



# KENTUCKY AND THE *Civil War* +150

## Classroom Extensions

Each section of suggested classroom extensions corresponds to one of the six thematic storyboard panels in the exhibition. Print the .pdf files of each on 11” x 17” paper, to use as resources.

### Introduction

The title of the exhibition, “United We Stand, Divided We Fall”—Kentucky’s motto—comes from a Revolutionary War song, and the Kentucky state seal is incorporated into the logo.

- Research the origins of the phrase “united we stand, divided we fall.”
- The phrase first appeared in the fourth verse of one of the first patriotic songs in American history, “The Liberty Song” by John Dickinson. Listen to the music of that historic song and/or read the lyrics. Why was this phrase fitting when “The Liberty Song” was written in 1768, during Revolutionary War times?
- Investigate how this phrase came to be the motto of the state of Kentucky.
- The motto is included on the state seal and flag. Who/what do the contrasting male figures represent?
- Why do you think this motto/seal was frequently used during the American Civil War, decades later, especially in Kentucky?

### The Liberty Song

Come, join hand in hand, brave Americans all,  
And rouse your bold hearts at fair Liberty's call;  
No tyrannous acts shall suppress your just claim,  
Or stain with dishonor America's name.

*Chorus:*

*In Freedom we're born and in Freedom we'll live.  
Our purses are ready. Steady, friends, steady;  
Not as slaves, but as Freemen our money we'll give.*

Our worthy forefathers, let's give them a cheer,  
To climates unknown did courageously steer;  
Thro' oceans to deserts for Freedom they came,  
And dying, bequeath'd us their freedom and fame.

The tree their own hands had to Liberty rear'd,  
They lived to behold growing strong and revered;  
With transport they cried, Now our wishes we gain,  
For our children shall gather the fruits of our pain.

Then join hand in hand, brave Americans all,  
By uniting we stand, by dividing we fall;  
In so righteous a cause let us hope to succeed,  
For heaven approves of each generous deed.

Lyrics by John Dickinson, 1768

“By Uniting We Stand, By Dividing We Fall” is the final song in the Kentucky State Fair original musical, “Kentucky’s Civil War Song: From Reveille to Tattoo.” The ballad adapts the phrase of “The Liberty Song” and the state motto, to summarize Kentucky’s Civil War story. The song borrows and adapts many inspiring phrases from Civil War times.

- Investigate the quotes below, adapted in the song lyrics. The quotes are listed in the order they appear in the song. Locate online resources to view them in their original context and discuss.

*The contest now must be decided, and decided forever, which of the two, Freedom or Slavery, shall give law to this Republic. **Let the conflict come.***

--Frederick Douglass, published in *Douglass’ Monthly*, March 1861

- Who was Frederick Douglass, and how did his work as an abolitionist have an impact before and during the Civil War? How did Douglass encourage slaves and free blacks to support the cause for freedom? How did he argue for the rights of people of African descent, especially after they began to serve in the Union army?

*...Fondly do we hope -- fervently do we pray -- that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue, until all the wealth piled by the bond-man's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until **every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword**, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said "the judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether..."*

--from Abraham Lincoln’s second inaugural address, March 4, 1865

*To our mind, there is but one easy, short and effectual way to suppress and put down the desolating war which the slaveholders and their rebel minions are now waging against the American Government and its loyal citizens. **Fire must be met with water, darkness with light**, and war for the destruction of liberty must be met with war for the destruction of slavery. The simple way, then, to put an end to the savage and desolating war now waged by the slaveholders, is to strike down slavery itself, the primal cause of that war.*

--Frederick Douglass, published in *Douglass’ Monthly*, May 1861

*...I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. **The mystic chords of memory**, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet **swell the chorus of the Union**, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.*

--the ending of Abraham Lincoln’s first inaugural address, March 4, 1861

- Abraham Lincoln took office as President of the United States just as the crisis was reaching its peak. Civil War was inevitable, with the election of Lincoln outraging many

Southerners and causing states to secede from the Union. How does the new president state his position on the national crisis in this first official address to the nation? How does he define “the only substantial dispute” dividing the country? He chooses his words carefully, and is often considered one of the greatest writers/orators in American History. Locate phrases in the speech that indicate he holds the people responsible for what happens to the nation. Find phrases that you feel are particularly poetic, descriptive, or well-chosen in this speech.

- Research the results of the 1860 presidential election. Who were the major candidates and which political parties did they represent? How did the turmoil of the times impact the political party structure in the nation? How did the voting break down, state to state?

