

## New Jersey and the Civil War



**Creator:** New Jersey Center for Civic Education, Rutgers University, Piscataway

**Grade Level:** Secondary

### **New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies (2020):**

- 6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.a: Prioritize the causes and events that led to the Civil War from different perspectives.
- 6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.c: Assess the human and material costs of the Civil War in the North and South
- 6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.e: Compare and contrast the approaches of Congress and Presidents Lincoln and Johnson toward the reconstruction of the South.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPR.4.a: Draw from multiple sources to explain the ways in which prevailing attitudes, socioeconomic factors, and government actions (i.e., the Fugitive Slave Act and Dred Scott Decision) in the North and South (i.e., Secession) led to the Civil War.
- 6.1.12.HistoryUP.4.a: Relate conflicting political, economic, social, and sectional perspectives on Reconstruction to the resistance of some Southern individuals and states.
- 6.1.12.HistoryCA.4.c: Analyze the debate about how to reunite the country and determine the extent to which enacted Reconstruction policies achieved their goals.

### **Common Core ELA Standards**

- [RH.6-8.1](#) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- [RH.6-8.2](#) Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- [RH.6-8.4](#) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- [RH.6-8.6](#) Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).
- [RH.6-8.7](#) Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- [RH.6-8.8](#) Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- [RH.9-10.1](#) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

<a href="#">RH.9-10.2</a>	Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
<a href="#">RH.9-10.4</a>	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
<a href="#">RH.9-10.5</a>	Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.
<a href="#">RH.9-10.6</a>	Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
<a href="#">RH.9-10.7</a>	Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
<a href="#">RH.9-10.8</a>	Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.
<a href="#">RH.9-10.9</a>	Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.
<a href="#">WHST.6-8.1.A</a>	Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
<a href="#">WHST.6-8.1.B</a>	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
<a href="#">WHST.6-8.2</a>	Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events,
<a href="#">WHST.6-8.7</a>	Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
<a href="#">WHST.6-8.8</a>	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
<a href="#">WHST.6-8.9</a>	Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
<a href="#">W.9-10.1</a>	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
<a href="#">W.9-10.2</a>	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately
<a href="#">W.9-10.7</a>	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question
<a href="#">SL.8.1</a>	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions
<a href="#">SL.8.4</a>	Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
<a href="#">SL.9-10.1</a>	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions
<a href="#">SL.9-10.4</a>	Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically

**Objectives:** Student will be able to:

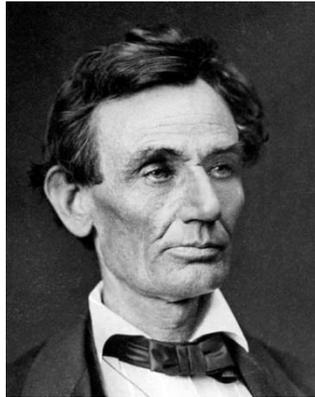
- Explain why many New Jerseyans did not support President Lincoln in the 1860 and 1864 presidential elections
- Analyze the fairness of a winner-takes-all or proportional presidential electoral vote system and determine which would be better for New Jersey
- Compare the speech president-elect Lincoln made to the New Jersey Senate in Feb. 1861 with his First Inaugural Address in March 1861
- Identify how New Jersey supported the Union in the Civil War

- Explain the views of “Copperheads” and the Copperhead press
- Analyze the arguments made by the New Jersey press in the 1864 presidential election and take a position about their strength
- Examine the potential opportunity offered by the assassination of a president to make difficult, controversial changes

### Focus Questions

- Why did New Jersey not support Lincoln in his two elections?
- Would New Jersey benefit more from a winner-takes-all or a split voting reflecting the popular vote in the Electoral College?
- How did President-elect Lincoln’s address to the NJ Legislature on Feb. 21, 1861 his first Inaugural Address in Washington, D.C. on March 1861?
- How did New Jersey contribute to the Union’s effort in the Civil War?
- How does the assassination of a president

### 1. The 1860 Presidential Election



*From photo of Lincoln taken by Alexander Hesler in Springfield, IL in June 1860, LC-USZ62-6958*

**Background:** Unlike other northern states, New Jersey’s gradual emancipation law still left a few (estimated at 18) slaves in the state in 1860. Also unlike the other northern states, New Jersey permitted the capture of runaway slaves within its borders. New Jersey was basically a politically conservative place in the 1860s. Having many economic and social ties with the South, many New Jerseyans sympathized with the southern states on deeply divisive issues such as slavery and state’s rights. Half of Princeton College’s students came from southern states in 1860. Republican Charles Olden was narrowly elected Governor of New Jersey in 1859 but both houses of the state legislature were overwhelmingly Democratic until 1865. In 1863 Democrat Joel Parker became New Jersey’s Governor.

