

# Summary: The Civil War Begins

## The Road to Secession

In the 1840s and 1850s, many Southern plantations used enslaved Africans to do most of the work. The planters made money by using these unpaid workers. Planters believed the South needed slavery. The North had farms and factories. Factory workers were paid for their work.

People in the North and South disagreed about whether slavery was right or wrong. Northern abolitionists worked to make slavery illegal. By the 1840s, slavery was illegal in many northern states.

Two issues divided the North and the South. The first was slavery, and the second was states' rights. Northerners believed the federal government should make all new states free states. Southerners believed each state should be able to decide for itself about slavery.

Within Florida, people disagreed about slavery too. In Middle Florida, many planters wanted slavery. In West Florida, fewer people supported slavery. In East Florida, most people were against slavery.

## Secession and War

In 1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected President. Southerners knew Lincoln was against slavery. They feared he would ban slavery in all states. Many southerners believed their states should secede from the Union.

In Florida, free blacks and abolitionists did not want to secede. Many planters wanted to secede because they believed the South needed slavery. Others supported slavery but wanted to be loyal to the United States. They feared leaving would cause a war.

In 1860, South Carolina was the first state to secede. Eleven southern states formed a new nation called the Confederate States of America. In 1861, Confederate troops attacked a U.S. fort in South Carolina. The Civil War began.

People from Florida fought both for the Confederate States and for the Union. Florida produced cattle, lumber, salt and cotton for the Confederate Army. Union generals sent ships to blockade Florida's coast.



### Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

**abolitionist** *noun*, a person who works to abolish, or end, slavery

**secede** *verb*, to separate from the rest of the country and form a new nation

**blockade** *noun*, a military obstacle that prevents movement in and out of a place



### After You Read

**REVIEW** What issues divided the North and the South? Underline the sentence that tells the answer.

**REVIEW** Why did planters support secession? Highlight the sentence that tells why many planters wanted to secede.