

### 4.4.9 Project: Why Does It Matter?

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#### Questions:

- Why was the civil war fought?
- Why was the civil war important?
- In which state/country did you go to school?

#### Under 18:

1.
  - I don't know why the civil war was fought.
  - I don't know...
  - Alaska
2.
  - I think it was so they could have the slaves be free?
  - I'm pretty sure it set the slaves free.
  - Alaska
3.
  - The civil war was fought because of conflicting interests between the north and south. The south wanted slavery, and the north did not want slavery.
  - It was important because it set the slaves free.
  - Alaska
4.
  - The civil war was fought because the United States was divided over ... slavery.
  - The war made it so the slaves could be free.
  - Alaska

#### 19 – 30:

5.
  - Most people think the Civil War was fought only over the issue of slavery. But that's not really true. The civil war was fought because of slavery, but also because the south and the north were mad at each other for ... about state's rights and taxes.
  - The civil war was important for a whole lot of reasons. First of all, it made it so the slaves could be free. Also, it brought the north and the south back together... by force.
  - Oregon
6.
  - Dude... It's been, like, 20 years since I learned that. Wasn't it like about black people or something?
  - I don't know, man. Maybe, like, they were free?
  - Alaska
- 7.

- I don't know... We never really learned about American History. I think it was something about slavery maybe?
  - I'm sorry, I really couldn't tell you.
  - Russia
- 8.
- It was fought because people didn't like how black people were being treated in the south.
  - The civil war made it so black people were treated better, all around the states.
  - Alaska

### 31 – 45:

- 9.
- The civil war was fought because the states didn't agree on who had the right to leave. The southern states wanted to leave the northern states, and the northern states didn't agree.
  - They made it so nobody could hold slaves, and they made it so America was one country again.
  - Alaska
- 10.
- It was so the slaves could be free of course. The north fought the south because they thought that slavery should be abolished, and the south didn't agree.
  - The war freed the slaves. That's really all there is to it.
  - Tennessee
- 11.
- People didn't want to get along. Some thought slavery was ok, some didn't. They fought it out and killed each other, and here we are.
  - It was important because they ended up stopping slavery for good. They made it so nobody could be a slave in America.
  - Alaska
- 12.
- I think it was more about the differences between the North and the South than anything. They really just didn't agree, about various things.
  - I guess a main part of it was that it freed the slaves. But it also forced the north and the south to stay together.
  - Montana

### 46 – 60:

- 13.
- It was mostly because of a difference in the ideas about state's rights at the time. They didn't agree on whether states could leave the union if they didn't like how they were being treated.
  - They made it so nobody could hold any slaves. They also brought the country back together, so we were no longer separate.

- Colorado

14.

- It happened because of the disagreements between the north and the south. They disagreed over the issues of slavery, and other economic issues.
- The civil war freed the slaves and ended slavery in America, but it also brought the north and south back together by force. It forced the southern states to still be a part of the union, even when they didn't want to.
- Texas

15.

- The same reason every war is fought: People don't get along. It was mostly because of slavery, but there were a lot of other causes too.
- The civil war was mainly important because it freed the slaves. It also unified the states again, and made it so we were once again one country.
- Arizona

16.

- It was fought because slaves were being treated badly in the south, and people in the north thought this wasn't right.
- The civil war freed the slaves. That's why it was fought, and that's what it did.
- New York

**61+:**

17.

- The war was fought so my great grandpa could be free. They had him locked up, working his a\*\* off on the farms. But they fought the civil war and set him free.
- It set my grandpa and all of his brothers and sisters free. They didn't have to work on the farms no more, and they was free men.
- California

18.

- The war was fought for no reason. People just didn't get along back then, and it's the same now. People can't get along.
- After the war, the slaves were free. But that's about it. Otherwise it's just a lot of pointless killing. That's what war is.
- California

19.

- The civil war was fought so we could keep the states together. They split apart, but then after the war, they were joined together.
- It was important because it brought us back together. We were one country again.
- Iowa

20.

- It was fought to set the black people free, so they didn't have to work as slaves no more.
- It set black people free, made it so they weren't slaves.
- Kansas

I got many results that I expected to get, but I was also surprised by quite a few of my results. Having interviewed 20 people, four from each of the five age groups, I got a very diverse pool of answers. It seemed like the youngest people I interviewed didn't know much about the civil war at all, but some of them could tell me it was about slavery. Most of the other people across the rest of the age groups just told me it was all about slavery, and really nothing else. Some people said it was for no reason, and didn't think it meant much. A decent portion of the responses ended up being about how the North and South disagreed, but they said this for various reasons. A few of the responses were especially well done. These responses encompassed the issue of slavery, but also the issues of states rights and whether or not states were allowed to secede from the Union. Some of these responses even included details about economy, and how this came into play as a cause of the Civil War. It seems like America's common memory of the Civil War is quite good. Most of the well educated people knew the causes of it, and realized why it was important. I was expecting that there would be a good common memory, but I didn't think that I would find that people would be so detailed and knowledgeable. In some ways I was expecting the results I got, but in others, I was a bit surprised.