The United States presidential election of 1860 set the stage for the American Civil War. The nation had been divided throughout most of the 1850s on questions of states' rights and slavery in the territories. In 1860, this issue finally came to a head, fracturing the formerly dominant Democratic Party into Southern and Northern factions and bringing Abraham Lincoln and the Republican Party to power without the support of a single Southern state. Lincoln received only about 40% of the popular vote in a divided nation on the brink of Civil War. Lincoln lost the popular vote in New Jersey the electorate favored northern Democrat Stephen A. Douglas and other minor party candidates. Although Douglas and other Democratic candidates collectively outpolled Lincoln in the general election 62,000 votes to

58,300, Lincoln still won four electoral votes to Douglas's three because Lincoln's opponents failed to forge a "fusion ticket."

The *Daily True American* of Trenton, which leaned strongly toward the Democratic Party, reflected a clear bias against Abraham Lincoln in the 1860 presidential election. In a post-election column, "All Hail New Jersey!," the newspaper's editors lauded New Jersey's electorate for casting the majority of the popular vote to Lincoln's opponents. They wrote: "It is with no small amount of pride and satisfaction that we record the facts to be found in our table of returns of the electoral vote [*sic*; they meant popular vote], which, although not complete, show conclusively that the Rail-Splitter has been defeated in the State by a majority of about five thousand...." Later in the same article they wrote: "Whatever disasters may result to the country from the election of LINCOLN, which seems to be conceded on all hands, it will be a great consolation for the Democracy and Union men of this State to know, they are not responsible."

Hardly more than a month after Lincoln's victory, South Carolina and other southern states seceded, actions which were rejected as illegal by the then-current President, James Buchanan and President-elect Abraham Lincoln.

### **Activity 1:** Class Discussion:

1. Students examine Handout 1: Results of the 1860 Presidential Election. Explain who was running, who won, and why New Jersey was the only "purple" state.
2. The United States Constitution leaves voting methods to each state. Currently, New Jersey, like 47 other states allocate their votes in the Presidential Electoral College on a winner takes all basis. If that had been the case in 1860, President Lincoln would have received no electoral votes from New Jersey. Only Nebraska and Maine currently have split votes in the Electoral College. Conduct a short research project about the Electoral College and New Jersey. Take and support a position of whether you think winner-takes all or splitting electoral votes to reflect the popular votes is more fair. Which system did you think would be better for New Jersey, which currently has 14 electoral votes.
3. Students examine Handout 2: 1860 Lincoln Popular Vote in New Jersey by County. In small groups discuss which counties supported Lincoln and which did not and offer an explanation. How did the population in the northern New Jersey counties differ from that in the southern New Jersey counties in 1860?

## **2. Lincoln in New Jersey, 1861**

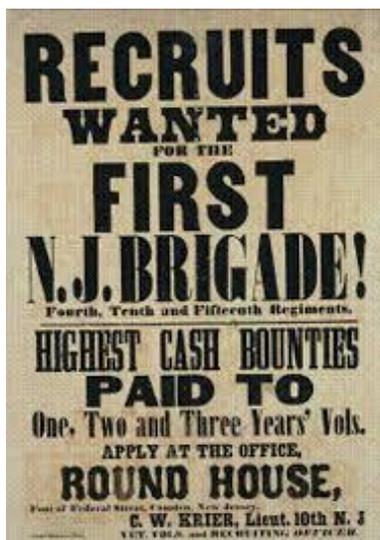
**Background:** Lincoln never actually physically campaigned in New Jersey in 1860, perhaps because it was a conservative Democratic state and he did not expect to win. However, as president-elect he visited New Jersey on his way from New York to his inauguration in Washington, D.C. on March 4, 1861. He came by train and stopped in Jersey City, Newark, Elizabeth, Rahway, New Brunswick and Princeton. On February 21, 1861 he addressed the members of the New Jersey Senate and General Assembly at the State House in Trenton. Senate President Edmund Perry welcomed Lincoln and offered him good wishes as he went "to preside over the destinies of this vast country at a time of great distraction and imminent peril...." Watch the 90-second video about Lincoln in Trenton at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=NVHpU-w036U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=NVHpU-w036U) and read President-elect Lincoln's short speech attached as Handout 3.

**Activity 2:** Close reading:

Students read Handout 3: THE RECEPTION AT TRENTON; SPEECH OF MR. LINCOLN IN THE SENATE. In small groups students discuss and identify the main point of Lincoln’s comments. (“I am exceedingly anxious that this Union, the Constitution and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated in accordance with the original idea for which that struggle was made.” He is hoping that the New Jersey Legislature will support his efforts to continue the Union.)

Then students read Handout 4: Excerpts from Lincoln’s March 4, 1861 Inaugural address and compare it with his Feb. 21, 1860 speech in Trenton. What are the similarities in the topic? In the tone? In rhetoric? What are the differences? (Similarities are that both are addressed to those who disagree with him and both are focused on the need to perpetuate the Union. The Inaugural speech is polished and uses rhetorical flourishes—e.g.: “... the central idea of secession is the essence of anarchy” “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 comments in Trenton are short and not as well rehearsed.

