In 1860, the differences that separated the North and the South reached a breaking point with the election of Abraham Lincoln as President. Several Southern states seceded from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America in early 1861. The Confederates immediately seized federal property in their states, particularly military forts. However, South Carolina’s Fort Sumter, on an island in Charleston harbor, remained in Union hands.

The Conflict Begins  At 4:30 A.M. on April 12, 1861, the Confederate batteries opened fire on Fort Sumter after its Union defenders refused to surrender. The fort’s defenses were no match for this thunderous assault, and the Union troops surrendered late in the afternoon of April 13. The following day, the brand new Confederate flag flew over the fort. The Civil War had begun.

A Costly War News of Fort Sumter’s fall spread rapidly. In the South, most people celebrated. The Confederate secretary of war predicted that by May 1 the Confederate flag would “float over the dome of the old Capitol in Washington.” Northerners were more subdued, but no less certain of a quick and relatively painless victory. Both sides were wrong. The war would last four years and inflict staggering costs—more than 600,000 dead, about 500,000 wounded, and some $5 billion in property damaged or destroyed. Yet with these costs came freedom for some 4 million enslaved African Americans and the preservation of our nation.

The War’s Legacy The Civil War brought tremendous changes to the United States. To begin with, it introduced new ways of waging war. General William T. Sherman’s strategy of total war became the hallmark of later military conflicts. Politically, the war put to rest the question of secession while greatly increasing the power of the federal government. Economically, the war helped turn the country into an industrial giant. Further, during the war women gained a foothold in the labor market, a foothold they did not fully abandon when peace returned. Finally, millions of African Americans experienced liberty, albeit briefly—the Civil War echoed deep into the twentieth century in their long struggle to gain equal rights.

Civil War historian Shelby Foote expressed the opinion that you cannot understand the United States without understanding the Civil War. What we are today as a people and a nation is a direct result of that bloody conflict. As Foote concluded, “It was the crossroads of our being.”
THE CHALLENGE

In 2010, award-winning cable network HISTORY® and global education leader Houghton Mifflin Harcourt partnered to revolutionize the way students learn and educators present history and other social studies subjects. The latest partnership project focuses on one of the most pivotal events in American history, the Civil War. To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the start of the great struggle between the North and the South, HISTORY and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt invite all high school students in the United States to participate in an American history trivia contest—the National Civil War Student Challenge. This competition gives students a chance to showcase their knowledge of the war and qualify to win up to $15,000 in college scholarships.

The National Civil War Student Challenge is an online competition of 50 multiple-choice questions that must be completed as quickly as possible. (You can access the quiz at CivilWarChallenge.com.) Students will have 45 seconds to answer each question; the number of correct answers and the speed at which answers are provided will determine scores. The 30 students who achieve the highest scores will be invited to take the Final Exam.

Schedule for the National Civil War Student Challenge (NCWSC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registration for NCWSC Online Challenge begins.</td>
<td>Monday, March 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCWSC Online Challenge begins.</td>
<td>Thursday, April 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCWSC Online Challenge ends.</td>
<td>Sunday, at 11:59 PM PT, April 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 finalists are announced.</td>
<td>Week beginning Monday, April 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam is administered.</td>
<td>Week beginning Monday, April 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prize winners are announced.</td>
<td>Week beginning Monday, May 23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Complete rules and regulations for the National Civil War Student Challenge can be found at CivilWarChallenge.com.

Grand Prize
$15,000 college scholarship

1st Place Prize
$7,500 college scholarship

2nd Place Prize
$5,000 college scholarship

3rd Place Prize
(7 recipients)
$1,000 college scholarship

Finalist Prize
(20 recipients)
$25 gift card to the official HISTORY store at http://shop.history.com

In addition, any teacher whose student qualifies for the final round of competition will have a chance to receive up to $400 in classroom supplies.

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PREPARING FOR THE CHALLENGE

As with any test, you will need to prepare for the National Civil War Student Challenge. There’s no one right way to prepare, but the following suggestions will get you ready to make your best effort.

What to Study; How to Study  Obviously, you need to study the Civil War! However, when you take into consideration the events that helped bring about the war and the war’s outcomes, that includes a good part of the mid-1800s. So, how do you ensure that you’re using your study time wisely and efficiently? One good way is to consider the significant versus the obscure. It’s more likely that you will encounter questions on significant developments, events, and individuals than on obscure ones. Asking yourself questions such as the following will help to focus your study on the important aspects of the Civil War:

• What were the most important causes of the war?
• Which battles were turning points in the war? Why were these battles so significant?
• Who were the major political and military leaders? How and why did they achieve positions of leadership?
• What important political, social, and economic developments took place during the war? What impact did these developments have?
• What were the outcomes of the war?

