

Teaching notes:

This resource is designed to show the economic, cultural and political differences between the North and the South in the mid nineteenth century, as well different opinions on slavery. These differences have been seen as causes of the Civil War, but also directly affected the course of Reconstruction and are therefore good background knowledge to the AQA course *USA 1865-1975: The Making of a Superpower*. The differences have been written into character cards to help make them concrete and engaging. They could be used in various ways.

Ideas for using the cards:

1. Students could be given a character card to read out to the class to facilitate class discussion of each.
2. Alternatively, this information could be shared using a ‘speed dating’ exercise.
3. Having disseminated the information on the cards, a spider diagram of the main differences could be developed on the board. Students could then categorise the information using a colour code.
4. A 50 word summary of the differences could be written and peer assessed for SPaG.

Possible extension:

Students could practise exam skills by assessing the validity of the following interpretation of the causes of the Civil War:

‘To say that ‘only’ slavery divided the North from the South is akin to saying that ‘only’ religion divides people in Northern Ireland today. Slavery was the sole institution not shared by North and South. The peculiar institution defined the South, permeating almost every aspect of its life. In 1858 a prominent, and relatively moderate, Northern politician, Senator William Seward, declared that the social systems of slave labour and free labour ‘are more than incongruous – they are incompatible.’

From: Farmer, *Reconstruction and the results of the American Civil War 1865-1877*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1997, p.3



A: An immigrant living in New York (1860)

I moved to New York nearly 30 years ago. I have seen many changes; the towns and cities are growing larger. More and more people from overseas are coming to live here. I am told that the population here in the North has just reached 18.65 million!

B: A 'belle' in Mississippi (1860)

I am told of great towns developing in the North where thousands upon thousands of people live all together. It sounds mighty different from here in the South. My papa says that 10.5 million people live here – anymore and we'd be too crowded!

C: A farmer in Tennessee (1860)

We have lived this way for many years. Farming is an honest profession. It allows a man to feel the benefit of his own hard work. I am told that there are hundreds of miles of railroads and ships passing along canals up there, taking manufactured goods and textiles overseas. Why they are meddlin' in this way, I do not know. It seems mighty un-American to me!

D: A plantation owner in Louisiana (1860)

I have grown cotton on this land for forty years. Most people in these parts do. We are all strugglin' the same. There's too much competition you see – from abroad – it makes our cotton prices fall. In order to carry on we have to borrow money from industrialists in the North 'else we can't transport our goods to be sold. They take a percentage of profits from us. It's like they never want us to be out of debt. They like power and have too much money up there.

E: A factory owner in Rhode Island (1860)

In my opinion, we need higher tariffs. We need them to protect our goods and the high prices that they fetch. I understand that they want free trade for their cotton but that is harmful to new industries. They need to see that free trade stands in the way of progress.

F: A lawyer in Massachusetts (1860)

We have been suppressing duelling laws in the North in one way or another for around fifty years now. It is almost laughable that this practice still exists in the South. It is so archaic to define a man in terms of 'honour'.



<p>G: A store owner in Delaware (1860)</p>	<p>H: A student in Michigan (1860)</p>
<p>They are just so haughty writing all that high and mighty trash about how we live! Things in the South are how they should be! We believe in the natural order of things, in honour and in God. They may have fancy words but they've got no sense of tradition or national identity.</p>	<p>I just cannot get my head around it! If they opened their minds and were more accepting of new ideas then they could help to make America a better country – founded on liberty and free labour. We aren't so different underneath it all; perhaps it is just a difference in education.</p>
<p>I: A statesman in Florida (1860)</p>	<p>J: An abolitionist in New Hampshire (1860)</p>
<p>I, for one, know that I speak on behalf of the people that I represent – State law is sacred! The president or Congress cannot overtake our power. It is unconstitutional! We need to be able to protect the interests of our own states in order to protect the interests of our people.</p>	<p>There are nineteen 'free' states in the North now. Slavery was abolished because the Declaration of Independence says that all men were created equal and that they have certain rights. Now I don't disagree with what those in the South are saying – there is a natural order to things – if you catch my drift? I just don't see how slavery can continue in a Christian country such as ours.</p>