**3. Civil War Troops and other ways New Jersey supported the Union effort**



*Civil War Poster from the Recruitment Office in Camden, NJ*

**Background:** Although New Jersey did not vote for President Lincoln and there was no great enthusiasm for war, following the Confederate attack at Fort Sumter New Jersey sent the first full militia brigade to defend Washington. By the end of the conflict, the state had raised thirty-three regiments of infantry, four of militia, three of cavalry and five batteries of artillery. New Jersey furnished approximately 88,000 troops to the Union cause. Records show that 2800 Black soldiers from New Jersey fought for the Union. Of the total troops from New Jersey, more than 6000 died (about three men died of disease for every one killed in battle or from battle wounds) including as inmates of prison camps

**Activity 3:** Students conduct short research on how else New Jersey helped support the Union in the Civil War and write a short essay.

Examples: Nurses, such as Clara Barton, Cornelia Hancock, Dorothea Dix (from Maine but settle in Trenton after the war and founded what is now Trenton Psychiatric Hospital) helped the many wounded and ill soldiers. New Jersey manufactured a great deal of supplies for the Union army, including muskets in Trenton and leather goods in Newark.

#### 4. The Copperhead Press in New Jersey and the election of 1864

**Background:** A vocal faction of Northern Democrats opposed the American Civil War and urged an immediate peace settlement with the Confederate states. Republicans started calling these antiwar Democrats "Copperheads", likening them to the venomous snake. The Peace Democrats accepted the label, reinterpreting the copper "head" as the likeness of Liberty, which they cut from copper pennies and proudly wore as badges.



This was a highly contentious, grassroots movement, strongest in the area just north of the Ohio River, as well as some urban ethnic areas, including parts of New Jersey. Some historians have argued it represented a traditionalistic element alarmed at the rapid modernization of society sponsored by the Republican Party, and looked back to Jacksonian Democracy for inspiration. Historians agree that the Copperheads' goal of restoring the Union with slavery was naive and impractical, for the Confederates refused to consider giving up their independence.

When Lincoln issued the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation in September 1862, the worst suspicions of the Copperhead Peace Democrats were confirmed: the true agenda of Lincoln and the Republicans was freeing the slaves. In March 1863, the New Jersey Copperheads protested the emancipation of slaves, the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, a war they claimed was waged "for the accomplishment of unconstitutional or partisan purposes" and called for the appointment of peace commissioners.

The peace movement tried to weaken the Union military effort by undermining both enlistment and the operation of the draft. The enactment of the Enrollment Act of 1863 was the first time that federal control was extended to the recruitment process. Unlike the violent draft riots that broke out in New York City on July 11, 1863, which required President Lincoln to divest combat troops to retake control of New York City from the anti-draft rioter; antiwar protests were peacefully held in Bloomfield, Orange, Jersey City, Princeton, Morristown and Hackensack, NJ. Despite protests by the Copperhead press, the state of New Jersey managed to raise its quota of enlisted men for the Union.

The Copperhead press in New Jersey, which included the Trenton *Daily True American*, the Newark *Daily Journal*, the Paterson *Daily Press*, the Morristown *Democrat*, and the Bergen *Democrat*, continued to denounce the Republicans, the president and the war. Copperhead support increased when Union armies were doing poorly, and decreased when they won great victories. The Copperhead press was

particularly virulent during the time leading up to the 1864 election. Press coverage of the 1864 Lincoln reelection campaign gives insight into how divided and how racist New Jersey and the nation were at the time.

Northern antiwar sentiment was so strong that Peace Democrats came close to seizing control of their party in mid-1864. Although the 1864 Democratic convention in Chicago adopted a largely Copperhead platform, it chose a pro-war presidential candidate, George B. McClellan.

**George McClellan** was born in Philadelphia December 3, 1826. He attended private schools before entering West Point Military Academy in 1842. Upon graduation, McClellan was appointed 2nd Lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers. In the Mexican War, he was promoted for his zeal, gallantry, and ability in constructing roads and bridges over routes for the marching army. He also surveyed possible transcontinental railroad routes. He was sent abroad to study the armies of Europe and observe the Crimean War. In 1857, he resigned his commission of Captain in the 1st Cavalry to become Chief Engineer of the Illinois Central Railroad, where he occasionally worked with a lawyer named Abraham Lincoln. When the Civil War began, he was living in Ohio, where he served as president of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad. In 1861 President Lincoln appointed McClellan as Major General in charge of the Army of the Potomac. McClellan reorganized a disjointed and poorly disciplined Union Army, pushing it into the field in response to Lee's invasion. McClellan was meticulous in his planning and preparations, characteristics that may have hampered his ability to challenge aggressive opponents in a fast-moving battlefield environment. He chronically overestimated the strength of enemy units and was reluctant to apply principles of mass, frequently leaving large portions of his army unengaged at decisive points. Although he was popular with the soldiers, after the Battle of Antietam in September 1862 and the failure to seize the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia, McClellan lost the president's trust and was removed from his command. Some historians argue that he was the scape goat for the Union Army's failures. McClellan returned to his home in West Orange, New Jersey.



