

Social Studies LPA Assessment

8th Grade – “Divided House, Divided Families”

Instructions:

Read the following article carefully and **make notes in the margin** as you read.

Your notes should include:

- Comments that show that you **understand** the article. (A summary or statement of the main idea of important sections may serve this purpose.)
- Questions you have that show what you are **wondering** about as you read.
- Notes that differentiate between **fact** and **opinion**.
- Observations about how the **writer’s strategies** (organization, word choice, perspective, support) and choices affect the article.

Your **margin notes** are part of your score for this assessment.

Student _____ SSID _____
Teacher _____ Class Period _____
School _____ School District _____



*Notes on my thoughts,
reactions and questions as I
read:*

1. Even as the Civil War began, Benjamin Hardin Helm had the prospect of a bright future in front of him. Helm was married to Emilie Todd, a sister of Mary Todd Lincoln, President Lincoln’s wife. That made Helm the president’s brother-in-law. President Lincoln had offered him a good job with the Union army. The position paid well and would not require Helm to fight. It was a job many people wanted. “The position you offer me is beyond what I had expected in my most hopeful dreams,” Helm told the president. Still, he could not decide.

2. In the end, Helm turned down the president’s offer. It was “the most painful moment of my life,” he said, but he felt he could not take up arms against the South. Instead, he joined the Confederate cause and fought against the Union.

*Notes on my thoughts,
reactions and questions as I
read:*

3. Helm's dilemma, though difficult, was not unusual. Many people found themselves torn between competing loyalties during the Civil War. This was especially true in border states like Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, and Delaware. Although these states remained in the Union, many of their citizens felt sympathy for the South. Families in border states were often deeply divided over the war. Lincoln's own family was a case in point.

4. The president actually had little immediate family of his own. But his wife's family, the Todds, was quite large. Mary Todd Lincoln had 14 brothers and sisters, all from Kentucky. Of these, 6 supported the Union and 8 backed the Confederacy. Several of her brothers fought in the Confederate army.

5. The Todds were important to Lincoln, and he did everything in his power to help them, even when they turned against him. Just as he tried to hold the nation together, he tried to keep the family together. But this was too much for even the president to accomplish.

Brother Against Brother

6. Henry Stone and his brother fought on opposing sides in the war. This was not uncommon. In fact, the Civil War was sometimes called the "brothers' war." One notable case of brother against brother involved the Campbell brothers from Scotland. James and Alexander Campbell came to America in the 1850s. James settled in Charleston, South Carolina. Alexander chose New York. When the war began, both signed up to fight, though on opposite sides.

7. In June 1862, Alexander's regiment was part of an invasion force sent to retake Charleston from the Confederates. At the Battle of Secessionville, Union troops attacked Ft. Lamar, one of the forts guarding the city. Although neither brother knew it at the time, they were both involved in the battle. Alexander held the U.S. flag at the base of the fort's walls, while James stood above, firing down on the attackers. James later wrote his brother,

I was astonished to hear from the prisoners that you [were] color Bearer of the Regiment that assaulted the Battery . . . I hope you and I will never again meet . . . on the Battlefield but if such should be the case . . . I will strive to discharge my duty to my country and my cause.

8. The two brothers fought in other battles of the war, but never again in the same place. After the war, they corresponded with each other and remained on good terms.

9. Another soldier, Matthew H. Peters, later recounted his own experience of the brothers' war in a poem:

*Both of us fought for what we thought right,
But of duty each took a different view;
Both of us entered the perilous fight
And did our duty as patriots do—
But he wore the gray and I wore the blue.*

—Matthew H. Peters, "My Brother and I," 1893

10. Unlike these soldiers, Hardin Helm did not survive the war. He was killed at the Battle of Chickamauga in 1863. When Lincoln got the news, he was devastated. "I never saw Mr. Lincoln more moved than when he heard of the death of his young brother-in-law," said a friend. Helm had died fighting for the Confederacy, but he was still family.

11. For Lincoln, Helm's death was yet another tragedy of the divided nation. Families and communities had been torn apart by the war. It would take years for the wounds to heal.

*Notes on my thoughts,
reactions and questions as I
read:*

Demonstrate Understanding

1. *Summarize the text for someone who has not read it. Make sure you include the main idea and supporting details.*

Demonstrate Understanding

2. The author states that “Lincoln’s own family was a **case in point** [example]” of the division among families. How is Lincoln’s family’s story similar to the stories of other families in the country during the Civil War?

Develop an Interpretation

3. According to the author, the division among families was “especially true in border states like Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri and Delaware.” Based on the text, why would you think this was the case?

Develop an Interpretation

4. *The Campbell brothers never met on the battle field, but based on James' letter to his brother, what do you hypothesize would have happened had they met in battle? Use evidence from the text to support your claim.*

Analyze Text

5. *What is the author's purpose in including primary sources such as quotes, a letter and a poem? Use evidence to support your claim.*