress from 1847 to 1849. He joined the new Republican party—and the ongoing argument over sectionalism—in 1856. A series of heated debates in 1858 with Stephen A. Douglas, the sponsor of the 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act, over slavery and its place in the United States forged Lincoln into a prominent figure in national politics. Lincoln's anti-slavery platform made him extremely unpopular with Southerners and his nomination for President in 1860 enraged them. On November 6, 1860, Lincoln won the presidential election without the support of a single Southern state. Talk of secession, bandied about since the 1830s, took on a serious new tone. The Civil War was not entirely caused by Lincoln's election, but the election was one of the primary reasons the war broke out the following year.

Lincoln's decision to fight rather than to let the Southern states secede was not based on his feelings towards slavery. Rather, he felt it was his sacred duty as President of the United States to preserve the Union at all costs. His first inaugural address was an appeal to the rebellious states, seven of which had already seceded, to rejoin the nation. His first draft of the speech ended with an ominous message: "Shall it be peace, or the sword?"

Throughout the war Lincoln struggled to find capable generals for his armies. McDowell, Fremont, McClellan, Pope, McClellan again, Buell, Burnside, Rosecrans--all of these men and more withered under Lincoln's watchful eye as they failed to bring him success on the battlefield.

He did not issue his famous Emancipation Proclamation until January 1, 1863 after the Union victory at the Battle of Antietam. The Emancipation Proclamation, which was legally based on the President's right to seize the property of those in rebellion against the State, only freed slaves in Southern states where Lincoln's forces had no control. Nevertheless, it changed the tenor of the war, making it, from the Northern point of view, a fight both to preserve the Union and to end slavery.

In 1864, Lincoln ran again for President. After years of war, he feared he would not win. Only in the final months of the campaign did the exertions of Ulysses S. Grant, the quiet general now in command of all of the Union armies, begin to bear fruit. A string of heartening victories buoyed Lincoln's ticket and contributed significantly to his re-election. In his second inauguration speech, March 4, 1865, he set the tone he intended to take when the war finally ended. His one goal, he said, was "lasting peace among ourselves." He called for "malice towards none" and "charity for all." The war ended only a month later.

The Lincoln administration did more than just manage the Civil War. The Revenue Act of 1862 established the United States' first income tax. The Morrill Act of 1862 established the basis of the state university system in this country, while the Homestead Act, also passed in 1862, encouraged settlement of the West by offering 160 acres of free land to settlers. Lincoln also created the Department of Agriculture and formally instituted the Thanksgiving holiday. Internationally, he navigated the "Trent Affair," a diplomatic crisis regarding the seizure of a British ship carrying Confederate envoys, in such a way as to quell the saber-rattling overtures coming from Britain as well as the United States. In another spill-over from the war, Lincoln restricted the civil liberties of due process and freedom of the press.

On April 14, 1865, while attending a play at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., Abraham Lincoln was shot by Confederate sympathizer, John Wilkes Booth. The assassination was part of a larger plot to eliminate the Northern government that also left Secretary of State William Seward grievously injured. Lincoln died the following day, and with him the hope of reconstructing the nation without bitterness.

## Confederate State President Jefferson Davis Biography from the American Battlefield Trust

Jefferson Finis Davis, the first and only President of the Confederate States of America, was a planter, politician and soldier born in Kentucky and raised in Mississippi. Davis was the tenth and youngest child of Revolutionary War soldier Samuel Davis and his wife Jane Cook Davis (Finis in Latin means final—the couple wanted no more children after Jefferson). Born June 3, 1808, he was heavily influenced by his oldest brother, Joseph, who saw to it that he was well educated. Davis attended college in Kentucky at Transylvania before entering the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1824.

When he graduated in 1828 he placed twenty-third in a class of thirty-four. He went on to serve briefly in the Black Hawk War in 1832. While stationed under Colonel Zachary Taylor (future President of the United States) the following year, he met the colonel's daughter, Sarah. Jefferson Davis married her in 1835 against her father's wishes. Sadly, the couple came down with bad cases of malaria only three months after the wedding, and the young bride died.