*[Currier and Ives](#) print of the McClellan–Pendleton Democratic presidential party ticket, 1864.*

Although the Democratic Party's 1864 platform promised an end to the war and negotiations with the Confederacy, McClellan repudiated his party's anti-war platform, an action which severely weakening the party's chances to defeat Lincoln and McClellan lost the election. However, he defeated Lincoln in New Jersey by 7300 votes. The popular vote in New Jersey was 53% for McClellan and 47% for Lincoln. As in the 1860 election, the Republican candidate won the southern counties and the Democratic candidate carried the northern counties.

General McClellan served as governor of New Jersey for one three-year term from 1878-1881, a tenure marked by careful, conservative executive management and minimal political rancor. On October 29, 1885, George B. McClellan died in Orange, NJ. He is buried in Riverside Cemetery in Trenton.

**Activity 4:** Students compare two views. Students write a short essay comparing the November 1864 excerpts from the Democratic *Newark Daily Journal* (Handout 5) and the Republican *New Jersey (Elizabeth) Journal* (Handout 6). How do these each describe President Lincoln? What arguments do they each use to support their candidate. Which do you find more persuasive and why? Are newspapers as influential today as they were in 1864? Why or why not? How do we get information about candidates for public office today?

## 5. Assassination and Funeral

Even after the fall of Richmond in 1865, the New Jersey Legislature debated a resolution expressing New Jersey's thanks to Lincoln (reference to Lincoln was deleted by the Assembly) and the soldiers. This attitude was only changed in the wake of President Lincoln's assassination on Friday, April 14, 1865. The *Trenton Daily True American* expressed the same shock and outrage felt throughout the northern states. On the day after the President's assassination, the *Daily True American's* editors wrote in disbelief: "At midnight last night the telegraph brought us the shocking and horrible report of the assassination of President Lincoln."

When President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated, his body was carried by train and by carriage through 180 cities before reaching Springfield, Illinois, where it was buried. The route passed through New Jersey and Princeton students are reported to have stood in silence as it passed. The train stopped briefly in New Brunswick and Newark, before the body was transferred to a ferry, which carried it from Jersey City to New York City.

Only after Lincoln's death in April 1865 did the Republicans in New Jersey campaign with confidence and Republican Gov. Ward was elected in Nov. 1865.



*Princeton students at attention as Lincoln's funeral carriage passes through Princeton, NJ*

**Activity 5: Critical thinking:** Does the assassination of a president provide an unusual opportunity to make difficult, controversial changes?

In his Second Inaugural Address on March 4, 1864, President Lincoln had famously stated his goal for the country: "With malice towards none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him

who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.”

Does the assassination of a president provide an opportunity to make controversial changes in public policy? Compare the results of the “opportunities” in 1865 and 1963. Were the Reconstruction policies that President Lincoln began to develop implemented by his vice-president, Southern Democrat Andrew Johnson, and the Republican Congress? Were the civil rights policies promised by President Kennedy implemented by his vice president, Lyndon Johnson? How might any differences be explained?

### **Assessment**

Students write a short essay or prepare a short presentation summarizing the impact of New Jersey and New Jerseyans on the Civil War.

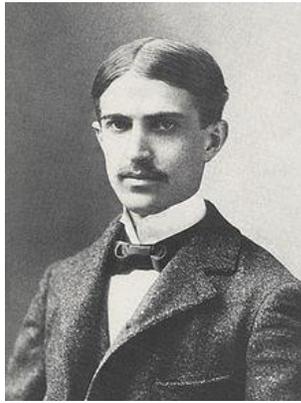
### **Extension—Literature Connection**

Read *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane. Stephen Crane was born on November 1, 1871, in Newark, New Jersey, to Jonathan Townley Crane, a minister in the Methodist Episcopal church, and Mary Helen Peck Crane, daughter of the clergyman. As a child, Stephen was often sickly. Despite his fragile nature, Crane was a precocious child who taught himself to read before the age of four. By age 16, Crane had published several articles. Having little interest in university studies, he left college in 1891 to work as a reporter and writer. Crane struggled to make a living as a free-lance writer, contributing sketches and feature articles to various New York newspapers.

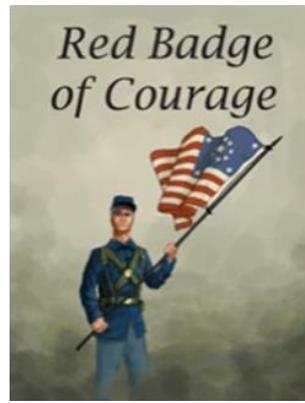
He won international acclaim in 1895 for his Civil War novel *The Red Badge of Courage*, which he wrote without having any battle experience. His realistic depictions of war and battle led to many assignments as a foreign correspondent for newspapers, taking him to such locales as Greece, Cuba, and Puerto Rico. Crane's writing is characterized by vivid intensity, distinctive dialects, and irony. Common themes involve fear, spiritual crises and social isolation. Plagued by financial difficulties and ill health, Crane died of tuberculosis in a Black Forest sanatorium in Germany at the age of 28.

