Border State Crossroads

Strategic places, divided loyalties

8.C.12.1.D "Describe tensions over the strategic and internally divided border states."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that show why a border state mattered strategically, circle signs of divided loyalties, and number the choices state leaders made. Use your marks to explain why these states were difficult to control.

States Between Two Sides

1. In 1861, four slaveholding states stayed in the Union: Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri. These border states sat between areas loyal to the Union and areas that joined the Confederacy. They mattered for more than their location. Maryland's roads and rail lines linked northern states to Washington, D.C. In April, a crowd in Baltimore attacked Union soldiers passing through the city. Some residents favored the Confederacy, while others backed the Union. Federal leaders feared that losing Maryland would make it harder to supply and defend the capital.

2. Kentucky first declared neutrality, hoping to keep both armies out. Yet its position made that hard: the Ohio River marked its northern edge, and routes through Kentucky led toward the Confederate South. Union and Confederate supporters lived in the state. When Confederate troops entered Kentucky in September 1861, the state legislature called for their withdrawal and sided with the Union. Control of Kentucky helped Union forces move south along important rivers. For families with relatives on opposite sides, the legislature's decision did not end disagreements about the war.

3. Missouri was another prize because the Mississippi River ran along its eastern edge, and the Missouri River carried travel and trade across the state. Its governor supported the Confederacy, but a state convention voted against secession. Armed clashes followed, and rival groups claimed to speak for Missouri. The state remained in the Union, even as some Missourians fought for the Confederacy. Delaware, the smallest border state, also kept slavery while staying in the Union. Together, these states showed how loyalty, slavery, and military needs could pull neighbors in different directions.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why was Maryland important to Union leaders, and what event showed that its residents did not all support the Union?

2. Why was Kentucky's neutrality hard to maintain? Explain how its location and a later event affected the state's choice.

3. How did Missouri's rivers make it valuable, and what disagreement among its leaders showed that the state was divided?

4. Why would it be a mistake to assume that everyone in a border state supported the Union? Give evidence from two states.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you advise Union leaders in 1861. In four sentences, choose Kentucky or Missouri, explain two reasons it mattered strategically, describe one internal division, and propose a response that takes that division into account.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 8 · 8.C.12.1.D

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details that show why a border state mattered strategically, circle signs of divided loyalties, and number the choices state leaders made. Use your marks to explain why these states were difficult to control. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why was Maryland important to Union leaders, and what event showed that its residents did not all support the Union?	**Maryland's roads and rail lines connected northern states to Washington, D.C., helping supply and defend the capital. A Baltimore crowd attacked Union soldiers passing through.**
2	Why was Kentucky's neutrality hard to maintain? Explain how its location and a later event affected the state's choice.	**Routes through Kentucky led south, making it valuable to both armies. After Confederate troops entered in September 1861, its legislature called for their withdrawal and sided with the Union.**
3	How did Missouri's rivers make it valuable, and what disagreement among its leaders showed that the state was divided?	**The Mississippi and Missouri rivers carried travel and trade. Missouri's governor supported the Confederacy, but a state convention voted against secession.**
4	Why would it be a mistake to assume that everyone in a border state supported the Union? Give evidence from two states.	**In Maryland, a Baltimore crowd attacked Union soldiers. In Missouri, the governor supported the Confederacy, and some residents fought for it, even though the state remained in the Union.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Missouri mattered because the Mississippi River ran along its eastern edge. The Missouri River also carried travel and trade across the state. Its governor supported the Confederacy, but a state convention voted against secession. Union leaders should protect river travel while working with Union supporters in Missouri rather than assuming all residents agreed.

Accept other passage-based evidence for strategic importance and divided loyalties. For Part 3, the proposed response should account for the state's division, not assume all residents share one view.