*Then join hand in hand, brave Americans all,  
By uniting we stand, by dividing we fall;  
In so righteous a cause let us hope to succeed,  
For heaven approves of each generous deed.*

--last verse of “The Liberty Song” by John Dickinson, 1768

*I enlisted in the 12<sup>th</sup> U.S. Colored Heavy Artillery in the fall of 1864, and my only sorrow is that I did not enlist sooner. I left a home such as would have made a slave happy, as long as there was a grain of happiness to be found in slavery. While living in Nelson county I indeed thought that it was right that all colored people should be slaves, and I was far from being the only one having the same opinion; but, oh, how different now! ...I see, as it were, a nation born in a day—men and women—**coming forth from slavery’s dark dungeons to the noonday sunshine** of the greatest of God’s gifts—Liberty.*

--from a letter by Kentuckian Corporal George Thomas, published in the *Weekly Anglo-African*, August 12, 1865.

- The bridge of the song focuses on the United States Colored Troops (USCT). Study this significant segment of the military, which represented approximately ten percent of the Union forces by the end of the Civil War.
- Corporal George Thomas, who was stationed at Fort Smith in Bowling Green, Kentucky, enlisted at Camp Nelson, in Jessamine County. Research the significance of this recruiting camp for the USCT. After learning how enlisting soldiers and their refugee families suffered, discuss why they may have been willing to exchange a relatively “happy” life as a slave for a dangerous and challenging life as a soldier.
- Assemble a collection of symbolic phrases and metaphorical imagery—such as “darkness met with light” and “from slavery’s dark dungeons” referenced above—used to describe slavery and freedom from slavery at this time period, looking to resources such as the writings of slaves, spiritual music, etc.

*Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history. We of this Congress and this administration, will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance, or insignificance, can spare one or another of us. The fiery trial through which we pass, will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest generation. We say we are for the Union. The world will not forget that we say this. We know how to save the Union. The world knows we do know how to save it. We—even we here—hold the power, and bear the responsibility. **In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free**—honorable alike in what we give, and what we preserve. We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last best, hope of earth.*

--the ending of Abraham Lincoln's second annual address to Congress, Dec. 1, 1862

- What do you think the phrase at the end, “in giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free” means?
- In his second annual address to Congress (now called the State of the Union), President Lincoln reiterated what he believed was the cause of the Civil War, as initially stated at his inauguration (and quoted on the exhibition's “Divided Nation, Divided State, Divided Families” storyboard panel):

*One section of our country believes slavery is right and ought to be extended, while the other believes it is wrong and ought not to be extended. This is the only substantial dispute.*

Why do you think he felt it was important to restate this point?

- How does the president describe the effect that the American Civil War has had on other world nations? The war strained relations with certain countries, in particular. Which ones?
- Research the events that occurred in the months before this address was given. Which major Civil War battles were fought (here in Kentucky and elsewhere)? What important proclamation was Lincoln preparing to deliver at this time?
- Abraham Lincoln was assassinated just as the war was about to end. The final verse references his “solemn funeral train.” Investigate the Funeral Train of Abraham Lincoln, the president who signed into law the first Transcontinental Railroad.
- Discuss the enduring legacy of the American Civil War.

## By Uniting We Stand, By Dividing We Fall

song from the Kentucky State Fair original musical, "Kentucky's Civil War Song: From Reveille to Tattoo"

The contest now must be decided, how to end this great impasse.  
For to answer every drop of blood drawn with the master's lash,  
We must resort to pay in blood drawn with the soldier's sword,  
In sharp discord. Let the conflict come, that liberty be restored.

Lincoln strove to rise above it, appealing to our best ideals.  
The Commonwealth, deeply divided, would not hear his firm appeals.  
Douglass wrote: fire must be met with water, darkness met with light.  
Take up the fight! Liberation is our God-given right.

*(Chorus:)*

Swell the chorus of the nation, rise in harmonic unity,  
The mystic chords of deep division, forever etched in memory.  
Then each join hand in hand together, brave Kentuckians all,  
We heed the call: by uniting we stand, by dividing we fall.

*(Bridge:)*

Answering the call to service in the colored regiments,  
Restoring dignity with action, in free-will-guided deference.  
Coming forth from slavery's dungeons to the noonday sun  
A new nation, with black and white now forged together in union.

With our division long behind us, we all embrace this legacy:  
In giving freedom to the slave, we assured freedom to the free.  
Join in grief to mourn slow passage of his solemn funeral train.  
Final refrain, may the Emancipator's vision still sustain.

