Social Studies

Grade 4 / Week 8

Your Week at a Glance
☐ Area of focus: American History – Lesson: Florida Statehood
☐ Area of Focus: American History – Lesson: Florida and the Civil War
☐ Area of Focus: American History – Lesson: Florida and Reconstruction
☐ STANDARDS:
SS.4.A.5.1 Describe Florida's involvement (secession, blockades of ports, the battles of Ft. Pickens, Olustee, Ft. Brooke, Natural Bridge, food supply) in the Civil War.   SS.4.A.5.2 Summarize challenges Floridians faced during Reconstruction.
☐ STATUTES: 1003.42 f, l

Name

Teacher

Florida Statehood
(adapted from Florida Studies Weekly Week 16)

On March 3, 1845, almost 70 years after the United States declared independence from England, Congress decided that not one, but two, great territories could become states. Why two at once? That's a simple question, but the answer isn't so simple.

At this time, America was still a very young country. Like most youngsters, it was going through some growing pains and making some mistakes. About half the country was opposed to slavery, while the other half was in the habit of depending upon slavery to make a living.

In 1693, the king of Spain freed African slaves in the Florida territory, but slavery had long since moved south to Florida again by the time the United States took it over as a territory in 1821. The Union became worried that one more slave state would give slave owners too much power in the government. They tried to solve this problem by granting statehood to two different territories at the same time: the slave-holding state of Florida and the free state of Iowa. What a balance! The politicians in Washington, D.C., were able to breathe easily for a while. But what was happening here in Florida?

The road to statehood for Florida had not been a smooth one. There was a great deal of controversy (heated discussion). People argued about everything, from where the state capital should be to what hotels to stay in during the government conferences. But once the arguing was over, our state wound up smelling like a rose, with senators and representatives speaking for us in the U.S. government and a terrific state song as a bonus.

Iowa didn't have it easy either. Even though Congress agreed to let them become a state at the same time as Florida, arguments over boundaries kept that from happening until December 1846.

Waving in the Lonely Breeze

You can tell a lot about a place by its flag. An American flag has one stripe for each of the original 13 Colonies and a star for every state that is part of the country today. Each state also has its own flag, including Florida. In fact, Florida's flag has changed a few times since the 1800s. Florida's first unofficial flag had blue, orange, red, white and green stripes and the motto, "Let Us Alone!" A motto is a saying or slogan. Today, Florida's state motto is "In God We Trust." Florida has changed in many other ways since we were a territory. Let's look at a few of those changes.

East vs. West

Before Florida became a state, it was divided into two parts. Those areas were called East Florida and West Florida. Leaders in Florida and the United States weren't

sure whether the area should join the country as one state or two. Those in Florida wanted to remain separate, but leaders in Washington, D.C., did not agree. Slavery was one of the most important and controversial issues. Both East and West Florida allowed slaves. People who opposed slavery knew that having more slave states would make it harder to free the slaves. They did not want to add two more slave states at the same time. The argument continued as Florida got closer to becoming a state.

David Levy Yulee, a Florida Statesman

David Levy Yulee was an important person in that argument. He worked hard to make sure Florida joined the United States as a single state. Yulee's father had made a lot of money in the lumber business. The family used part of that money to buy 50,000 acres of land. They wanted to build a town for Jewish settlers. Yulee also helped build Florida's first cross-state railroad.

Yulee wrote a lot of letters and gave many speeches about Florida's future. He argued that Florida would be better if it stayed as one state. He was so convincing that people all over Florida started to agree with him. Today, many historians believe that Yulee was one of the most important people involved with Florida's statehood. He had a vision for his state and worked hard to make it happen. Yulee would later become one of Florida's senators. This made him the first Jewish person to serve as a member of Congress (a gathering of representatives).

Becoming a State: The Magic Number

Population was an important part of becoming a state. Congress only allowed new states if the territory had enough citizens. In the early 1800s, that number was 60,000 people. That's enough people to fill about five minor league baseball stadiums. That may seem like a lot, but today, Florida has a population of around 20 million people. That's enough to fill more than 1,500 baseball stadiums!

House Rules

Another step to becoming a state was writing a constitution. Deciding on the laws for a new state was a big job. Florida's politicians had to decide what property needed to be taxed and by how much. Politicians are people who are involved in government. They also had to decide on the rules for different offices like senator, judge and governor. Some of those rules seem strange to us today. For example, Florida's first constitution says that no one who had ever fought in a formal duel was allowed to hold any office in the state.

Once the constitution was finished, Florida was finally ready to become a state!

Think and Review

1. What other territory was working to become a state at the same time as Florida?

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2. Why did Congress agree to let both territories become states?

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3. On what date did Florida officially become a state?

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4. What kept the other territory from becoming a state until December 1846?

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5. Name one of the leaders who helped Florida become a state. What did that person do?

