

“This is America” music video discussion

- When you watched the video for the first time, what did you notice?
- What’s your initial reaction to the music video and the song? Why?
- What do you think the main takeaway message of the video might be?
- Who is the audience for this music video? Why do you think that?
- How are guns treated in the video? Why do you think that is? What is our relationship with guns in the US? What’s the relationship with guns in other countries?
- Why do you think Childish Gambino makes a reference (in his posture) to Jim Crow?

What is Jim Crow?

- “Jim Crow” laws were state and local laws that enforced racial segregation in the Southern United States.
- The origin of the name itself actually dates back to before the Civil War.
- In the early 1830s, the white actor Thomas Dartmouth “Daddy” Rice performed routines as the fictional “Jim Crow,” a caricature of a clumsy, dimwitted black slave.





THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR



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What was the Civil War?

- The Civil War, also known as “The War Between the States,” was fought between the United States of America (north) and the Confederate States of America (south), a collection of eleven southern states that left the Union in 1860 and 1861 and wanted to form their own country in order to protect the institution of slavery.

The South (Confederacy)

When the southern states decided to break away, or secede, they made their own country called the Confederate States of America, or the Confederacy. They wrote their own Constitution and even had their own president, Jefferson Davis. The Confederacy was made up of 11 southern states including **South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee.**

The North (Union)

The North consisted of the remaining 25 states which were located in the north. The North was also called the Union to symbolize that they wanted the United States to remain a single country and union. The North was bigger and had more industry than the South. They had a lot more people, resources, and wealth giving them an advantage in the civil war.

Why did the Southern States want to leave?

- The Southern states were worried that as the United States expanded, they would gain less power. They wanted the states to have more power and be able to make their own laws. One of the laws they were worried about losing was the right to have slaves. Many northern states had outlawed slavery and they were worried that the United States would outlaw slavery in all the states.



Where was the Civil War fought and how many soldiers fought?

- 1. The Civil War was fought in thousands of different places, from southern Pennsylvania to Texas; from New Mexico to the Florida coast.
- The majority of the fighting took place in the states of Virginia and Tennessee. The Civil War was also contested on the Atlantic Ocean as far off as the coast of France, the Gulf of Mexico, and the brown water of the Mississippi River and its tributaries.
- 2. At the beginning of the war the Northern states had a combined population of 22 million people. The Southern states had a combined population of about 9 million. This disparity was reflected in the size of the armies in the field. The Union forces outnumbered the Confederates roughly two to one.

Slavery before the Civil War

- Slavery goes back before the founding of the United States
- In 1619, slavery was introduced to Virginia, when a Dutch ship traded African slaves for food. Unable to find cheap labor from other sources, white settlers turned to slaves imported from Africa.
- By the early 1700s, in British North America, slavery generally meant African slavery. Southern plantations using slave labor produced the great export crops—tobacco, rice, forest products—that made the American colonies prosperous.
- Many Northern merchants made their fortunes either in the slave trade or by exporting the products of slave labor.
- African slavery was central to the development of British North America.

Slavery during the Civil War

The North

- The North and South were very different in nature, and wanted different things from their government. In the North, society was becoming industrial → Immigrants in search of work were arriving by the thousands.
- Immigrants and women provided an abundant source of inexpensive labor to fuel the factories. Industrialization increased the amount of textiles produced and therefore, the demand for more slave labor.

The South

- The South, on the other hand, remained a region of small towns and large plantations. The great cotton empire depended on slave labor and cheap European imports. By 1840, cotton produced in the American South earned more money than all other U.S. exports combined. Many white Southerners came to believe that the viability of cotton as a crop depended on slave labor. Over time, most took for granted that their prosperity, even their way of life, was inseparable from African slavery.

The Underground Railroad

- During this time there were states in the northern United States where slavery was outlawed. Slaves would try to escape to the north using the Underground Railroad. This wasn't a real railroad. It was a number of safe homes (called stations) that hid slaves as they traveled north.
- The people that helped the slaves were called conductors. Slaves would move from station to station at night, hiding in the woods or sneaking onto trains until they finally reached the north and freedom.



Harriet Tubman

Harriet Tubman was born a slave on a plantation in Maryland.

At the age of thirteen Harriet received a horrible head injury. It happened when she was visiting the town. A slave owner tried to throw an iron weight at one of his slaves, but hit Harriet instead. The injury nearly killed her and caused her to have dizzy spells and blackouts for the rest of her life.