*(Repeat Chorus)*

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Kentucky, a border state, was in a significant geographic position during the Civil War. Locate a map of Union, Confederate, and border states (or create one, using three different colors—blue, gray, and red—to indicate the allegiance of each state).

- Compare this map to a map of slave-holding states. How many slaves lived in Kentucky, according to the 1860 Census? List the states that seceded to form the Confederate States of America. When did each state leave the Union? Who was the president of the Confederate States of America? Where was he born? Where was the Confederate capital?
- Research the Confederate State of Kentucky. Where was Kentucky's Confederate capital? Who served as Kentucky's Confederate governors and why more than one?
- What does "state's rights" mean?
- What does "border state" mean? How many states fall into this category? Identify them. Did the Emancipation Proclamation free slaves in border states? Find a quote from that document which answers the question.
- Who was Beriah Magoffin? How long was Kentucky a neutral state, before officially supporting the Union?
- Why were the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers important boundaries for slavery and for the Civil War?
- Why was Kentucky's geographic location significant to war strategy?

### **Divided Nation, Divided State, Divided Families**

Many of the key figures in national politics before and during the Civil War were Kentuckians. Research each of the following, developing biographical sketches and describing the important role of each in Kentucky's and the nation's Civil War story:

- Henry Clay
- John J. Crittenden
- Abraham Lincoln
- Jefferson Davis
- Robert Anderson

Read this text from Senator John J. Crittenden's letter to his son George, April 30, 1861, encouraging him to maintain allegiance to the Union. The letter is in the collections of The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

*This supposes they have No Nation, no National Flag & c. This is assuming a very questionable position, at least. But I hope you will never have cause for any such questions or scruple in your case. Kentucky has not seceded, & I believe never will. She loves the Union & will cling to it as long as possible. And so, I hope, will you. Be true to the government that has trusted in you. And stand fast to your Nation's Flag, the Stars & Stripes.*

- Did George Crittenden follow his father's advice?
- Research the Crittenden family and how it was divided by the Civil War. Create a family tree, indicating which family members fought for the Union and which for the Confederacy.

- Imagine how a family discussion around the dinner table at the Crittenden household may have sounded during the war. Write a one-act play, with various Crittendens as the characters.

**Defending Kentucky: Camps, Forts & Earthworks**  
**and**  
**Rivers, Roads & Rails: Wartime Transportation**



*Fort Anderson, Paducah, Image: Library of Congress*

- Investigate military centers in Kentucky where troops were recruited and trained, supplies were stored and transported, and resources fortified and protected, using the handout, *Select Civil War Camps, Forts & Earthworks in Kentucky*, as a starting point. Add additional sites of interest to the list, including locations in or near your county.
- Create a map pinpointing some of the Civil War military camps and defense works in the state. Assign students to locate information about each site, including pictures, descriptions, related primary and secondary source documents, associated events, public monuments or interpretive sites, etc. What is preserved at each site today (structures, names, historical markers, etc.)?
- Compare the map with a map of rivers and railroads in Kentucky during the Civil War. How many key sites were located near rivers, railroad lines or both? Why do think many of the sites are along rivers or railways? Consider the sites that are *not* near rivers and

roadways; why are they significant? In eastern Kentucky, why were the Cumberland Gap and Wilderness Road strategic locations?

- Research different types of fortifications built in Kentucky and elsewhere. How did geography and the availability of natural resources impact the location and the type of forts built?
- Study transportation at the time of the Civil War, in Kentucky and throughout the nation. Describe major roads and turnpikes and the modes of transportation that utilized this infrastructure (horseback, wagons, stagecoaches, etc.). Determine the railroads in Kentucky in 1861. How were they used? Which cities were connected by rail? Why? How did railroad infrastructure differ in the North and South? How did the war and Lincoln's presidency impact the building of a transcontinental railroad? What key war strategies were employed by the North and the South related to railroads?
- Identify important bridges in Kentucky (or specifically in your county) during the Civil War. Were they protected by the Union or attacked by the Confederacy? Where were temporary bridges built and how were they constructed?
- Compare wooden gunboats to the new ironclad gunboats the Union began to construct during the war. Locate images of naval battles, including the important battles at Island No.10 of the Mississippi River at Fulton County, Kentucky. What submersible naval vessel technology was advanced during the Civil War? How was it used?
- The exhibition and related musical production mention Abraham Lincoln's interest in advancing transportation infrastructure as president. Research Lincoln's personal life experiences as a boatman, inventor of an inflatable flotation device for ships, and attorney for railroad companies. Discuss how his experiences, interests, and knowledge may have impacted his presidency.