Based loosely on the events of the Civil War Battle of Chancellorsville (May 2–6, 1863)—though neither the battle, the war, nor the armies are named in the book—*The Red Badge of Courage* shattered American preconceptions about what a war novel could be. In the decades before Crane’s novel, most fiction about the Civil War was heavily idealistic, portraying the conflict as a noble clash of opposing ideals. Whereas previous writers had taken a large, epic view, Crane focused on the individual psychology of a single soldier, Private Henry Fleming, during his first experiences of battle. In this narrowed scope, Crane represents Henry’s mind as a maze of illusions, vanity, and romantic naïveté, challenged by the hard lessons of war. Crane does not depict a world of moral absolutes, but rather a universe utterly indifferent to human existence.

Discuss or write a short essay considering the following questions: Do we glorify war? What is courage? Compare Stephen Crane’s depiction of the Civil War in *The Red Badge of Courage* with first hand stories by soldiers and photos of the Civil War.



*Formal portrait of Stephen Crane taken in Washington, D.C., about March 1896*



## Handout 1

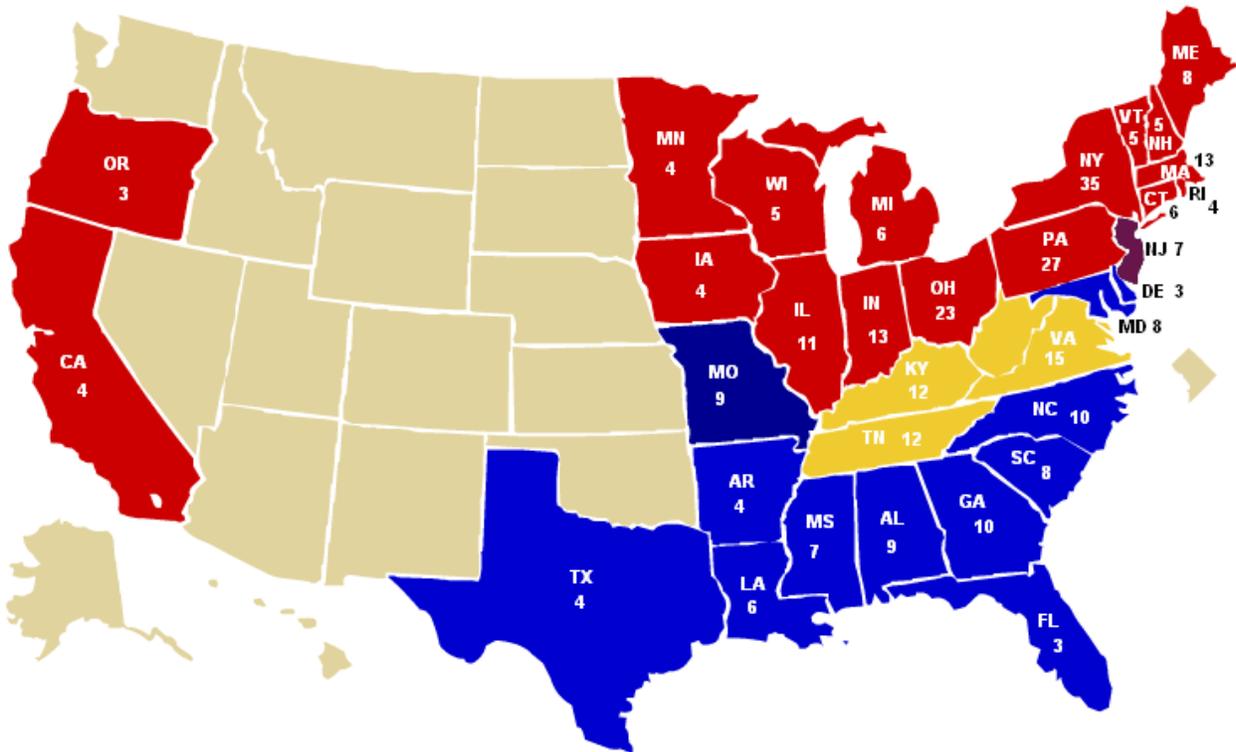
### Results of the 1860 Presidential Election

Candidate	Party	Electoral Votes	Popular Votes
Abraham Lincoln (red)	Republican	180	1,866,452
John C. Breckinridge (blue)	Southern Democrat	72	847,953
John Bell (yellow)	Constitutional Union	39	592,906
Stephen A. Douglas (MO-9; NJ-3)	Northern Democrat	12	1,382,713

