



## Teaching Guide

### SEGMENT 8, WEBISODE 5

Please note: Each segment in this Webisode has its own Teaching Guide



#### Segment Overview

When Abraham Lincoln received the news that he had been nominated by the Republican party as their presidential nominee, he replied by saying, “There is a little short woman down in our house who would like to hear the news.” Soon, that little short woman, Mary Todd Lincoln, was first lady, and Lincoln was occupying the Oval Office.

However, even before Lincoln took the oath of office, seven of thirty-three existing states had seceded from the Union, led by South Carolina, the home state of John Calhoun. Ultimately, eleven states left the Union: South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee. Lincoln struggled with a country torn apart. On February 18, 1861, Jefferson Davis became president of the Confederate States of America with Alexander Stephens from Georgia as his vice-president.

A few months later, attention focused on a small fort in the middle of the Charleston, South Carolina, harbor that was still held by a small garrison of federal troops. The spot was Fort Sumter. When the federal troops refused to leave the fort, the bombardment of Sumter by Southern soldiers began. On April 13, 1861, General P.G.T. Beauregard sent a message to President Davis that read “Quarters in Sumter all burned down. White flag up.” The nation had split apart.

#### Teacher Directions

1. Help the students understand the many issues concerning decisions of states not only to secede from the union, but also to establish a new union, which they called a confederacy. The word “confederate” actually means an associate or an ally; hence, certain common bonds and beliefs naturally permit confederacies to thrive and survive.
2. Write the following quotation on chart paper or make a transparency. Read aloud the quotation from Jefferson Davis’ farewell speech to the United States Senate:

“Secession belongs to a different class of remedies. It is to be justified upon the basis that the states are sovereign.....the sacred Declaration of Independence has been invoked to maintain the position of the equality of the races....that men were created equal...They [the writers of the Declaration] have no reference to the slave.”



#### Let's Discuss

Let's Discuss, Cont.

3. Discuss the quotation with the students using questions such as the following.
  - Students look up the meaning of the word *confederacy*. Ask if they have a confederacy of friends. What elements do their friends share in common?
  - With students identify the eleven states in the Confederate States of America. Help the class determine what the states have in common with each other.
  - Ask the students why the Confederate States of America needed to elect its own president and vice-president.
  - What does Jefferson Davis mean when he states that secession is a remedy? A remedy for what?
4. Students look up the word *sovereign*. Help them understand that sovereign as used by Davis is equivalent to states' rights, that individual states have individual powers and authority to rule themselves.
5. Compare all of the above to the issues that arise in family-child conflicts. Generate discussion about parental rules or school rules. Compare those ideas to a strong federal government (a parent or a school) telling individual states (students or children) that they can no longer do something.
7. Of great importance is Jefferson Davis' point about the Declaration of Independence. Ask students to examine his logic in stating that all men are indeed created equal – except for slaves. How is this a contradiction? Jefferson Davis rationalizes that because the words slave or slavery are not included in the Declaration, slaves do not fall under its protection.
8. Ask students what other minority groups were not mentioned in the Declaration of Independence. Should all minority groups have been listed? Would it be possible to list all minority groups? Do students think that the founding fathers believed at the time that all men meant every human being? Was Jefferson Davis wrong or right in his reasoning? Ask students to explain their answers.

### History Sleuth

1. Remind the students that the Southern states believed that they had a right to secede (withdraw) from the Union because they were merely part of a union or a group. They did not want the federal government telling them what they could or could not do. They believed in the rights of each state to make their own laws. This exercise is designed to help students comprehend the seriousness of secession – and the seriousness of withdrawing from any group or alliance. Help the students reason their way through the following activity.
2. Ask the students.
  - What would happen if your city decided to secede from your state and



History Sleuth

- create a whole new state and new city? Students brainstorm to create some reasons why a city might want to withdraw from a state and create their own government.
- Some examples: high taxes, poor government, safety, poor city services, education, violence, drug problems
3. Divide the class into teams. Each team should do the following:
    - Make a list of complaints and issues as reasons leading to your group's decision to secede.
    - Agree on a new name for the city and a new name for the state.
    - Choose people from your class, your community, or your school to be named governor, assistant governor, mayor and assistant mayor.
    - Decide how you will resolve the problems that led you to secede in the first place.
    - Discuss how you will announce your decision to secede. What do you think newspapers and television reporters will say?
    - Discuss how people will react to your decision to secede. Who will be in favor of it? Who will be opposed? Imagine that your new city and state are cut off from the rest of the United States. What would you need to survive?
  4. Each team reports to the class on their issues, new names, and potential problems.
  5. Promote a class discussion of how difficult it must have been for Southerners to create an entirely new nation. Stress problems to be faced.
    - What did Southerners need from the North? What did Northerners need from the South?
    - How would you communicate with family members who lived in different parts of the country?
    - What if two brothers decided to fight on different sides (as often happened)? How would families deal with that issue?
    - How frightened would you be if you were a Union soldier stationed at Fort Sumter in the middle of Charleston harbor after South Carolina had seceded from the Union?
    - Try to imagine the problems that both President Lincoln and President Davis faced as they tried to lead a nation split apart. Discuss.