# Select Civil War Camps, Forts & Earthworks in Kentucky

## **Columbus—“Gibraltar of the West”—Controlling the Mississippi River**

Columbus, Kentucky, was one of the great Confederate strongholds along the Mississippi River for six months in 1861-1862. Trenches and fortifications protected this river port, and the Mobile & Ohio Railroad service there, so successfully that the Confederacy called it their “Gibraltar of the West.” After the Confederates were forced out, the Union maintained the site for the rest of the war as a supply depot and a recruiting camp, particularly for United States Colored Troops.

## **Fort Anderson—Defending Paducah**

Located in the Jackson Purchase—Kentucky’s strongest Confederate region—Fort Anderson was a seven-gun Union fort, built around a hospital and surrounded by water-filled ditches. Union forces defended the fort during the Battle of Paducah in March 1864.

## **Rebel Stronghold—In the Confederate Capital of Bowling Green**

Fort C. F. Smith, high on a hill overlooking Bowling Green, was positioned to protect the Louisville & Nashville Railroad trestle over the Barren River and the capital of the Confederate State of Kentucky. A bastion fort, it was designed to withstand attack from all sides and could be outfitted with twenty-five cannons. When the Confederate occupation of Bowling Green ended, Union forces took over Fort Smith and the other hilltop forts in the city.

## **Fort Duffield—Protecting the Supply Line to Elizabethtown**

Fort Duffield, near West Point, is Kentucky’s largest and best-preserved Civil War earthen fortification. Located at the confluence of the Ohio and Salt rivers, the serpentine-walled fort was also the first to be built in the state, in 1861.

## **Defenses of Louisville**

In 1863 and 1864 eleven earth-and-timber forts and two batteries were constructed to encircle the city of Louisville, a critical supply and recruiting station. Ten additional batteries were planned but were not completed. The Ohio River formed the northern line of defense. The city was never attacked, so the guns were never fired in battle.

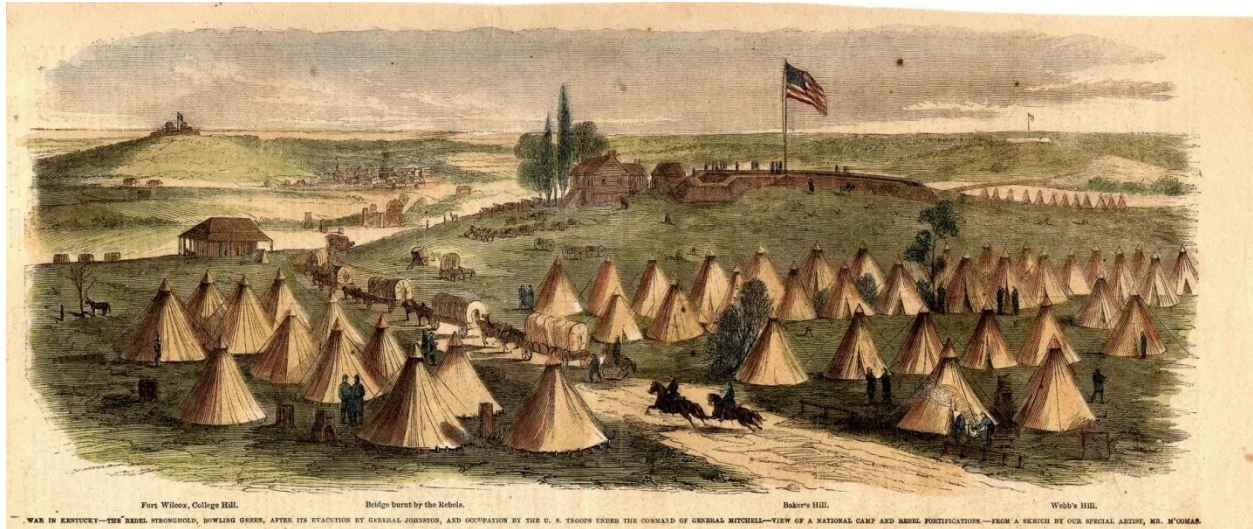
## **Frankfort’s Fortifications**

Frankfort was the only pro-Union state capital to fall into Confederate hands during the war. Fort Hill and Fort Redoubt were built high on a hill above Frankfort in response to the Confederate occupation, which lasted a few weeks, beginning in September 1862. The fortifications helped secure the state capital (unsuccessfully attacked by John Hunt Morgan’s cavalry again in 1864) and key bridges over the Kentucky River.

