

Lincoln's Wartime Choices

Track how one presidency shaped war, government, and society.

SS.8.A.5.3 "Explain major domestic and international economic, military, political, and socio-cultural events of Abraham Lincoln's presidency."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one political, one military, one economic, one social, and one international event. Write P, M, E, S, or I beside each underlined event to show how Lincoln's presidency involved several kinds of events.

A Presidency in a Divided Nation

- ① When Lincoln took office in March 1861, seven Southern states had announced secession. He rejected their claim that they could leave the Union. After Confederate forces fired on Fort Sumter in April, Lincoln called for troops, and four more states seceded. His goal was first to preserve the Union. The Union navy began a blockade of Southern ports, a military strategy meant to limit Confederate trade and supplies. The war tested federal power as Lincoln authorized some arrests and suspended habeas corpus in certain areas, actions that sparked political debate.
- ② Congress and Lincoln also shaped the Northern economy during the war. The Homestead Act of 1862 offered western land to settlers who met its requirements. The Pacific Railroad Act of 1862 supported a transcontinental railroad, and the National Banking Acts of 1863 and 1864 created a more uniform national currency and banking system. In 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation declared freedom for enslaved people in designated states and parts of states in rebellion, with exceptions for loyal slave states and some Confederate areas. It transformed the war's purpose and allowed Black men to enlist in the Union army. About 180,000 Black soldiers served, pressing the nation toward a broader meaning of freedom.
- ③ Lincoln's choices also had international effects. Confederate leaders hoped that cotton would persuade Britain or France to recognize their government, but neither nation did. In the Trent Affair of 1861, a Union ship stopped a British vessel and removed two Confederate diplomats. Britain protested, and Lincoln released the men, helping avoid war with Britain. Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg in 1863 weakened Confederate hopes for foreign support. Lincoln won reelection in 1864. Before his death in April 1865, he backed the Thirteenth Amendment, which Congress passed to abolish slavery.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What military purpose did the Union blockade serve?

2 Name two 1862 laws described in the passage. Explain one way one of them changed the Northern economy.

3 How did the Emancipation Proclamation affect both the purpose of the war and the Union military?

4 How did Lincoln's response to the Trent Affair influence relations with Britain?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write four sentences explaining how Lincoln used political, economic, and international decisions to defend the Union. Begin with a claim, then use one event from each category as evidence.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline one political, one military, one economic, one social, and one international event. Write P, M, E, S, or I beside each underlined event to show how Lincoln's presidency involved several kinds of events. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What military purpose did the Union blockade serve?	It was meant to limit Confederate trade and supplies.
2	Name two 1862 laws described in the passage. Explain one way one of them changed the Northern economy.	The Homestead Act and Pacific Railroad Act, both passed in 1862. The Homestead Act offered western land to qualifying settlers; the railroad act supported a transcontinental railroad. Explain either effect. The National Banking Acts were passed in 1863 and 1864, not 1862.
3	How did the Emancipation Proclamation affect both the purpose of the war and the Union military?	It transformed the war's purpose by declaring freedom for enslaved people in designated states and parts of states in rebellion, and it allowed Black men to enlist in the Union army.
4	How did Lincoln's response to the Trent Affair influence relations with Britain?	Lincoln released the two Confederate diplomats, helping avoid war with Britain.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Lincoln used presidential leadership to hold the Union together while changing the nation's future. Politically, he rejected secession and defended the Union. Economically, the National Banking Acts created a more uniform currency and banking system. Internationally, releasing the Confederate diplomats after the Trent Affair helped prevent war with Britain.

Accept accurate events and explanations drawn from the passage. In the open response, accept a reasonable claim supported by one political, one economic, and one international decision.