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6. What requirement did Florida need to meet before it became a state?

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Florida and th Civil
(adapted from Florida Studies Weekly Week 17)

You probably know hundreds and hundreds of words. Some of them are big and long, like archaeologist, and some of them are short and simple, like cat. Here's one medium-sized word that caused the Civil War, the most deadly war ever fought by the United States. Are you ready for the word? The word is secede, and it means to officially leave a group or country.

Secede is just what the slave-holding states in the Southern part of the United States wanted to do. They believed they had the right to break away from the rest of the Union and form their own country. A union is a group of people who share a common cause. Does that seem like a crazy idea? The people in the Northern states sure thought so, and when the Southern states seceded, it was only a matter of time before the first shot was fired at Fort Sumter, South Carolina.

Why did the South want to be its own country? That's a good question, and there are many different answers. But probably the main answer is that the Southern states allowed people to own slaves, and the Northern states did not. It was a big difference, and big differences can lead to big arguments. Solving big arguments sure is tough. It's tough enough to solve arguments between just two people; think of what it must take to solve an argument big enough for an entire nation!

What Is a Civil War?

The United States has fought in many wars since it became a nation over 200 years ago. Our soldiers have fought in World War I, World War II, wars in Korea and Vietnam and in Operation Desert Storm. These wars were all fought against other countries, governments and armies. A civil war is a war between people in the same country. The American Civil War lasted from 1861 until 1865. American soldiers fought against other Americans in one of the deadliest wars our country has ever seen.

The War Begins

One of the main causes for the Civil War happened when the country elected a new president in 1860. People living in the Southern states were upset because they knew the new president did not like slavery. Do you know who this president was? It was Abraham Lincoln!

About a month after Lincoln was elected, South Carolina seceded from the United States. To secede means to officially leave a group. Over the next few months, 10 more states did the same. Florida seceded on Jan. 10, 1861. We were the third state to leave the Union.

On April 12, 1861, Confederate troops attacked Fort Sumter in South Carolina. The U.S. government controlled the fort, and Lincoln knew he had to respond. He gave orders to raise an army, and he ordered his generals to attack the Southern states.

Florida Does Its Part

When the Civil War started, Florida had fewer people than any other Southern state. Some people even called it the "smallest tadpole" of the Confederacy. A confederacy is a group of nations or states that agree to work together. Florida was not able to send many soldiers to fight, but it found other ways to help. Soldiers in the Civil War needed guns, ammunition, clothes and food. Florida had some of the most fertile farmland in the South. Farmers from our state grew a lot of the crops that helped feed Confederate soldiers.

Battles of Fort Pickens and Fort Brooke

Fort Pickens was built on Pensacola Bay. For a long time, there weren't any soldiers at the fort, but that changed in October 1861. Union soldiers took control of Fort Pickens and prepared to defend it. Over 1,000 Confederate troops soon arrived and began to attack. Union soldiers used artillery from the fort and two Navy ships to keep the attackers away. Artillery is a group of large guns or cannons that can fire over long distances. This plan worked, and Fort Pickens became one of the few Southern forts to stay under Union control.

The Battle of Fort Brooke took place where the city of Tampa is today. Two Union Navy ships arrived in October 1863 and started attacking the fort. Confederate soldiers fought hard to defend it, but they didn't realize they were being tricked. The Navy ships were just a distraction. While the ships attacked the fort, other Union troops sneaked past the fort. They marched another 14 miles to the Hillsborough River, where they captured several Confederate boats. Pretty sneaky!

Emancipation

New Year's Day in 1863 was even more special than usual. That was the day President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. Emancipation means being set free from something (slavery in this case). Lincoln's proclamation made slavery illegal everywhere in the United States. The war was still being fought, however, so there were many slaves in the South who were not freed until the end of the war.

Battle of Olustee

An army does not always have to fight in order to win a battle. Another way to win as an army is to keep your enemies from getting any food. Soldiers began to siege cities instead of attack them. A siege is when an army surrounds an enemy and tries to take control or force a surrender. As the war continued, some Northern generals realized they could win battles by cutting off supply routes. Since Florida grew a lot of

food, the North sent troops to stop farmers from sending their crops to the Confederate Army.

Around 5,500 Union soldiers reached Florida on Feb. 20, 1864. They met an army of about 5,000 Confederate troops near a railroad station called Olustee. The battle lasted for several hours. During that time, the Union lost around 1,800 soldiers. The Confederate Army won the battle, and it forced Union soldiers to retreat to the North. It was the largest battle fought in Florida during the Civil War.

Battle of Natural Bridge

In March 1865, a large group of Union soldiers marched toward Tallahassee. There were only a few Confederate soldiers who were there to try and stop them. The Confederate soldiers had not done much fighting, but they had planned for the attack. They stopped the Union soldiers from crossing the river at Natural Bridge. Tallahassee was safe, and it became the only state capital that was never taken over by Union soldiers.