Once you’ve identified what to study, you need to decide how to study. Some students prefer to study a subject chronologically, as this makes it easier for them to see connections among events. Others find it easier to study if they organize information into categories—causes, battles, leaders, and so on. Again, there is no one right way to study. Whichever approach you find more comfortable and productive is the one you should follow. Finally, be aware that you will probably find some topics more interesting to study than others. Like many students, you may find it more fun to learn about major battles than about how the two sides financed the war. But don’t let your enjoyment get in the way of gaining a solid understanding of other important topics.
Resources for Study  According to some estimates, more than 50,000 books have been written about the Civil War! So, which ones should you use in your studies? What other resources should you check out? Here is just some of what Houghton Mifflin Harcourt and HISTORY® have to offer.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT RESOURCES

HMH American history textbooks have chapters on the Civil War era that will serve as a solid starting point for your study. The Supplemental Resources offer primary source readings, biographies of important figures in the war, and novels.

Basal Resources
- Holt McDougal The Americans © 2012
- Holt McDougal United States History © 2012
- Holt McDougal African American History © 2010

Advanced Placement Resources
- The American Pageant © 2010
- A People & A Nation © 2008

Supplemental Resources
- Nextext Historical Reader, The Civil War
- Nextext Stories in History, The Civil War 1860–1865
- Abe Lincoln Grows Up by Carl Sandberg
- Across Five Aprils by Irene Hunt
- Behind Rebel Lines by Seymour Reit
- Bull Run by Paul Fleischman
- Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad by Ann Petry
- The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane
- Soldier’s Heart by Gary Paulsen
- Stealing Freedom by Elisa Carbone
- A Stillness at Appomattox by Bruce Catton
- Uncle Tom’s Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe
HISTORY® RESOURCES

HISTORY Classroom provides free online study guides and companion viewing guides to HISTORY on-air programming. We also feature short video clips, links to education partners, and information about our latest educational initiatives. Teachers can sign up to receive a free weekly HISTORY Classroom email newsletter on the site for updates about these programs. In observance of the Civil War Sesquicentennial, HISTORY will be adding new classroom material based on Civil War–themed programming and activities over the next four years.

Learn more about the Civil War on History.com:
  http://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war

Civil War Technology:
  http://www.history.com/topics/civil-war-technology

AMERICA The Story of Us™ Civil War content from HISTORY Classroom:
  http://www.history.com/images/media/pdf/America_Episode5_guide_FIN.pdf

Find teaching tools and sign up for email updates on HISTORY Classroom:
  http://www.history.com/classroom

For additional premium resources, including Civil War DVDs and books, please visit our online store at:
  www.historyeducation.com
  http://shop.history.com/?v=history-education_subjects_social-studies_american-history_civil-war-and-reconstruction

HISTORY on iTunes:
  www.itunes.com/HistoryChannel

SPECIAL PLAYLISTS:
  Secrets of the Civil War
  http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewTVSeason?id=313234074&s=143441

  Abraham Lincoln: His Life and Legacy
  http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewTVSeason?id=301641059&s=143441

HISTORY SPECIALS:
  Stealing Lincoln’s Body
  http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewTVSeason?id=30392386&id=257241074&s=143441

  Sherman’s March
  http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewTVSeason?id=258841476&id=257241074&s=143441

  The Hunt for John Wilkes Booth
  http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewTVSeason?id=271100726&id=257241074&s=143441
**GENERAL REFERENCES**

Also look for these books and Websites, all of which have lots of great information on the Civil War.

**Books**


**Websites**

The Civil War at the Smithsonian ([civilwar.si.edu/home.html](http://civilwar.si.edu/home.html)) Provides a detailed time line and images and other resources from the Smithsonian’s extensive collections.

Index of Civil War Information ([civilwarhome.com/indexcivilwarinfo.htm](http://civilwarhome.com/indexcivilwarinfo.htm)) A listing of Civil War resources available on the Internet.

Finally, make sure to check newspapers, magazines, television schedules, and Internet history sites. As April 12—the anniversary of the beginning of hostilities—approaches, there’ll be more and more coverage of the Civil War and its legacy.
Practice, Practice, Practice!