What do you  
Think?

### Teacher Directions

1. The students write two paragraphs:
  - **Paragraph # 1:** If I were President Lincoln, in my Inaugural Address, I would say.....
  - **Paragraph # 2:** If I were President Davis, in my Inaugural Address, I would say...
2. Encourage students to write motivational paragraphs that could persuade citizens to support each president's cause.
3. Students begin Lincoln's message with "My Fellow Americans..." Davis' message begins "My Fellow Members of the Confederacy..."
4. Students use this exercise as a speech activity. Use a podium or create a podium (even using a box), and have students deliver their "mini-orations."
5. Distribute the Student Sheet: *What Did Jefferson Davis Have to Say?* As a class, help the students grasp his arguments and meanings.

### Teacher Directions

1. Students search the Internet to find the lyrics and tunes for each of these songs: "John Brown's Body", "Follow the Drinking Gourd", "Dixie", and "The Star Spangled Banner." Or, work with a music teacher or musician. Find someone who can play each of these songs – or find recordings of all. Tie the songs (lyrics and music) to the start of the Civil War – a nation split apart – even in the area of musical preferences.
2. Working in their teams, students discuss and interpret one of the songs. Different teams work with different songs. Tell the students that each of these songs was very popular prior to and during the Civil War. In fact, one of Lincoln's favorite songs was "Dixie!" Challenge the students to think about why these songs were so motivational for soldiers and civilians alike.
3. The students do one of the following:
  - Write a paragraph telling about the meaning of the song (as though one were explaining it to a person from a foreign country.)
  - Draw a picture or create a collage representing what students have learned from the song.
  - Pretend that the song is the title of a new CD. Students design the cover for the CD. Name the album.
  - Write a letter or an email to a friend telling that friend about a new song they have just heard.



Moving Toward  
Freedom



## Connections

### Teacher Directions

Use the following activities with your students.

**Language Arts** — In the 1850s, many people were writing about issues of slavery. Students write a brief paper entitled “A Modest Complaint.” In it they should discuss a problem that either bothers them personally—a bad habit of human beings—something about the school or community that must be corrected—or a problem affecting citizens anywhere. Do not allow students to merely gripe about an issue. Encourage them to create a clear sentence (I believe that \_\_\_\_\_) followed by a list of good reasons for holding that belief.

**Music** — As a class, students choose one or several popular tunes/songs that they know well. Students rewrite the lyrics so that it becomes a patriotic song for the soldiers who will soon fight for the South or the North.

**Note to the Teacher:** Guide students in selecting music that best matches this assignment.

**Geography** — Students use a United States map and color the Northern states red and the Southern states blue.

**Art** — Find and display photographs of Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, and Dred Scott. Explain that Tubman was a slave who helped many people escape on the Underground Railroad. Using their own individual artistic skills, the students recreate the images of Tubman, Douglass, or Scott — in watercolor, paper collage, pen and ink, charcoal, or clay.



Alexander Stephens

## Jefferson Davis President of the CSA

## Alexander Stephens Vice-President of the CSA



Jefferson Davis

Jefferson Davis leaves the United States Senate and makes the following comment...

*“Secession belongs to a different class of remedies. It is to be justified upon the basis that the states are sovereign...the sacred Declaration of Independence has been invoked to maintain the position of the equality of the races...that men were created equal...[yet] they [the writers] have no reference to slavery.”*

*What Did Jefferson Davis Have to Say?  
His Inaugural Address of 1861*

*“If we may not hope to avoid war, we may at least expect that posterity will acquit us of having needlessly engaged in it... Doubly justified by the absence of wrong on our part, and by wanton aggression on the part of others...”*

*“As a necessity, not a choice, we have resorted to the remedy of separation...”*

*“We have changed the constituent parts, but not the system of our government. The Constitution formed by our fathers is that of these Confederate States.”*