



Social Studies Exemplary Text Student Handout

In 1775 the first shots were fired in the war between the thirteen American colonies and Great Britain that ended in a victory for the colonists and the founding of a new nation, the United States of America. Only eighty-five years later, in 1861, the first shots were fired in a different war—a war between the states that became known as the Civil War. It was a war fought between the Confederate States of America and the states that remained in the Union—each side representing a distinct economy, labor system, and philosophy of government. The southern states that formed the Confederacy had agricultural economies that depended on a slave workforce and believed that any rights not granted to the federal government by the United States Constitution belonged to the states. The northern states were undergoing rapid industrialization, which depended on wage labor, and while northerners disagreed among themselves about slavery, most believed it represented a direct challenge to their own rights and freedoms. Most also believed that a strong federal government, with the ability to legislate behavior in areas not specifically set forth in the Constitution, was key to the growth and strength of the American republic. It was inevitable that these two very distinct societies would clash. For the Confederates, nicknamed Rebels, the Civil War was a new war of Independence. For the Unionists, nicknamed Yankees, it was a war to preserve the Union that had been so dearly won in the American Revolution.

In the eyes of the four and an half million African Americans, enslaved and free, it was a war about slavery; and they wanted to be part of the fight. But many northern whites did not want blacks to serve in the northern military. They called it a “white man’s war” and said that slavery was not the main point of the conflict. At first, northern generals actually sent escaped slaves back to their southern masters. Eventually, the Union did accept blacks into its army and navy.

A total of 178,895 black men served in 120 infantry regiments, twelve heavy artillery regiments, ten light artillery batteries, and seven cavalry regiments. Black soldiers constituted twelve percent of the North’s fighting forces, and they suffered a disproportionate number of casualties.

Haskins, J. (1998). Introduction: A ‘White Man’s War? *Black, Blue and Gray: African Americans in the Civil War*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

This is an example of exemplary text found in *Common Core Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects: Appendix B Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks*. Retrieved from http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf

Social Studies Exemplary Text Teacher Resource

In 1775 the first shots were fired in the war between the thirteen American colonies and Great Britain that ended in a victory for the colonists and the founding of a new nation, the United States of America. Only eighty-five years later, in 1861, the first shots were fired in a different war—a war between the states that became known as the Civil War. It was a war fought between the Confederate States of America and the states that remained in the Union—each side representing a distinct economy, labor system, and philosophy of government. The southern states that formed the Confederacy had agricultural economies that depended on a slave workforce and believed that any rights not granted to the federal government by the United States Constitution belonged to the states. The northern states were undergoing rapid **industrialization**, which depended on wage labor, and while northerners disagreed among themselves about slavery, most believed it represented a direct challenge to their own rights and freedoms. Most also believed that a strong federal government, with the ability to legislate behavior in areas not specifically set forth in the Constitution, was key to the growth and strength of the American republic. It was **inevitable** that these two very distinct societies would clash. For the Confederates, nicknamed Rebels, the Civil War was a new war of Independence. For the Unionists, nicknamed Yankees, it was a war to preserve the Union that had been so dearly won in the American Revolution.

In the eyes of the four and an half million African Americans, enslaved and free, it was a war about slavery; and they wanted to be part of the fight. But many northern whites did not want blacks to serve in the northern military. They called it a “white man’s war” and said that slavery was not the main point of the conflict. At first, northern generals actually sent escaped slaves back to their southern masters. Eventually, the Union did accept blacks into its army and navy.

A total of 178,895 black men served in 120 infantry

Teacher introduces the text with minimal commentary and students read it independently. Teacher then reads passage aloud. Give a brief definition to words students would likely not be able to define from context (underlined in text). Teacher guides the students through a series of text-dependent questions. Complete the performance task as a cumulative evaluation of the close-reading.

Text-Dependent Questions

1. What two wars took place between eighty-five years of each other?
2. Who was the U.S. fighting in the Civil War?
3. What did the northerners think the war was about? What did the slaves think it was about?
4. How many black men, in total, fought in the war?
5. What percentage did the black men represent of the North’s fighting forces?
6. What are two reasons that the enslaved black men would have a very different view of what the war was about? Why do you think they were eager to participate?

Performance Tasks for Informational Texts

Students analyze the role of African American soldiers in the Civil War by comparing and contrasting primary source materials against secondary syntheses such as Jim Haskins’ *Black, Blue and Gray: African Americans in the Civil War*. [RH.9–10.9]

This is an example of exemplary text found in *Common Core Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects: Appendix B Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks*. Retrieved from http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf

regiments, twelve heavy artillery regiments, ten light artillery batteries, and seven cavalry regiments. Black soldiers constituted twelve percent of the North's fighting forces, and they suffered a **disproportionate** number of casualties.

Haskins, J. (1998). Introduction: A 'White Man's War? *Black, Blue and Gray: African Americans in the Civil War*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

EFL 5
Word Count 376

This is an example of exemplary text found in *Common Core Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects: Appendix B Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks*. Retrieved from http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf