Historical Background: The American Civil War (1861 to 1865) sent our country into a national crisis that will devastate the Nation. The Civil War will threaten to break up the United States of America, will lead to over 500,000 American deaths, and destroy through total war the economy of the South. This War was caused by many underlying social, economic, and political factors that will in the end lead to the attack on Fort Sumter in 1861 and the start of the Civil War. The issue of slavery, rise of cotton production in the South, growth of the abolition movement, Uncle Tom’s Cabin, expansion of slavery into the territories, election of President Lincoln in 1860, and the secession of southern states are some of the major issues that will lead to the outbreak of Civil War at Fort Sumter on April 12th, 1861.

Correlation to NYS 7/8 Social Studies Core Curriculum:
Unit Six: Division and Reunion
I. Underlying Causes of the Civil War

Suggested Timeframe: This lesson is designed to be completed in two, forty-minute periods (two days).

Materials/Resources:
- Underlying Causes of the Civil War Webquest Worksheet (attached)
- Social, Economic, Political, and Military Causes of the Civil War Graphic Organizer (attached)
- Computers with access to the Internet
- Short Four question Quiz
- 3-2-1 worksheet (access at http://www.readingquest.org/pdf/321.pdf)
- Banner paper, markers, Flash Cards (4 per student)

Student Objectives: Students will be able to:
- Accurately research and answer questions about the Causes of the Civil War using an Internet webquest.
- Identify underlying and immediate causes of the American Civil War.
- Organize researched information into a “Causes of the Civil War Graphic Organizer.”

Teaching Strategies, Procedures and Methodologies:
1. Each student or a group of two students will be provided access to a computer. Hand out the questions and instruct students to research the answers at the websites provided.
2. The student will then use the information gained through the webquest, to create a Graphic Organizer for the Underlying and Immediate cause of the Civil War.
3. Students will create four flash cards for homework on the first day. The first flash card will define Underlying Cause, the second will define Immediate Cause, the third will identify at least 3 Underlying Causes of the American Civil War, and the fourth will identify the Immediate Cause of the American Civil War.
4. Students will be given a four-question quiz and a 3-2-1 sheet at the end of class on the second day to fill out and hand in.

Evaluation/Assessment:
The success of the lesson will be based on the accuracy of student answers to the webquest work sheet, the accuracy of the Civil War Graphic Organizer and flashcards. A short four-question quiz will be given based on the Flash Cards on Day 2.
About the Author:
J. David Conway is a social studies teacher in the South Colonie Central School District in Colonie, New York.
CAUSES OF THE CIVIL WAR WEBQUEST WORKSHEET

Read the questions and go to the website to find the correct answer. Write the answer in the blank provided.

1. Define the following terms:
   - Underlying cause-
     http://www.yourdictionary.com/underlying
   - Immediate cause-
     http://www.answers.com/topic/immediate-cause

2. Why was slavery used in the United States?
   http://www.slaveryinamerica.org/history/hs_esoverview.htm

3. What was a Cotton Gin and what effect did it have on slavery in the South?

4. As our nation expanded during the 1800s the issue of expanding or limiting slavery in the United States was a key issue. Explain how each of the Compromises listed dealt with the issue of slavery.
   http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/lincolns/politics/es_shift.html
   - Missouri Compromise 1820-
   - Compromise of 1850-
   - The Kansas-Nebraska Act, 1854-

5. What effect did the Dred Scott Supreme Court case have on Dred Scott’s freedom and on the Missouri Compromise?
   http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/E/dred_scott/scott03.htm
6. What is an Abolitionist?
   http://history1800s.about.com/od/1800sglossary/g/abolitdef.htm

7. Who was William Lloyd Garrison and what was his newspaper about?

8. What was the purpose of the Underground Railroad?

9. What contribution did Harriet Tubman make to the Abolitionist movement and how much would be paid for her capture?
   http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4p1535.html

10. What was the new political party that was formed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on June 17, 1856 and what political goals were stated in their platform?
    http://www.ushistory.org/gop/origins.htm

11. Who said, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that started this Great War!"
    http://www.harrietbeecherstowecenter.org/life/#war

   Who is the little woman?

   What is the name of the book and how could it be blamed for a war?
12. Who was John Brown and what did he do on October 16th 1859?
http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/jb/reform/brown_2
http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/jb/reform/brown_2

What happened to John Brown?

13. Presidential elections can have a great effect on our nation.
http://www.eagleton.rutgers.edu/e-gov/e-politicalarchiveCivilWar1.htm

What party and person won the election of 1860?-

What was the South’s response to the election?-  

14. What was the immediate cause of the Civil War?
http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/trm117.html

15. Define the following terms:
http://www.birdseyeviews.org/tr-middle-03.php

• Political-

• Economic-

• Social-
4 QUESTION QUIZ

1. Define an underlying cause.

2. Define immediate cause.

3. What were 3 underlying causes of the Civil War?

4. What was the immediate cause of the Civil War?