One of the best ways to prepare for a particular activity is to practice that activity. Trying your hand at questions that are similar in structure, content and difficulty to those you will actually encounter is a great way to prepare for the National Civil War Student Challenge.

A good place to start is with the National Civil War Student Challenge Practice Game. You can find this game on the HISTORY® Facebook page (facebook.com/History). If you don’t have a Facebook account, you can also access the Practice Game at the Civil War Challenge Website (CivilWarChallenge.com). The Practice Game consists of multiple-choice questions, which are structured as a series of Civil War battles that you must win to advance to the next level. You have the option of selecting easy or difficult questions, and you can work with friends to help you advance. You might want to start with the easy questions first to get acclimated to the test. Or, if you feel confident after studying, dive into the deep end and try the harder level questions straight away.

Test-Taking Strategies and Practice

As you recall, the National Civil War Student Challenge has two stages—the Online Challenge and the Final Exam. Each stage is structured differently and has different types of questions.

The Online Challenge
The first stage, the Online Challenge, consists of 50 multiple-choice questions. Most of the questions are stand-alone, but some are driven by short excerpts.

The Final Exam
The Final Exam is more challenging than the Online Challenge. It consists of 60 questions of four different types—matching, completion, graphic-organizer, and open-ended—and an essay.

On the following pages, you’ll find test-taking tips and practice items for all of these question types. Read the tips in the left column, then apply them to the practice items on the right. There’s an Answer Key at the back of this document where you can check your answers.
Multiple-Choice Questions Practice

1. Many Northerners began to oppose the Civil War because they
   a. realized the importance of slavery to the South’s economy.
   b. felt that the Union was being too harsh on the Confederacy.
   c. thought Lincoln was following his own agenda and not the
      Union’s.
   d. were upset by the length of the war and the number of
      casualties.

2. Which of the following was not a principle crop in the Confederate
   states during the Civil War era?
   a. nutmeg
   b. cotton
   c. tobacco
   d. sugar

3. What was the main goal of the siege of Vicksburg?
   a. to gain control of the Ohio valley
   b. to gain control of the Tennessee valley
   c. to gain control of the Mississippi River
   d. to gain control of the Missouri River

4. President Lincoln removed General George McClellan from
   command because McClellan
   a. wanted to be president.
   b. did not believe in the Union cause.
   c. was not daring enough.
   d. was too daring.

5. What was the strategy of total war adopted by General Sherman?
   a. destroying military and civilian resources
   b. executing all prisoners of war without a trial
   c. executing Southern politicians to discourage further rebellion
   d. waging war on both land and sea
TEST-TAKING TIPS

Matching questions ask you to match terms and names with a list of descriptions. Usually there are more terms and names than there are descriptions. On the Finalist Exam, correct answers to matching questions earn one point.

1. Read through both lists carefully to get an overview of the terms and descriptions and how they are related.
2. Make the easiest matches—those you are sure of—first.
3. For the harder matches, eliminate answers that you know are incorrect. Obviously, battle names would not be a good match for a description of a person.
4. As you make matches, cross out or check off the terms and names that you have used.
5. Once you have completed all the matches, look at the terms that are left. Check them against the matches you have made to ensure that your answers are correct.

Matching Questions Practice

In the space provided, write the letter of the term, person, or place that matches each description. Some answers will not be used.

A. Copperheads
B. Anaconda Plan
C. George McClellan
D. 54th Massachusetts Infantry
E. freedmen
F. Battle of Pea Ridge
G. Battle of Fredericksburg
H. United States Sanitary Commission
I. Andersonville
J. ironclads
K. William Tecumseh Sherman
L. Battle of Gettysburg
M. Richmond

____  6. African American combat unit
____  7. Notorious Confederate prisoner of war camp
____  8. Emancipated slaves
____  9. Succeeded General Grant as Union commander in the West
____ 10. Union strategy that called for the blockade of all Confederate ports
____ 11. Captured by Union troops in April, 1865
____ 12. Antiwar Democrats in the North
____ 13. Created to oversee conditions in Army camps and hospitals
____ 14. Battle in which 1,000 Native Americans fought for the Confederates
____ 15. Disastrous loss for the Union
Completion Questions Practice

For each of the following statements, fill in the blank with the appropriate word, phrase, or name from the two choices provided.

