Questions to Guide Discussion of What Constitutes a Civil War

1. What is a civil war?

A short and simple definition is supplied by *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*. It defines civil war as “a war between factions or regions of the same country.”

*Wikipedia* defines civil war as “a war in which the competing parties within the same country or empire struggle for national control of state power.”

2. Over what sorts of issues might two sides within the same country go to war?

Possible answers include religion, ethnicity, and distribution of wealth.

3. How is a civil war different from a big protest in the streets?

4. How is a civil war different from a riot or violent uprising?

5. Do a minimum number of people have to die in the conflict before we call it a civil war?

Answers will vary.

6. How long must a conflict last before we call it a civil war?

7. Have we studied any civil wars so far in our history class? What about the Revolutionary War with its patriots and loyalists? Explain.
The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (4th edition) defines civil war as “a war between factions or regions of the same country.”

http://www.answers/topic/civil-war-1

Wikipedia

A civil war is a war in which the competing parties within the same country or empire struggle for national control of state power. As in any war, the conflict may be over other matters such as religion, ethnicity, or distribution of wealth. Some civil wars are also categorized as revolutions when major societal restructuring is a possible outcome of the conflict. An insurgency, whether successful or not, is likely to be classified as a civil war by some historians if, and only if, organized armies fight conventional battles. Other historians state the criteria for a civil war is that there must be prolonged violence between organized factions or defined regions of a country (conventionally fought or not.

West’s Encyclopedia of American Law states that a “Civil war exists when two or more opposing parties within a country resort to arms to settle a conflict or when a substantial portion of the population takes up arms against the legitimate government of a country. Within international law distinctions are drawn between minor conflicts like riots, where order is restored promptly, and full scale insurrections finding opposing parties in political as well as military control over different areas. When an internal conflict reaches sufficient proportions that the interests of other countries are affected, outside states may recognize a state of insurgency. A recognition of insurgency, whether formal or de facto, indicates that the recognizing state regards the insurgents as proper contestants for legitimate power. Although the precise status of insurgents under international law is not well-defined, recognized insurgents traditionally gain the protection afforded soldiers under international rules of law pertaining to war. A state may also decide to recognize the contending group as a belligerent, a status that invokes more well-defined rights and responsibilities. Once recognized as a belligerent party, that party obtains the rights of a belligerent party in a public war, or war between opposing states. The belligerents stand on a par with the parent state in the conduct and settlement of the conflict. In addition, states recognizing the insurgents as belligerents must assume the duties of neutrality toward the conflict.”
**Warner’s Nat Turner Woodcut**

Questions for students to ponder while transparency of Warner’s woodcut is projected on a screen:

1. What is happening in these four illustrations?
2. Who are the people in the illustrations?
3. What is the cause of the violence shown in these illustrations?
4. When did these clashes occur? How can we tell about when these events might have occurred?

Assignment and questions for students while working in small groups:

5. Write your own caption for each of the four illustrations.
6. Do you think Warner was white or black? Explain.
7. Would these illustrations have been any different if a slave had drawn them? How?
Excerpt from Nat Turner’s Confession to Thomas B. Gray

Thomas Gray visited Nat Turner during his very first day in jail -- November 1, 1831 -- and before Mr. Gray could even ask a question, Nat Turner began to tell the following story:

“Sir, You have asked me to give a history of the motives which induced me to undertake the late insurrection, as you call it. To do so I must go back to the days of my infancy, and even before I was born. I was thirty-one years of age the 2nd of October last, and born the property of Benjamin Turner, of this county. In my childhood a circumstance occurred which made an indelible impression on my mind, and laid the ground work of that enthusiasm, which has terminated so fatally to many both white and black and for which I am about to atone at the gallows. It is here necessary to relate this circumstance - trifling as it may seem, it was the commencement of that belief which has grown with time, and even now, sir, in this dungeon, helpless and forsaken as I am, I cannot divest myself of. Being at play with other children when three or four years old, I was telling them something, which my mother overhearing, said it had happened before I was born - I stuck to my story, however, and related some things which went in her opinion to confirm it - others being called on were greatly astonished, knowing that these things had happened, and caused them to say in my hearing, I surely would be a prophet, as the Lord had shewn me things that had happened before my birth.”
Questions Relating to the Excerpt Taken from Nat Turner’s Confession

1. What can you infer from Nat Turner’s confession above regarding why he led a violent insurrection which took the lives of many white slave owners and their families?

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______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
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______________________________________________________________________

2. Given the difficult circumstances in which early 19th century blacks found themselves in Virginia, do you think Nat Turner was justified in leading the deadly uprising? Explain.

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Questions Concerning the Electoral Map of 1860

1. Every four years the American people elect or re-elect a president. In most of these elections there are two major candidates with each representing one of the two dominant political parties. Who were the two candidates during the presidential election of 2004, and which political parties did they represent?

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2. Looking at the electoral map for the 2004 presidential election, how many votes (Pop. vote) did each of the two major candidates receive?

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______________________________________________________________________

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3. How many candidates were there in the race for the Presidency in 1860 and what were their names?