Think and Review

1. Why did the Southern states want to leave the U.S. to form their own country?

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2. What was the first state to secede, and what happened?

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3. Who were the Confederate soldiers? The Union soldiers?

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4. What happened at the Battle of Olustee?

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5. When did the Civil War end?

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Florida and Reconstruction
(adapted from Florida Studies Weekly Week 18)

Have you ever built a fort in your living room out of couch cushions, blankets and kitchen chairs? What if you built a fort and felt pretty good about it, but your little brother came in and wanted his blanket back and wrecked the whole thing trying to get it out? Or what if your mom needed the kitchen chairs at dinner time? There goes all your hard work. What do you think you would do then? Would you go to your room and mope? Would you shrug your shoulders and go play video games? Would you build another fort right after dinner?

Well, think about this for a second: The Civil War ended in 1865, and the United States had to deal with more than a broken-down living room fort. The whole country was torn apart. The people couldn't just turn their backs on the problem and mope, and there were no video games in those days, so that left them with just one option: rebuild. Right away, people began to think of ways to make the nation better and stronger than ever before. That's why the time between 1865 and 1877 is sometimes called the Reconstruction Period.

What'll We Do Now?

After the Civil War ended, all slaves were given their freedom. Sadly, they still faced major challenges. Former slaves had no place to live and no way to earn money. Some plantation owners even tried to convince African Americans to simply stay put and keep working.

One solution to this problem was a system called sharecropping. Former slaves agreed to keep working on plantations, but as employees instead of slaves. Owners gave these workers a share of the profits. Not everyone agreed that sharecropping was a good idea. While it gave former slaves a way to earn money, it did not help them learn new skills or seek other opportunities.

Carpetbaggers and Scalawags

Here are a couple of words that will twist your tongue: The first word is carpetbagger. After the Civil War, things were pretty mixed up. Some Northerners came to live in the South thinking they could make money doing business with the desperate people in the Southern states. These Northerners were not very honest. They came to be known as carpetbaggers because they carried suitcases made of pieces of carpet.

The second word is scalawag. Almost the opposite of carpetbaggers, scalawags were Southerners who were rooting for the Northern states when the Civil War ended. It was a little like someone coming to one of your baseball games and sitting with your folks but cheering for the other team. Neither scalawags nor carpetbaggers were very popular among white Southerners.

Fourteen for Freedom!

Even after slavery ended, many African Americans were still segregated, or separated, because of race. Businesses often chose to serve or hire only white people. Slaves had been given their freedom, but many people still treated them differently.

That began to change in 1868, when the 14th Amendment was added to the Constitution. An amendment is an official change. This amendment said that everyone in our country was a citizen of the United States, including former slaves. Sadly, African Americans were still segregated, even with the new laws. It took time for people to change their minds about how to treat others. Do you think segregation is still a problem today?

The Army Is in Charge!

Florida's government is mainly made up of people who are either Republicans or Democrats. Maybe you already know what these words mean. Republicans and Democrats are two groups of people who have their own ideas about how the country ought to be run—kind of like two teams playing the same sport, but with different rules. Well, for a little while after the Civil War, Florida wasn't run by Republicans or Democrats. It was run by the Army. Instead of a governor, generals ran the show; and instead of policemen, soldiers enforced the laws. When the army is in charge of the government, it's called martial law. Martial is another word for military.

Close the Church!

The end of the Civil War didn't really bring peace and happiness in Florida—at least not for a while. Some reasons for the bad feelings that existed might seem silly to you. Here's an example: A general named Edward McCook came to Florida to accept the surrender of the last Confederate troops. When he got to Tallahassee, he took charge and threatened to close the Episcopal Church. Why? Because the minister forgot to pray for the president of the United States during his service!

It Takes Some Old, and It Takes Some New

After the war, many Northerners thought that in order to fix all the problems in the South, it would take a whole new system of laws and leaders. They tried many different ways to run things, but every new way they tried seemed to cause more problems than before. Finally, the people in charge came to realize that the old South, except for its ideas on things like slavery, had run pretty well all along. Today, Florida is a great place to live, partly because of our amazing history and partly because of new leaders who work hard to make our state's laws fair for everyone.

What Happened During Reconstruction

The Reconstruction was the period of time that followed the Civil War. Reconstruction means to repair or rebuild something that has been damaged or totally

lost. When the war was over, the land needed to be repaired. Homes, towns and cities that were damaged or destroyed during the fighting needed to be rebuilt. The people had to work together.

The Reconstruction was also about fixing relationships. The different states had to start working together again.

Think and Review

1. During which years did most of the Reconstruction occur?

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2. Why was this time in America called the Reconstruction Era?

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3. What are carpetbaggers?

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4. What are scalawags?

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5. Who was Gen. Edward McCook?

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