Jefferson Davis led a secluded life for the next eight years on his cotton plantation at Davis Bend, Mississippi. A slaveholder, Davis firmly believed in the importance of the institution of slavery for the South. In 1845, he married his second wife, Varina Howell, a young woman eighteen years old. Jefferson and Varina Davis eventually had six children—two girls and four boys—but only their daughters lived into adulthood.

In the same year, 1845, Mississippi sent Davis to the U.S. House of Representatives. His Congressional term was short, however. He resigned in June 1846 to fight in the Mexican War where he led his troops valiantly at the battles of Monterrey and Buena Vista. He was offered a promotion to brigadier general in 1847 but refused it when he was elected to the U.S. Senate.

In 1853, President Franklin Pierce appointed Davis U.S. Secretary of War where he served with distinction and was recognized as one of the most capable administrators to hold the office. In 1857, Davis returned to the Senate as a vocal proponent of states' rights. He formally withdrew from the U.S. Senate on January 21, 1861 after Mississippi seceded from the Union.

One month later, the Confederate Congress in Montgomery, Alabama selected Jefferson Finis Davis to become the provisional President of the Confederacy. He was inaugurated for a six-year term as President on February 22 of the following year. Initially, Davis was a popular President with the Southern people. He had a dignified bearing, a distinguished military record, extensive experience in political affairs, and—most importantly—a dedication to the Confederate cause. Unfortunately for Davis, these attributes were not enough to triumph over the harsh challenges posed by his new position. His early popularity was a result of war fervor and he did not have the personality necessary to sustain it. He was impatient with people who disagreed with him, and he had the unfortunate habit of awarding prominent posts to leaders who appeared unsuccessful. Davis' loyalty to these people led to bickering and quarrels throughout his administration. In addition, he was plagued by chronic illness.

Davis' popularity and effectiveness were not enhanced by the growing numbers of Confederate defeats in the latter years of the War. On April 2, 1865, he and the other members of the Confederate government were forced to flee from Richmond before the advancing Union Army. The Confederate President was captured by Northern soldiers near Irwinville, Georgia on May 10, 1865.

Jefferson Davis was imprisoned at Fort Monroe, Virginia for two years. He was never tried for treason, but was released on bond in May 1867. After being released, Davis and his family traveled for some time in Europe before returning to the American South. They first took up residence in Tennessee then relocated to the Mississippi gulf coast where Davis lived out his retirement years at an estate called Beauvoir near Biloxi. Mississippi tried to return him to the U.S. Senate, but he was not legally qualified to serve since he refused to request an official pardon from the United States for his role in the Civil War. Like many of his contemporaries, Davis wrote about his wartime experiences. Entitled *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government (vol 1, vol 2)*, his two-volume book was published in 1881.

Jefferson Finis Davis died in New Orleans, Louisiana on December 6, 1889. The year before his death the former President of the Confederate States of America beseeched the young men of Mississippi to “lay aside all rancor, all bitter sectional feeling, and to make your places in the ranks of those who will bring about a consummation devoutly to be wished—a reunited country.”

## United States General Ulysses S. Grant Biography from the American Battlefield Trust

Born Hiram Ulysses Grant, in Point Pleasant, Ohio, the future General-in-Chief's name was changed due to a clerical error during his first days at the United States Military Academy at West Point. To his friends, however, he was known simply as "Sam." After a mediocre stint as a cadet, he graduated twenty-first out of the thirty-nine cadets in class of 1843. Yet despite his less than exemplary school record, he performed well as a captain during the Mexican War (1846-1848), winning two citations for gallantry and one for meritorious conduct. Only when the fighting stopped and Grant was assigned monotonous duties at remote posts far from his wife and family did he again begin neglecting his work and drinking heavily. He resigned in 1854 to avoid being drummed out of the service.