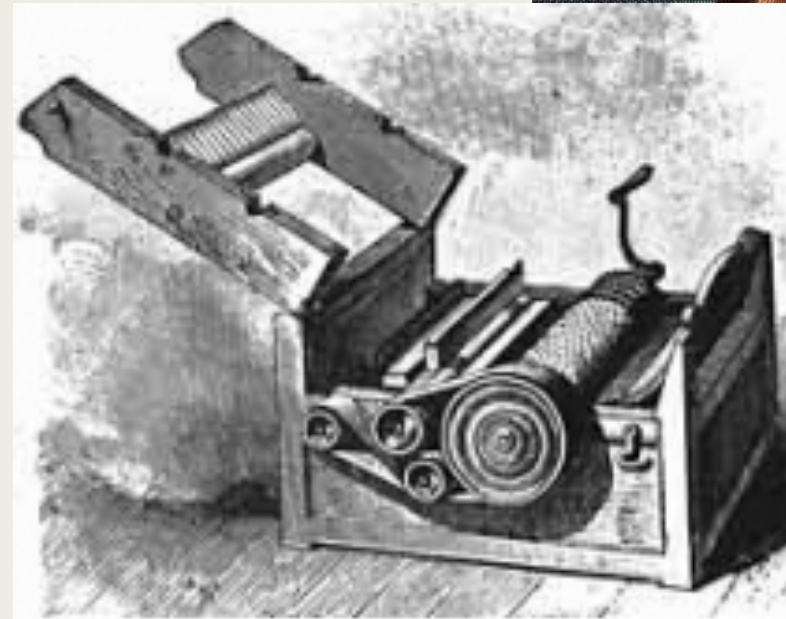
In 1849 Harriet decided to escape. She would use the Underground Railroad. After a long and scary trip she made it to Pennsylvania and was finally free.



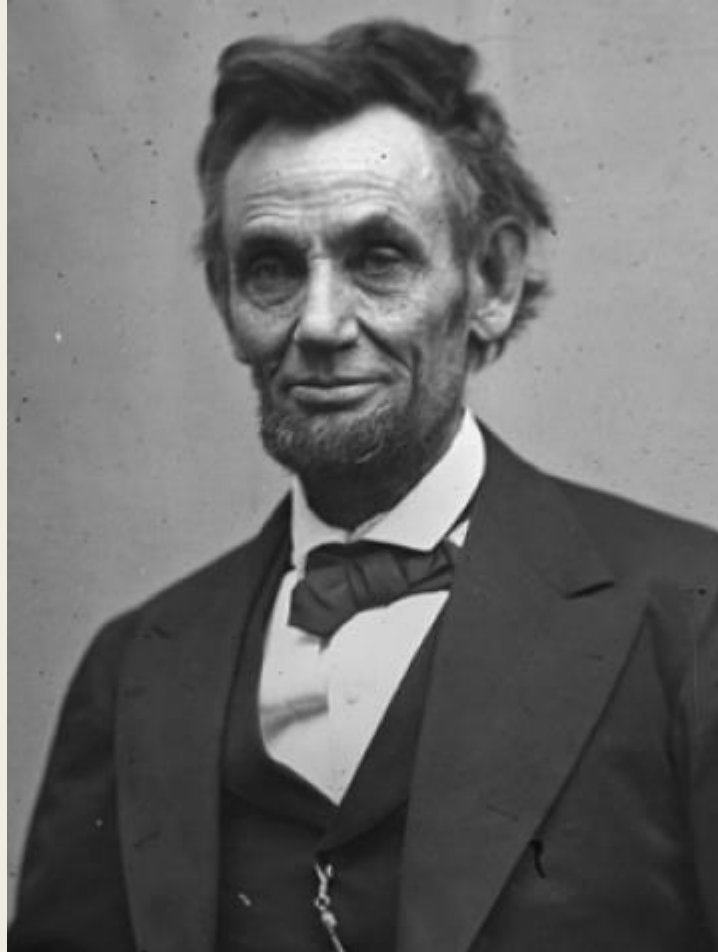
The Cotton Gin

In 1794, U.S.-born inventor Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin, a machine that revolutionized the production of cotton by greatly speeding up the process of removing seeds from cotton fiber.

While it was true that the cotton gin reduced the labor of removing seeds, it did not reduce the need for slaves to grow and pick the cotton. Instead, cotton growing became so profitable for the planters that it greatly increased their demand for both land and slave labor. Eli did not profit from his invention because of patent issues.



