**Standard 8-4:** The student will demonstrate an understanding of the multiple events that led to the Civil War.

**Enduring Understanding:**

The outbreak of the Civil War was the culminating event in a decades-long series of regional issues that threatened American unity and South Carolina’s identity as one of the United States. To understand how South Carolina came to be at the center of this conflict, the student will . . .

**8-4. 6 Compare the differing impact of the Civil War on South Carolinians in each of the various social classes, including those groups defined by race, gender, and age.**

**It is essential for students to know:**

The Civil War had a profound impact on daily lives of all the people in South Carolina.

Prior to the Civil War, plantation owners became wealthy from cash crops and slavery. Slaves also gave their owners social and political status; therefore the plantation owners defended slavery and the southern way of life. When the war came, many of the wealthiest slave owners volunteered and served as officers in the Confederate army. Others were exempt from service under the “20 slave” law. So men from the lower classes served and died in disproportionate numbers to their elite countrymen. When the Civil War ended, many plantations had been destroyed. War brought an end to slavery and the plantation owners lost the fortunes that had been tied up in slave property. Since a manpower shortage in the South during the war pressed most males into service, after the war ended most of the male population was Confederate veterans who were eventually pardoned by the US government.

As the men went off to fight, women were left behind to tend to the farms and run the plantations. The lives of women were made especially difficult because of shortages of supplies such as clothes and food needed by the southern soldiers. Women found substitutes for many products or did without, especially as inflation made Confederate money worthless. Some women served as nurses to the wounded or raised money for the cause. Many were forced to flee their homes as Union forces advanced, only to return to ruins. At the end of the war, many were left widowed and were forced to continue to be the sole providers for the family.

During the war, African Americans longed for their freedom and many fled to nearby Union lines to claim it. Others stayed on the plantation and waited for the Union army. President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation**,** declaring that all slaves in areas that had not yet been captured by the Union army were free. These states, still under the control of the Confederacy, did not obey the Union president and most slaves remained on plantations following the progress of the war. Slaves were freed as a result of military action, not as a result of the Emancipation Proclamation. President Lincoln’s proclamation allowed African Americans to fight for the Union Army and many, including both free blacks and recent runaways, volunteered immediately. Although African American troops served with distinction, they were discriminated against. They served under the leadership of white officers and were paid less than their white comrades. Some African Americans were put into service for the Confederate armies, as masters took their slaves with them to the battlefield or they were commandeered to build defenses.

The Civil War also had an impact on children. Both slave and free children assisted around the farm or plantation. They suffered the same privations as other members of the wartime society. Some boys as young as 10 enlisted in the army, served as drummer boys and standard bearers, were sometimes caught in the crossfire and died for their cause. After the war, many children were left without fathers or had fathers whose ability to earn a livelihood was hampered as a result of the injuries (and surgeries) they had sustained during the war. An entire generation grew up coping with war-resultant changes that made their lives vastly different from those of their parents’ generation.