

ActiveHistory: The American Civil War Simulation Worksheet

Teacher Notes

▪ The following table can be 'uncovered' cell by cell as appropriate. Students can be given a completed copy at the end of the exercise and use this to complete their analysis table.

▪ Stress that a factual test will take place next lesson to test how much they have learned from the game.

- When each President has a turn, we complete three decision points (or three for the first round, pairs thereafter).
- Each President can play for 1 to 3 points depending on how confident they are.
- They have to guess what their president did. If they do so correctly, their 'national strength' increases by the same amount of points; if they get it wrong, they lose the same amount of points.
- Individual soldiers may also be permitted to 'bid' to increase their strength when it is their turn to move, using their Fakebook research to help them make convincing arguments.

	Options	Political, Economic or Military? Use this information to help you complete your table.	Result
Creating an Effective President • It is April 1861. In the first clash of the war, Confederates attack and defeat the Union at Fort Sumter. Both President Lincoln (Union) and President Davis (Confederates) need strong powers to win the war.	a. Allow the States to ignore your wishes – this is a war for freedom! b. Pass laws increasing your power over the States. c. Ask the people to vote for a law increasing your power.	• The Confederate states went to war to defend 'state rights', so they were unwilling to give any power to President Davis (Option A). • President Lincoln did not face the same problem. So he immediately suspended the right of prisoners to a trial so he could act decisively against spies (Option B).	Confed=a; Union=b.
Raising money from abroad It is 1861. Both sides require large sums of money. The Confederate economy is based on cotton. The Union economy is based on grain. Both sides want to sell their produce abroad at the highest possible price.	a. Export as many crops to Europe as possible. This will earn lots of money. b. Stockpile the crops. The shortage in Europe will drive up prices and we will make more profit.	• The Confederates stockpiled their cotton to drive up its value, but Europe just bought the cotton from elsewhere. • The Union instead sold its grain to Europe straight away, providing it with lots of money.	Confed=b Union=a
Building a strong navy It is 1862. As well as having more soldiers, the Union also has a larger navy. At the outbreak of the war, the Union Navy had 90 ships and the Confederate Navy had only 30 ships. However, the Confederacy had control of the river Mississippi and a long coastline which provided a valuable trade advantage.	Which TWO of the following do you adopt? a. Build 'ironclad' warships which are slow but almost indestructible. b. Develop 'torpedo' and 'submarine' technology. c. Blockade your opponents' ports so that they are starved of supplies.	The Confederates couldn't match the size of the Union navy, so built the first submarine (CSS Hunley) and used 'torpedos' (which sank 40 Union ships). The Union blockaded the southern ports (the 'Anaconda Plan'). 95% of Confederate exports were blocked this way. Both sides built 'ironclads', and the first clash of these new ships was the Battle of Hampton Roads: an epic battle ending in a draw.	Confed=a,b Union=a,c
Building a strong government It is Summer 1862. With the pressure mounting, General Lee is arguing with President Davis, and General McLellan is arguing with President Lincoln. Both Presidents need to decide how best to manage these tensions.	a. Patiently listen to all points of view before making firm decisions. b. Follow the advice of a close circle of personal friends and advisors. c. Demand total obedience from the members of your government.	Davis was a soldier and generally demanded total obedience from his government – a real weakness with alienated his generals. Lincoln in contrast was a politician. He listened to different points of view carefully, learned very quickly, and then took firm decisions.	Confed=c Union=a
Raising Domestic Finance It is Summer 1862. With the war entering a more deadly phase, both sides must raise fresh revenue: this time from their own people rather than from abroad.	a. I will raise money for the war by printing off as many banknotes as I need. b. I will raise money for the war by increasing taxes and selling bonds (people give you money, you promise to pay them back with interest after the war).	• President Davis mainly relied on printing paper money, which just led prices to spiral upwards - by the end of the war the price of bread had increased by 1000%. In the Richmond Bread Riots of 1862, more than 100,000 women demanded 'bread or blood'. • President Lincoln, because he believed in a strong centralised government, had less of a problem increasing taxes. He also sold lots of bonds.	Confed=a Union=b
The issue of slavery • The Confederate states seceded in 1861 to protect 'state rights'. Both sides refused to declare that this was a 'war about slavery' because this was just as likely to divide as to unite their own people. • However, as the war enters a period of stalemate both sides have to rethink.	a. Announce a plan to emancipate the slaves to build up more support. b. Avoid the issue of slavery altogether – it's just too explosive. c. Say that slavery will fade away within a few generations, but don't go any further.	For President Davis, slavery was too important to the Southern cotton plantations to abolish. However, to keep Britain and France out of the war, he said that slavery would fade away in a few generations. President Lincoln acted more decisively. In 1862 he issued his Emancipation Proclamation. However, this only promised freedom to slaves in the rebel states and did not apply to slave states who remained loyal to the union.	Confed=c Union=a
The issue of telegraph communications It is Spring 1863. After a series of indecisive battles, both sides need fresh ideas to secure victory. One of these is the new Telegraph system, invented by Samuel Morse.	a. Use telegrams to congratulate successful generals but not to give them orders – this would just irritate them. b. Invest heavily in developing an efficient Telegraph network. Use it to control and direct the armies.	President Davis sent telegrams to congratulate his generals after successful battles and ordered his armies to cut Union telegraph wires wherever they found them - but he didn't really use telegrams to direct operations. President Lincoln, though, sent over 1000 'T-Mails' during the war. For example, he ordered General	Confed=a Union=b

		Ulysses S. Grant to 'Hold on with a bull-dog grip, and chew and choke, as much as possible'. As he read it, Grant laughed 'The President has more nerve than any of his advisors!'	
The issue of conscription In Summer 1863 President Lincoln delivers his famous 'Gettysburg Address' in which he calls this a war for 'A new birth of freedom'. Nevertheless, the war is far from over. Both sides desperately need fresh troops to keep their hopes of victory alive – volunteers are drying up.	a. Use conscription for all young unmarried men, but allow rich men to opt out. b. Use conscription for all young unmarried men, without exceptions.	In 1862 President Davis started conscripting white men who owned less than 20 slaves. This led to complaints that this was a 'rich man's war and a poor man's fight'. With a larger population, President Lincoln didn't have to introduce conscription until 1863, although he too allowed rich men to avoid service by making a \$300 donation to the army.	Confed=a Union=a
The issue of strategy • By Spring 1864, both sides are desperate for a breakthrough. • Some Confederate Generals (e.g. Robert E. Lee) feel that a war of attack will bring victory, but others (General Longstreet) feel that a defensive war is better. The Union Generals were also divided. Some (e.g. George McClellan) favour siege warfare; others (Ulysses S. Grant and General Sherman) favour 'total' war to break Confederate resistance.	a. Conduct a war of defence: by dragging the war out, your opponents will eventually lose their desire to fight. b. Don't have any overall policy – just react to circumstances as they develop. c. Conduct a war of attack: the only way to end this war is by fighting it to win.	• President Davis struggled to decide on an overall policy and as a result his generals argued with each other and their overall effectiveness was undermined. For example, during the Battle of Gettysburg, General Longstreet was very slow to carry out the orders of General Lee and this contributed to their defeat. Historians disagree about whether the South should have fought a war of defence, or a war of attack. • President Abraham Lincoln always favoured a war of attack, and he eventually dismissed the cautious General George McClellan and placed Generals Grant and Sherman in charge. The Union army then adopted the aggressive tactics of 'total war'. This turned the tide of the war in favour of the Union.	Confed=b Union=c