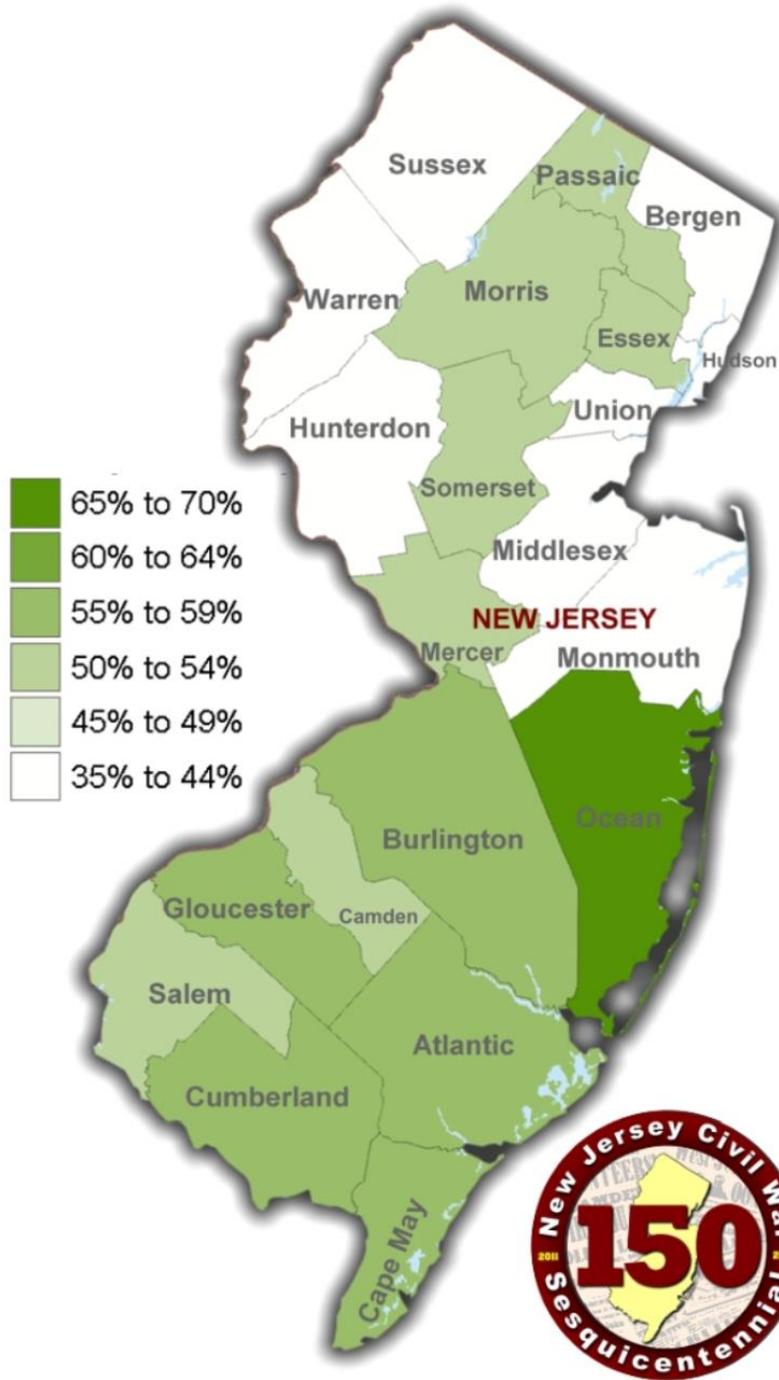
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#### New Jersey

Abraham Lincoln	Republican	4	58,300
Stephen A. Douglas	Northern Democrat	3	62,000



## 1860 Lincoln's Percentage of the Presidential Popular Vote By NJ County



In the 1860 Presidential Election in NJ, Abraham Lincoln's support came from the southern portion of the State with a small portion in pockets in the north. However the voter population base heavily favored to the cities in the north and this is how Lincoln lost New Jersey in this election, as well as in 1864 against NJ Resident and future NJ Governor General George B McClellan.

This map only demonstrates the percentage of the vote by county for Abraham Lincoln.

## **THE RECEPTION AT TRENTON; SPEECH OF MR. LINCOLN IN THE SENATE. SPEECH IN THE ASSEMBLY. SPEECH TO THE PEOPLE**

From the New York Times, Feb. 22, 1861

HONORED SIR: In the name of the citizens of the Capital of New-Jersey, I have the honor to extend to you a most cordial welcome to our city, and it will be a pleasure to do all in our power to make your stay among us agreeable. And, Sir, if your official mission would allow you to prolong your visit, we could point you to incidents in the early struggles of our fathers, that would excite in your breast, as they have in the breasts of every true patriot, the deepest veneration for the very soil on which you tread. But Sir, with your permission, I will now escort you to the Capitol of our State, where the members of the Legislature, and the State authorities, are in waiting to do you further honors.

The Mayor then introduced the President elect to the President of the Common Council and the members there. The party were then taken in carriages to the State House. The crowd of people to be seen was perfectly alarming, yet the efficient police arrangements of the Mayor and Common Council enabled the party to reach the State Capitol in safety.