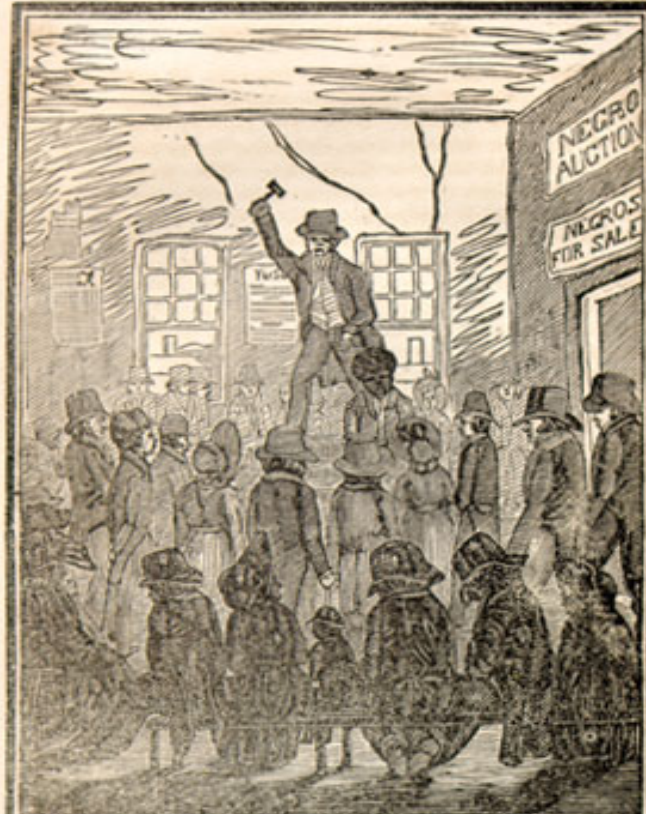
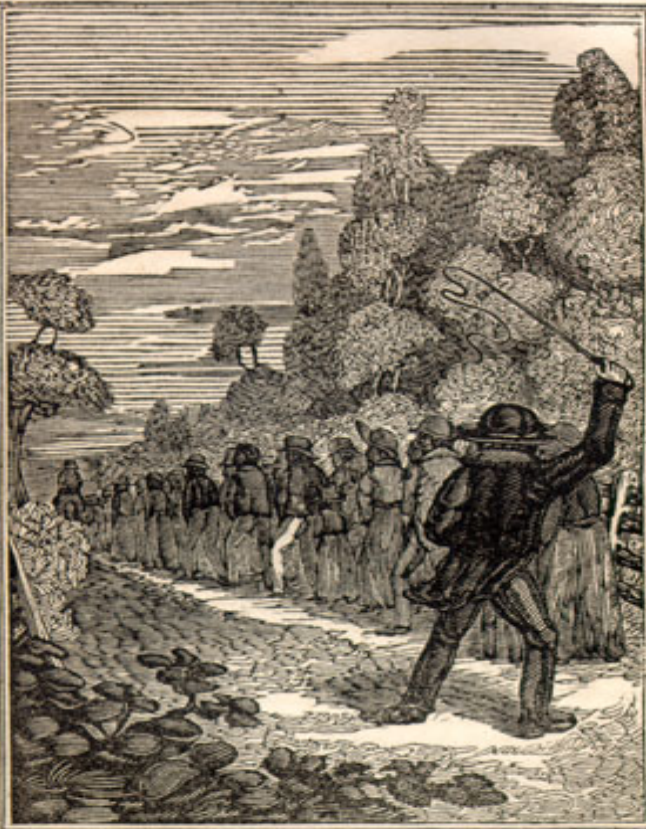
Who was the President during the Civil War?



- Abraham Lincoln was the president of the United States during the Civil War. He wanted a stronger federal government and was against slavery. It was his election that triggered the southern states leaving and the Civil War. He was determined that the country remain united.
- After being elected as President in 1860, the southern states seceded.
- Lincoln declared that he would do everything necessary to keep the United States united as one country. He refused to recognize the southern states as an independent nation and the Civil War took place in the spring of 1861.
- On January 1, 1863, Lincoln issued the **Emancipation Proclamation**, which freed the slaves in the southern states and laid the groundwork for slaves to eventually be freed across the country.

Activity #1

Describe what you see in the pictures and discuss how these images helped to change views on slavery.



The Emancipation Proclamation

- The Emancipation Proclamation was an order given on January 1, 1863 by Abraham Lincoln to free the slaves.
- **But...All slaves were not freed immediately**

Only about 50,000 of the 4 million slaves were immediately set free. The Emancipation Proclamation had some limitations. First, it only freed the slaves in the Confederate States that were not under Union control. There were some areas and border states where slavery was still legal, but were part of the Union. The slaves in these states were not immediately freed.

- For the rest of the Southern states, the slaves would not be free until the Union was able to defeat the Confederacy.
- However, the Emancipation Proclamation did eventually set millions of slaves free. It also made clear that in the near future all slaves should and would be set free.
- The Emancipation also allowed for Black men to fight in the Union Army. Around 200,000 black soldiers fought on the side of the Union Army helping the North win the war and also helping to expand the area of freedom as they marched through the South.



The Emancipation Proclamation cont...

Why did President Lincoln wait until 1863?

- Lincoln felt like he needed a major victory in order to have the full support behind the Emancipation.
- If he issued the order without public support, it might fail and he wanted to be sure that it was successful and seen as a major moral victory for the North.
- The initial announcement that the Emancipation Proclamation order was coming was given a few days later on September 22, 1862.

Slavery and the Constitution

- When the U.S. Constitution was written in 1787, the interests of slaveholders and those who profited from slavery could not be ignored. Although slaves could not vote, white Southerners argued slave labor contributed greatly to the nation's wealth.
- The words "slave" or "slavery" were not used in the original Constitution, and the word "slavery" is very hard to find even in the current Constitution.
- However, the issues of slaves' rights, the slave trade, and slavery have been addressed in several places of the Constitution; namely, Article I, Articles IV and V and the 13th Amendment, which was added to the Constitution nearly 80 years after the signing of the original document.
- “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that **all men are created equal**, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness”

13th Amendment

"Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

Sources

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