

# The Gathering Storm: The Coming of the Civil War Lesson Plan

MIDDLE SCHOOL

**Approximate Time:** 50 minutes

## **Goal:**

Students will gain an understanding of the progression of causes leading to the American Civil War.

## **Objectives:**

1. After viewing an exhibit on the period leading to the American Civil War, students will be able to identify the principal events of that period.
2. Students will be able to place the events in chronological order

## **Materials:**

1. [The Gathering Storm Exhibit](#)
2. [The Gathering Storm Timeline Assignment \(PDF\)](#)

## **Anticipatory Set/Hook:**

Ask: Do you think most Americans were aware that they were being drawn into war? How do you think a citizen might be able to tell if their country is going to war? What are some things you think happen before a war? Do you think people happy or unhappy with their situation in life?

## **Procedure:**

### **Activity 1:**

Either view The Gathering Storm Exhibit as a group – projecting the exhibit or printing the PDF's. Or have students view the exhibit on their own.

Discuss what students think the most important development leading up to the war was. Have a few students give their opinion and ask them why they think that event or development was the most important.

### **Activity 2:**

Hand out The Gathering Storm Timeline Assignment and read over the directions:

Use the pictures below to illustrate the causes of the American Civil War.

1. Cut out and paste the pictures that represent the two major differences between the North and South.
2. Label what these differences are below the picture.
3. Cut out and paste the pictures that represent major events leading up to the Civil War.
4. Next to the picture, label the event it represents.

Students will have the remainder of class to work on their timelines.

### **Closure:**

Ask: What do you think will happen next? Do you think people living in that time had a sense of what was coming? What kind of predictions do you think people had about the war at the time, what predictions would you have made?

### **Assessment in this Lesson:**

1. Informal assessment through discussion after viewing the Gathering Storm Exhibit.
2. Completed Gathering Storm Timeline Assignment