The procession consisted of about 100 men on horseback, the City Blues, of Patterson; the German Rifles, of Trenton; the President elect, etc. Arriving at the State House, he was first introduced to the Senate, and the President of the Senate, in a very eloquent speech, received him, when Mr. LINCOLN replied as follows:

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEW-JERSEY: I am very grateful to you for the honorable reception of which I have been the object. I cannot but remember the place that New-Jersey holds in our early history. In the early revolutionary struggle few of the States among the old thirteen had more of the battle-fields of the country within their limits than old New-Jersey. May I be pardoned if upon this occasion I mention that away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book, such a one as few of the younger members have ever seen, "WEEM's Life of Washington." I remember all the accounts there given of the battle-fields and struggles for the liberties of the country, and none fixed themselves upon my imagination so deeply as the struggle here at Trenton, New Jersey. The crossing of the river; the contest with the Hessians; the great hardships endured at that time, all fixed themselves on my memory, more than any single revolutionary event; and you all know, for you have all been boys, how these early impressions last longer than any others. I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that these men struggled for. I am exceedingly anxious that that thing which they struggled for; that something even more than National Independence; that something that held out a great promise to all the people of the world to all time to come. I am exceedingly anxious that this Union, the Constitution and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated in accordance with the original idea for which that struggle was made, and I shall be most happy in lead if I shall be an humble instrument in the hands of the Almighty, and of this, his almost chosen people, as the chosen instrument, also in the hands of the almighty, for perpetuating the object of that great struggle. You give me this reception, as I understand, without distinct on of party. I learn that this body is composed of a majority of gentlemen, who, in the exertion of their best judgment in the choice of a Chief Magistrate, did not

think I was the man. I understand, nevertheless, that they came forward here to greet me as the constitutional President of the United States -- as citizens of the United States to meet the man who, for the time being, is the representative man of the nation -- united by a purpose to perpetuate the Union and liberties of the people. As such, I accept this reception more gratefully than I could do did I believe it was tendered to me as an individual.

Mr. LINCOLN then gracefully closed his speech, which was followed by heartfelt applause.

After introductions and courtesies, Mr. LINCOLN was taken to the Assembly Chamber and introduced by the State Committee to the Speaker of the House.

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN: I have just enjoyed the honor of a reception by the other branch of this Legislature, and I return to you and then my thanks for the reception which the people of New-Jersey have given through their chosen representatives to me as the representative, for the time being, of the majesty of the people of the United States. I appropriate to myself very little of the demonstrations of respect with which I have been greeted. I think that should be given to any man, but that it should be a manifestation of adherence to the Union and the Constitution. I understand myself to be received here by the representatives of the people of New-Jersey, a majority of whom differ in opinion from those with whom I have acted. This manifestation is, therefore, to be regarded by me as expressing their devotion to the Union, the Constitution and the liberties of the people. You, Mr. speaker, have well said that this is a time when the bravest and wisest look with doubt and awe upon the aspect presented by our national affairs. Under those circumstances, you will readily see why I should not speak in detail of the course I shall deem it best to pursue. It is proper that I should avail myself of all the information and all the time at my command, in order that when the time arrives in which I must speak officially, I shall be able to take the ground which I deem the best and safest, and from which I may have no occasion to swerve. I shall endeavor to take the ground I deem most just to the North, the East, the West, the South, and the whole country. I take it, I hope, in good temper, certainly no malice towards any section. I shall do all that may be in my power to promote a peaceful settlement of all our difficulties. The man does not live who is more devoted to peace than I am. [Cheers] None who would do more to preserve it, but it may be necessary to put the foot down firmly. [Here the audience broke out into cheers so loud and long, that for some moments it was impossible to hear Mr. LINCOLN's voice.] He continued. And if I do my duty and do right, you will sustain me, will you not? [Loud cheers, and cries of "Yes yes, we will."] Received, as I am, by the members of a Legislature, the majority of whom do not agree with me to political sentiment, I trust that I may have their assistance in piloting the ship of State through this voyage, surrounded by perils as it is for if it should suffer attack now, there will be no pilot ever needed for another voyage. Gentlemen, I have already spoken longer than I intended, and must beg leave to stop here.

...The procession then moved to the Trenton House, where the president elect made a speech to the crowd outside.

## Handout 4

### President Lincoln's First Inaugural Address

March 4, 1861

...Apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern States that by the accession of a Republican Administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declare that--

I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so.

...There is much controversy about the delivering up of fugitives from service or labor. The clause I now read is as plainly written in the Constitution as any other of its provisions:

*No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.*

... There is some difference of opinion whether this clause should be enforced by national or by State authority, but surely that difference is not a very material one. If the slave is to be surrendered, it can be of but little consequence to him or to others by which authority it is done. And should anyone in any case be content that his oath shall go unkept on a merely unsubstantial controversy as to how it shall be kept?