Grant spent the next six years in St. Louis, Missouri with his wife, Julia Dent Grant. After several short-lived pursuits, including a brief episode as a farmer, he moved to Galena, Illinois to be a clerk in his family's store. When the Civil War began in 1861, he jumped at the chance to volunteer for military service in the Union army. His first command was as the colonel of the 21st Illinois Infantry, but he was quickly promoted to brigadier general in July 1861, and in September was given command of the District of Southeast Missouri.

His 1862 triumphs at Fort Henry and Fort Donelson in western Tennessee won him the nickname "Unconditional Surrender" Grant, and placed him before the public eye. However, when a surprise attack by Confederate forces at the Battle of Shiloh yielded devastating casualties during the first day's fighting, President Abraham Lincoln received several demands for Grant's removal from command. Nevertheless, Lincoln refused, stating, "I can't spare this man. He fights." The following day, Grant's Army - bolstered by troops under Maj. Gen. Don Carlos Buell - fended off Confederate advances and ultimately won the day.

Grant's hard-won victory at Vicksburg, Mississippi, in May of 1863 was a strategic masterpiece. On May 1, 1863, Grant's army crossed the Mississippi River at the battle of Port Gibson. With Confederate forces unclear of his intentions, Grant sent a portion of his army under Gen. William T. Sherman to capture the state capital, Jackson, while setting his sights on Vicksburg with a view toward permanently closing the Confederate supply base. When initial assaults on the city demonstrated the strength of Vicksburg's defenses, the Union army was forced to lay siege to the city. On July 4, 1863, after 46 days of digging trenches and lobbing hand grenades, Confederate general John Pemberton's 30,000-man army surrendered. Coupled with the Northern victory at Gettysburg, the capture of Vicksburg marked the turning point in the war. It also made Grant the premier commander in the Federal army. Later that same year, Grant was called upon to break the stalemate at Chattanooga, further cementing his reputation as a capable and effective leader.

In March 1864, President Lincoln elevated Grant to the rank of lieutenant general, and named him general-in-chief of the Armies of the United States. Making his headquarters with the Army of the Potomac, Grant was determined to crush Robert E. Lee and his vaunted Army of Northern Virginia at any cost. Though plagued by reticent subordinates, petty squabbles between generals and horrific casualties, the Federal host bludgeoned Lee from the Rapidan River to the James in what one participant would later describe as "unspoken, unspeakable history." The battles of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor and the subsequent siege of Petersburg effectively destroyed the rebel army, leading to the fall of Richmond and Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House. Though Grant's forces had been depleted by more than half during the last year of the war, it was Lee who surrendered in 1865.

After the Civil War, President Andrew Johnson named Grant Secretary of War over the newly reunited nation. In 1868, running against Johnson, Ulysses S. Grant was elected eighteenth President of the United States. Unfortunately, though apparently innocent of graft himself, Grant's administration was riddled with corruption, and scandal.

For two years following his second term in office, Grant made a triumphal tour of the world. In 1884, he lost his entire savings to a corrupt bank. To make up some of his losses, he wrote about his war experiences for Century Magazine. They proved so popular that he was inspired to write his excellent autobiography, *Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant*, finishing the two-volume set only a few days before dying of cancer at the age of sixty-three. Ulysses S. Grant is buried in New York City in the largest mausoleum of its kind in the United States. Reminiscent of Napoleon's tomb in Paris, Grant's tomb is a National Memorial.