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________
4. How many votes (Pop. vote) did each candidate receive in the 1860 election?
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

5. What percentage (%) of the votes did each candidate receive?
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

6. If 50% = one half, did the winner of the 1860 presidential election -- Abraham Lincoln -- receive half the votes, less than half the votes, or more than half the votes?
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

7. After looking at the results of the presidential race of 1860, would you say that Lincoln was a popular or unpopular president in 1860? Why? Explain your answer.
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
8. Do you think Lincoln would have received more votes had there been fewer people in the presidential race of 1860? Explain.
Questions Relating to *The Staunton Spectator* and *The Charleston Mercury*

1. The editors of *The Staunton Spectator* -- a Virginia newspaper -- were not very concerned when Abraham Lincoln was elected President of the United States in 1860. Why were they not worried?

______________________________________________________________________

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2. Leading citizens of Charleston, South Carolina wrote a resolution which was published in *The Charleston Mercury*. What was the main idea of the resolution? For whom was it written? What was the purpose of the resolution?

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______________________________________________________________________
3. Both Virginia and South Carolina were slave states. Both would later become part of the Confederate States of America. Yet, the views concerning Abraham Lincoln’s election as President of the United States as expressed in Virginia’s *Staunton Spectator* and South Carolina’s *Charleston Mercury* were different. How were the views different? Why were they different? Explain.
Virginia History Test

(Causes of the Civil War)

Name____________________________  Date__________________

I. Fill in the blanks using the words from the word bank below. (3 points each)

slave states  agricultural  eastern  abolitionists

western  free states  industrial  slaves

1. Southerners felt threatened by the efforts of northern ________________________ to end slavery because without slaves, the southern economy would be ruined.

2. The North had a(n) ________________________ economy. This means that most of the people in the North had jobs in factories making products to sell.

3. & 4. ________________________ Virginians felt that it was not right to own another human being and to force someone to do hard work against their will. Many ________________________ Virginians owned plantations and felt that their way of life would not survive without the help
of many slaves working in the fields.

5. One big difference between the economy of the South and the economy of the North was that the southern economy depended on the labor (work) of ________________________, and the northern economy did not.

6. The South had a(n) _________________________ economy. This means that most of the people in the South had jobs on farms growing crops to sell.

7. & 8. There was a big disagreement between the North and the South about what to do with western territories that wanted to become new states. The North wanted the new states to be _____________________; but the South wanted the new states to be _______________________.

II. Put “P” in the blank next to each example of a primary source and “S” in the blank next to each secondary source. (3 points each)

9. _____ letter from Abraham Lincoln to General Ulysses S. Grant

10. _____ book report about Ulysses S. Grant’s autobiography
III. Multiple Choice. Circle the letter in front of the choice which best completes the sentence. (4 points each)

17. After the southern states broke away from the rest of the country, they called themselves

   A. rebels.
   B. the Union.
   C. the Confederate States of America.
   D. the Cotton States.

18. At the time of the Civil War most of the free states were located in

   A. the western counties of Virginia.
B. the South.
C. the Far West.
D. the North.

19. The Underground Railroad was

A. a railroad that was hidden underground which slaves used to escape to the North.
B. a railroad that was hidden by trees which slaves used to escape to the North.
C. a secret escape route used by slaves to escape to the North.
D. an underground tunnel that slaves used to escape to the North.

20. As a result of the eastern Virginians’ and western Virginians’ disagreement over slavery, many of the western counties of Virginia split with eastern Virginia to form a separate state called

A. Kentucky.
B. West Virginia.
C. Tennessee.
D. Maryland.

IV. Matching (4 points each)

_____ 21. This white abolitionist, with his followers, seized the federal gun supply in Harpers Ferry. He was captured and then put to death.

a. Nat Turner
b. William Lloyd Garrison
22. This black abolitionist helped slaves escape to the North along a secret route.
   c. John Brown
d. Harriet Tubman

23. This slave led a rebellion against white slaveholders throughout the Virginia countryside in 1831. His rebellion caused people all over the country to debate the issue of slavery.

V. Read each statement. Write True if the statement is true and False if it is false. If the statement is false, cross out the part that is incorrect and write the correct word or words above it.
(3 points each)

24. At around the time of the Civil War the United States was also called the Confederacy.

25. A free state was a state in which slavery was allowed.

26. An abolitionist was a person who worked to get rid of taxes.

27. To secede from the United States is to join or become a part of the United States.
VI. Answer the questions below in complete sentences. (4 points each)

28. How did the southern states feel about California joining the Union?
   Explain your answer. _________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

29. How did the southern states feel about the election of Abraham Lincoln
    as President of the U.S. in 1860? Explain your answer.
    ____________________________________________________________
    ____________________________________________________________
    ____________________________________________________________
    ____________________________________________________________
30. Why was Virginia’s decision whether or not to secede from the Union such a difficult one? Explain your answer.
(Causes of the Civil War)

Part I

1. abolitionists
2. industrial
3. western
4. eastern
5. slaves
6. agricultural
7. free states
8. slave states

Part V

24. False; Replace “Confederacy” with “Union.”
25. False; Insert “not” before “allowed” or replace “allowed” with “prohibited” or “forbidden” or replace “free” with “slave.”
26. False; Replace “taxes” with “slavery.”

Part II

27. False; Replace “join or become a part of” with “break away from,” “separate from,” or “leave.”

Part VI

28. See rubric
29. See rubric
30. See rubric

Part IV

21. C
22. D
23. A