## **Camp Nelson—Major Recruiting Center**

Military supply depots, recruitment centers, and training camps were located throughout Kentucky. Camp Nelson, in Jessamine County, was surrounded by earthen forts and the palisades of the Kentucky River. It was the third largest recruiting camp for United States Colored Troops in the nation. Over 10,000 slaves and free blacks enlisted there.

## Camp Dick Robinson—First Recruiting Camp in Kentucky



*Image: Library of Congress*

Camp Dick Robinson in Garrard County was the first recruiting station for Union regiments in Kentucky, even though it was established in August 1861, when the state was trying to maintain neutrality. The President’s shipment of arms to outfit Kentucky’s Home Guard units—the so-called “Lincoln guns”—were distributed here. Several military campaigns were launched from Camp Robinson, and it remained a supply depot into late 1862.

### **Northern Kentucky Defenses of Cincinnati**

A total of twenty-seven defensive works, including Forts Mitchell and Wright, were constructed by the Union in northern Kentucky. The forts and batteries formed an eight-mile hilltop arc that protected Cincinnati, the gateway to the North and a major transportation and supply hub.

### **Cumberland Gap—Key Path of Invasion**

The Old Wilderness Road through the Cumberland Gap was a key supply and invasion route into Kentucky. The Confederacy established the first forts on the north-facing slope in 1861, but ultimately abandoned them in June 1862. The Union then built up the south-facing slope. In September 1862, however, the Confederates cut off their supply route, forcing the hungry Union defenders to leave the position. The Gap was established as a Confederate stronghold once again. A year later, however, the Union army—using the geography of the area to convince the rebels that the threat was greater than it actually was—secured the Cumberland Gap for one final time and held it for the rest of the war.

### **Louisa—Seat of the Military District of Eastern Kentucky**

This small town in Lawrence County was strategically located at a major river fork that forms the Big Sandy River. The Union established fortifications that were impressive enough to deter rebel invaders on several occasions.

## **Civil War Communications**

- Visit the Stones River National Battlefield (National Park Service) website to download the “Signal Corps” Lesson Plan:  
[http://home.nps.gov/stri/forteachers/upload/lesson\\_signalcorps.pdf](http://home.nps.gov/stri/forteachers/upload/lesson_signalcorps.pdf)  
The lesson, geared for grades 4-6, prepares students to demonstrate signal flag communications (or wigwag) and send and decipher coded messages. Instructions for making signal flags and cipher disks are included.
- Discuss the potential limitations and risks of signal flag communications. Ask students to create their own message relay techniques, using signaling, whispering, sign language or other hand signals, texting, or other forms of communication. Test the various methods and compare results. Are some methods more successful/accurate than others? Why?
- Research Kentuckian Norvin Green’s contribution to telegraph expansion.
- Ask each student to write one important fact about the Civil War in Kentucky, translate it into Morse Code, then communicate the line of code to another student for translation. To make the task more challenging, employ a cipher to encode the fact.

## **Music of the Civil War**

The mini-musical at the Kentucky State Fair, “Kentucky’s Civil War Song: From Reveille to Tattoo,” was inspired by the fact that music played in military camps during the Civil War structured a soldier’s day, signaling when to wake, eat, advance, retreat, go to bed, etc.

- List many ways that music was important to field and camp life during the Civil War, beginning with the introductory text on the exhibition thematic panel and researching the subject in more depth.
- Other than field and camp music, what other categories of music were composed during this time?
- Locate pictures of the musical instruments most often used in military camp during this period.
- Read the story about the adaptation of the familiar tune, “Taps.” Listen to both “Taps” and “Reveille.” Compare and contrast the two tunes, listing descriptive words and describing the moods of each.
- Research Louisvillian William Shakespeare Hays, who composed several songs during this period.
- Listen to recordings of many Civil War songs. The Library of Congress offers one online library of music, and there are others. Create a music program featuring your favorite songs of the Civil War, writing program notes for each that list biographical information about the composers and details about the song’s history and use.
- Download the Library of Congress’ Teacher’s Primary Source Set, “Civil War Music”  
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/civil-war-music/>

“United We Stand, Divided We Fall” Project Contact: Steph Wilding Darst, KY State Fair Board, P.O. Box 37130, Louisville, KY 40233-7130, <a href="mailto:sdarst@ksfb.ky.gov">sdarst@ksfb.ky.gov</a> ; 502-367-5496
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