## Confederate General Robert E. Lee Biography from the American Battlefield Trust

Born to Revolutionary War hero Henry "Light-Horse Harry" Lee in Stratford Hall, Virginia, Robert Edward Lee seemed destined for military greatness. Despite financial hardship that caused his father to depart to the West Indies, young Robert secured an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point, where he graduated second in the class of 1829. Two years later, he married Mary Anna Randolph Custis, a descendant of George Washington's adopted son, John Parke Custis. Yet with for all his military pedigree, Lee had yet to set foot on a battlefield. Instead, he served seventeen years as an officer in the Corps of Engineers, supervising and inspecting the construction of the nation's coastal defenses. Service during the 1846 war with Mexico, however, changed that. As a member of General Winfield Scott's staff, Lee distinguished himself, earning three brevets for gallantry, and emerging from the conflict with the rank of colonel. From 1852 to 1855, Lee served as superintendent of West Point, and was therefore responsible for educating many of the men who would later serve under him - and those who would oppose him - on the battlefields of the Civil War. In 1855, he left the academy to take a position in the cavalry and in 1859 was called upon to put down abolitionist John Brown's raid at Harpers Ferry.

Because of his reputation as one of the finest officers in the United States Army, Abraham Lincoln offered Lee the command of the Federal forces in April 1861. Lee declined and tendered his resignation from the army when the state of Virginia seceded on April 17, arguing that he could not fight against his own people. Instead, he accepted a general's commission in the newly formed Confederate Army. He served as military advisor to President Jefferson Davis until June 1862 when he was given command of the wounded General Joseph E. Johnston's embattled army on the Virginia peninsula.

Lee renamed his command the Army of Northern Virginia, and under his direction it would become the most famous and successful of the Confederate armies. This same organization also boasted some of the Confederacy's most inspiring military figures, including James Longstreet, Stonewall Jackson and the flamboyant cavalier J.E.B. Stuart. With these trusted subordinates, Lee commanded troops that continually manhandled their blue-clad adversaries and embarrassed their generals no matter what the odds.

In September 1862, he launched an invasion into Maryland with the hope of shifting the war's focus away from Virginia. But when a misplaced dispatch outlining the invasion plan was discovered by Union commander George McClellan the element of surprise was lost, and the two armies faced off at the battle of Antietam. Though his plans were no longer a secret, Lee nevertheless managed to fight McClellan to a stalemate on September 17, 1862. Following the bloodiest one-day battle of the war, heavy casualties compelled Lee to withdraw under the cover of darkness. The remainder of 1862 was spent on the defensive, parrying Union thrusts at Fredericksburg and, in May of the following year, Chancellorsville.

The masterful victory at Chancellorsville gave Lee great confidence in his army, and the Rebel chief was inspired once again to take the fight to enemy soil. In late June of 1863, he began another invasion of the North, meeting the Union host at the crossroads town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. For three days Lee assailed the Federal army under George G. Meade in what would become the most famous battle of the entire war. Accustomed to seeing the Yankees run in the face of his aggressive troops, Lee attacked strong Union positions on high ground. This time, however, the Federals wouldn't budge. The Confederate war effort reached its high water mark on July 3, 1863 when Lee ordered a massive frontal assault against Meade's center, spear-headed by Virginians under Maj. Gen. George E. Pickett. The attack known as Pickett's charge was a failure and Lee, recognizing that the battle was lost, ordered his army to retreat. Taking full responsibility for the defeat, he wrote Jefferson Davis offering his resignation, which Davis refused to accept.

After the simultaneous Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, Mississippi, Ulysses S. Grant assumed command of the Federal armies. In a relentless and bloody campaign, the Federal juggernaut bludgeoned the under-supplied Rebel band. In spite of his ability to make Grant pay in blood for his aggressive tactics, Lee had been forced to yield the initiative to his adversary, and he recognized that the end of the Confederacy was only a matter of time. By the summer of 1864, the Confederates had been forced into waging trench warfare outside of Petersburg. Though President Davis named the Virginian General-in-Chief of all Confederate forces in February 1865, only two months later, on April 9, 1865, Lee was forced to surrender his weary and depleted army to Grant at Appomattox Court House, effectively ending the Civil War.

Lee returned home on parole and eventually became the president of Washington College in Virginia (now known as Washington and Lee University). He remained in this position until his death on October 12, 1870 in Lexington, Virginia.