16. The South's new nation was called the ____________.
   (Confederate Alliance/Confederate States of America)

17. The last state to secede from the Union was ____________.
   (North Carolina/Tennessee)

18. General ____________ believed himself personally responsible for
    the Confederate losses at Gettysburg.
   (Robert E. Lee/George Pickett)

19. The Battle of ____________ ended Union hopes for a short war.
    (Antietam/Bull Run)

20. The ____________ allowed President Lincoln to easily defeat George
    McClellan in the 1864 presidential election.
    (fall of Atlanta/Gettysburg Address)

21. The Confederacy issued large amounts of paper money to pay for
    the war, causing great ____________.
    (inflation/deflation)

Test-taking Tips

Completion, or fill-in-the-blank, questions ask you to complete a sentence by inserting a word or phrase into a blank. The blank may be anywhere in the sentence—it will not always be at the end. In the Finalist Exam, you'll be given two alternative answers. Correct answers earn one point.

1. Read each sentence twice—one with the first alternative, once with the second alternative.

2. After you make your choice, read the sentence again to make sure that your answer fits logically and grammatically.
Graphic-Organizer Questions Practice

22. Place the events listed below in their correct chronological order on the time line.

- Union forces capture Vicksburg
- Lincoln wins reelection
- Ironclad Monitor fights Virginia
- Confederates fire on Fort Sumter

**TEST-TAKING TIPS**

Graphic-organizer questions require you to place information in a chart, time line, or diagram. Some questions provide the information to be placed in the graphic, others require you to provide the information yourself. In the Finalist Exam, on graphic-organizer questions you’ll receive one point for a correct answer.

1. Carefully read the question to determine what is required to complete the graphic organizer. In this question you have to place several events in the correct chronological order on a time line.

2. Study the graphic organizer to see what information is provided. Note how this information is related to the information you have to place.

3. In some graphic-organizer questions, partial answers are given. For example, a chart might have some entries or a cause-effect chain might have some links completed. Analyze these partial answers to determine what kind of information your answers should contain.
Open-Ended Questions Practice

23. What was the Lecompton Constitution and why was it controversial?

____________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________  

24. What conclusion can be drawn from the graph about battle deaths compared to deaths from non-battle causes?

____________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________  

Lives Lost in the Civil War, 1861-1865

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Union losses</th>
<th>Confederate losses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Killed</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths from Battles</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths from Non-Battle Causes</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Enyclopedia of American History
TEST-TAKING TIPS

Essay questions require you to write a well-thought-out essay on a specific topic. In the Finalist Exam, the essay is the most heavily weighted of the questions, accounting for 25 percent of the total score.

1. Carefully read the question to get an overall view of the task. Note the general topic of the essay—here it is slavery and the Civil War. Also, check the directions for writing. These bullet points will help you focus your response.

2. Jot down ideas on the topic and organize them in an outline or a chart.

3. Use your outline or chart to write the essay. Remember that your essay should consist of an introduction, three or more body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Make sure that your essay shows a thorough understanding of the topic and addresses all aspects of the writing directions.

25. Write a persuasive essay supporting or opposing this statement:

The issue of slavery in the United States could have been resolved without the Civil War.

The essay should include the following:

• strong arguments in support of your position
• opposing positions, presented accurately and honestly
• arguments against the opposing positions

Write your answer on a separate sheet of paper.
Multiple Choice
1. d 2. a 3. c 4. c 5. a

Matching

Completion

Graphic Organizer
22. The events should appear on the time line in this order:
   1861—Confederates fire on Fort Sumter
   1862—Ironclad Monitor fights Virginia
   1863—Union forces capture Vicksburg
   1864—Lincoln wins reelection

Open-Ended
23. The Lecompton Constitution was a pro-slavery constitution proposed for the admission of Kansas to the Union. It was controversial because it was written by a legislature elected through vast voter fraud. The Lecompton Constitution deeply divided Kansans, and when it was submitted to Congress, Congress split over the issue of whether the constitution had been approved fairly. Although it was defeated, the battle over the Lecompton Constitution led radical Southerners to believe that secession was the proper course of action to follow.

24. More Civil War soldiers died from non-battle causes, such as disease, than from wounds suffered in battle.

Essay
25. Answers will vary but should include accurate information about slavery and the Civil War that supports the student’s position, focuses and develops ideas, and effectively organizes ideas in a clear, logical, detailed, and coherent manner.