Again: In any law upon this subject ought not all the safeguards of liberty known in civilized and humane jurisprudence to be introduced, so that a free man be not in any case surrendered as a slave? And might it not be well at the same time to provide by law for the enforcement of that clause in the Constitution which guarantees that "the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States"?

I take the official oath to-day with no mental reservations and with no purpose to construe the Constitution or laws by any hypercritical rules; and while I do not choose now to specify particular acts of Congress as proper to be enforced, I do suggest that it will be much safer for all, both in official and private stations, to conform to and abide by all those acts which stand unrepealed than to violate any of them trusting to find impunity in having them held to be unconstitutional.

... I hold that in contemplation of universal law and of the Constitution the Union of these States is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert that no government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination. Continue to execute all the express provisions of our National Constitution, and the Union will endure forever, it being impossible to destroy it except by some action not provided for in the instrument itself.

Again: If the United States be not a government proper, but an association of States in the nature of contract merely, can it, as a contract, be peaceably unmade by less than all the parties who made it? One party to a contract may violate it--break it, so to speak--but does it not require all to lawfully rescind it?

... The Union is much older than the Constitution. It was formed, in fact, by the Articles of Association in 1774. It was matured and continued by the Declaration of Independence in 1776. It was further matured, and the faith of all the then thirteen States expressly plighted and engaged that it should be perpetual, by the Articles of Confederation in 1778. And finally, in 1787, one of the declared objects for ordaining and establishing the Constitution was "to form a more perfect Union."

... Plainly the central idea of secession is the essence of anarchy. A majority held in restraint by constitutional checks and limitations, and always changing easily with deliberate changes of popular opinions and sentiments, is the only true sovereign of a free people. Whoever rejects it does of necessity fly to anarchy or to despotism. Unanimity is impossible. The rule of a minority, as a permanent arrangement, is wholly inadmissible; so that, rejecting the majority principle, anarchy or despotism in some form is all that is left.

... 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. The fugitive-slave clause of the Constitution and the law for the suppression of the foreign slave trade are each as well enforced, perhaps, as any law can ever be in a community where the moral sense of the people imperfectly supports the law itself. The great body of the people abide by the dry legal obligation in both cases, and a few break over in each. This, I think, can not be perfectly cured, and it would be worse in both cases after the separation of the sections than before. The foreign slave trade, now imperfectly suppressed, would be ultimately revived without restriction in one section, while fugitive slaves, now only partially surrendered, would not be surrendered at all by the other.

Physically speaking, we can not separate. We can not remove our respective sections from each other nor build an impassable wall between them....

... This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing Government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow...

... My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and well upon this whole subject.

...In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war.

... 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.

Handout 5

**Excerpt from the *Newark Daily Journal*, November 8, 1864**

For nearly four years civil war has prevailed in this country, and during that time the people have held and expressed political opinions conflicts with the policy of the Administration, at the risk of their personal safety and convenience...

The term *traitor* has been freely applied to all men who have refused to believe in the honesty and perfection of Mr. Lincoln...

If it be treason to talk of an honorable peace, and to seek by a change of Administration, to bring about a cessation of hostilities and a restoration of the old order of things, the Union and the Constitution in all their strength and glory, then, fellow Democrats, are we doubledyed traitors.

If Mr. Lincoln shall succeed in fastening himself upon the people as President for the next four years, he will simply be its monarch and dictator...

Shall we tamely submit to the continued rule of the man who has robbed us of every right, and who has recognized nothing as sacred for his meddling touch?

...The reaction against the revolution of government attempted by the radicals will be consummated by the election of George B. McClellan to the presidency of the United States...

It would restore peace and prosperity to the country, reinstate the Constitution as the supreme law and the Union as a bond of internal peace and the pledge of fraternal affection. It would close up rebellion, and banish fanaticism from the land...

All these blessings we hope and expect would be brought about or put in train of progress by the election of General McClellan...

## Handout 6

### **Excerpt from The *New Jersey Journal* (Elizabeth), November 1, 1864:**

The rebellion which we are now striving to put down, was gotten up by the slaveholders of the south, because they were disappointed and defeated in the result of the last presidential election; despising the fundamental principle of government that a majority shall rule, they set at work when they found themselves in the minority, to overthrow the government...

The real issue is between *union and disunion* and the choice which is to be made on the eight of November is to settle that point. We believe for all practical purposes the case is already settled. In Mr. Lincoln we have an experienced statesman, a true patriot and a tried man. He has been surrounded with difficulties and trials tenfold greater than any of his predecessors ever experienced and in the midst of them all, he has conducted the ship of state in a manner which challenges our admiration. Mistakes and errors he has committed, but in the language of General Sherman, "I believe Mr. Lincoln has done the best he could."

Voters, you are called upon to make a choice between the two men. Let your choice be such a one as shall settle the point that the doctrines of secession and state rights have no countenance or support in all future time, and that the rebels shall be taught that there is no possible resource left to them, but an unconditional surrender to the authority and Constitution of the United States.