Alabama at War

Read how work, soldiers, and resistance shaped Alabama's Civil War role.

SS24.4.14a "Identify Alabama's economic and military contributions to the Civil War, including weapons manufacturing, soldiers, and the use of and resistance to conscripted enslaved labor."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline work that supplied the war, circle phrases about soldiers on both sides, write 1 beside forced labor, and write 2 beside resistance to sort Alabama's different roles in the war.

More Than One Story

1. When the Civil War began in 1861, Alabama became an important source of supplies for the Confederacy. In Selma, workers made cannons and shells for Confederate armies. Ironworks supplied metal for weapons, while farms grew food for soldiers. Trains carried these goods toward battlefields. These jobs and products were economic contributions because they helped supply the Confederate war effort, not just Alabama towns.

2. Many Alabama men joined Confederate units and fought for the South. Other Alabamians opposed the Confederacy and served in the Union Army. Some Black Alabamians who escaped slavery also joined Union forces. These soldiers made military contributions, but they fought on opposite sides. Alabama's role in the war cannot be told as if everyone in the state wanted the same outcome.

3. The Confederacy also forced enslaved people in Alabama to work on defenses and other war projects. Officials could take workers from enslavers for these jobs, a practice called impressment. Enslaved people did not choose this labor or receive its benefits. Some resisted by escaping or refusing orders, despite the danger of punishment. Their resistance showed that forced labor did not mean support for the Confederate cause.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did work in Selma and at ironworks help Confederate armies?

2. How did Alabama soldiers contribute to both sides of the war?

3. What was impressment, and how did it help the Confederate war effort?

4. What two ways did enslaved people resist forced war labor, and what did their resistance show?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence label for a museum display about Alabama during the Civil War. Connect weapons production, soldiers, and forced labor, and explain why resistance belongs in the story.

ANSWER KEY

Alabama at War

GRADE 4 · SS24.4.14a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline work that supplied the war, circle phrases about soldiers on both sides, write 1 beside forced labor, and write 2 beside resistance to sort Alabama's different roles in the war. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did work in Selma and at ironworks help Confederate armies?	**Selma workers made cannons and shells, and ironworks supplied metal for weapons.**
2	How did Alabama soldiers contribute to both sides of the war?	**Some Alabamians fought for the Confederacy, while others, including some Black Alabamians who escaped slavery, served the Union.**
3	What was impressment, and how did it help the Confederate war effort?	**Officials took enslaved workers from enslavers and forced them to work on defenses and other war projects.**
4	What two ways did enslaved people resist forced war labor, and what did their resistance show?	**Some escaped or refused orders. Their resistance showed that forced labor did not mean support for the Confederacy.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Selma's cannons and Alabama's iron helped arm Confederate soldiers, while other Alabamians fought for the Union. The Confederacy forced enslaved people to build defenses to support its armies. Their escapes and refusals belong in this story because forced work was not a choice or a sign of support.

Accept labels that accurately connect Alabama's weapons, soldiers, and forced labor to the war and explain that enslaved people's resistance showed opposition to being forced to work.