

The Nation Divides

Read how slavery created divisions that led southern states to leave the Union.

USI.9.a “describing how slavery and its expansion was the primary cause of the cultural, economic, and constitutional issues that divided the nation and led to the secession of southern states;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each sentence that gives a cultural, economic, or government-related reason slavery divided the nation, then write C, E, or G beside it. Circle the sentence that tells why southern states seceded.

Slavery and a Divided Nation

- ① Before the Civil War, slavery shaped daily life and beliefs in different parts of the United States. In the South, enslaved people were forced to work, and many white leaders defended slavery as necessary. In much of the North, abolitionists spoke and wrote against slavery. These opposing views created a cultural divide about human freedom and the kind of society the nation should be.
- ② Slavery was also central to the southern economy. Large farms raised cotton and other crops with unpaid enslaved labor, bringing profits to planters and traders. Northern factories and workers depended more on paid labor. As the nation grew westward, people argued over whether slavery would expand into new territories, because expansion could change which regions gained wealth and influence.
- ③ The Constitution included compromises about slavery, but it did not settle the conflict. Debates over federal power and state power grew sharper when Congress considered rules for new territories. Southern leaders feared that limits on slavery would weaken their states' voice in the national government. After Abraham Lincoln was elected in 1860, several southern states chose secession, leaving the Union to protect slavery.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did slavery create a cultural divide between much of the North and the South?

2 How did enslaved labor affect the southern economy, and how was northern labor different?

3 Why did people argue about expanding slavery into new territories?

4 What government-related fear helped lead southern leaders toward secession?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write 3 or 4 sentences explaining how slavery and its expansion divided the nation. Include one cultural cause, one economic cause, one government-related cause, and explain why some southern states seceded.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each sentence that gives a cultural, economic, or government-related reason slavery divided the nation, then write C, E, or G beside it. Circle the sentence that tells why southern states seceded. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did slavery create a cultural divide between much of the North and the South?	Many southern leaders defended slavery, while northern abolitionists spoke and wrote against it. They disagreed about human freedom and the kind of society the nation should be.
2	How did enslaved labor affect the southern economy, and how was northern labor different?	Southern farms used unpaid enslaved labor to raise crops and make profits. Northern factories and workers depended more on paid labor.
3	Why did people argue about expanding slavery into new territories?	They believed expansion could change which regions gained wealth and influence.
4	What government-related fear helped lead southern leaders toward secession?	Southern leaders feared that limits on slavery would weaken their states' voice in the national government. Several southern states then left the Union to protect slavery.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Slavery divided people because many northern abolitionists believed it violated human freedom, while many southern leaders defended it. It divided the economy because southern farms used unpaid enslaved labor, unlike much northern paid labor. Arguments over expanding slavery into western territories raised questions about wealth and power. Fearing limits on slavery, several southern states left the Union after Lincoln's election.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the North-South differences and the conflict over slavery's expansion. In the open response, look for accurate cultural, economic, and government-related causes connected to secession.