Alabama Divided

Trace how secession and war changed one state.

SS24.AS.11 "Outline Alabama's participation in events leading to the Civil War and in the war itself, and explain how the war created change within the state..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two causes or choices, circle two wartime events, and number three changes to people's lives or the economy so you can trace how one event led to another.

A State at War

1. On January 11, 1861, Alabama voted to secede after Abraham Lincoln's election, amid disputes over slavery's expansion and its future. Secession did not unite the state. Many delegates from northern Alabama opposed leaving the Union; their hill-country neighbors had fewer large slaveholding plantations than the Black Belt. Some northern residents joined Union forces or hid from Confederate conscription, while others supported the Confederacy. After Union troops took Huntsville in 1862, competing armies and local fighters struggled for control of the region. Families faced raids, arrests, and suspicion when neighbors chose different sides.

2. In February 1861, delegates from seceded states met in Montgomery and organized the Confederate States of America. They chose Jefferson Davis as president and wrote a constitution protecting slavery. His inauguration at the Alabama State Capitol made Montgomery the first Confederate capital. The city gave the new government a place to claim authority and plan for war. In May, Confederate leaders voted to move the capital to Richmond, Virginia. Virginia's entry into the Confederacy made its largest city politically important; Richmond also had factories and stood nearer the war's main eastern front. The move placed national leaders closer to those resources and battles.

3. War reached Alabama's farms, ports, and rail lines. The Union blockade limited cotton exports and imports, causing shortages and weakening an economy built on enslaved labor. Union victory at the Battle of Mobile Bay in 1864 tightened control of the coast, though the city of Mobile did not fall until 1865. In April 1865, Union cavalry captured Selma and destroyed foundries, an arsenal, and railroad facilities. As Union forces advanced, enslaved Alabamians escaped or gained freedom, while many white women managed farms, cared for wounded soldiers, and struggled with shortages. Freedom changed formerly enslaved families' futures, but destroyed infrastructure slowed recovery for all.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did secession divide northern Alabama, and what conflict followed there?

2. Why was Montgomery significant to the Confederacy, and why did its leaders move the capital to Richmond?

3. Explain how two wartime actions damaged Alabama's economy or infrastructure.

4. How did the war change life for enslaved Alabamians and white women in different ways?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a five- or six-sentence museum label titled “Alabama, Divided and Changed.” Trace a chain from secession through a wartime event to a change in Alabama, contrast the experiences of two groups, and name at least two places from the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Alabama Divided

HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.AS.11

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two causes or choices, circle two wartime events, and number three changes to people's lives or the economy so you can trace how one event led to another. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did secession divide northern Alabama, and what conflict followed there?	**Many northern Alabamians opposed secession, while others supported the Confederacy. After Union troops took Huntsville, armies and local fighters struggled for control, and families faced raids, arrests, and suspicion.**
2	Why was Montgomery significant to the Confederacy, and why did its leaders move the capital to Richmond?	**Montgomery was the first Confederate capital, where leaders organized a government and inaugurated Jefferson Davis. Richmond became politically important when Virginia joined the Confederacy; it also had factories and was nearer the main eastern front.**
3	Explain how two wartime actions damaged Alabama's economy or infrastructure.	**The Union blockade limited cotton exports and imports, causing shortages. Union cavalry destroyed Selma's foundries, arsenal, and railroad facilities in 1865.**
4	How did the war change life for enslaved Alabamians and white women in different ways?	**As Union forces advanced, enslaved Alabamians escaped or gained freedom. Many white women managed farms, cared for wounded soldiers, and struggled with shortages.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

After Alabama seceded, some northern residents rejected the Confederate cause, and neighbors took opposing sides. In Huntsville, Union occupation intensified the struggle for control and left families exposed to raids and suspicion. Farther south, Union cavalry destroyed Selma's foundries and railroad facilities, damaging production and transportation. Enslaved Alabamians pursued freedom as Union forces advanced, while many white women kept farms running and faced shortages. These experiences show how secession led to different risks and changes for people within the same state.

Accept other accurate cause-and-effect chains supported by the passage. The label should connect secession to a wartime event and a resulting change, contrast two groups, and name at least two relevant places.