**South Carolina Declaration of Causes of Secession (Dec. 24, 1860)**

*Six weeks following the election of Abraham Lincoln, the South Carolina legislature voted to secede from the United States. Read the excerpt below from the South Carolina’s Declaration of Causes of Secession and answer the questions that follow.*

In 1787, delegates were appointed by the states to revise the articles of Confederation. On September 17th 1787, these delegates recommended the Constitution for adoption by the states.

The Constitution is a compact between the states - a Government with clearly defined powers, limited by the Constitution itself. We maintain that in every compact between parties (states), each party has an obligation to follow the agreement. Whenever one party shall break that agreement, the other parties are released from following it.

We assert that 14 northern states have refused to fulfill their constitutional obligations. They have enacted laws that have either nullified the laws of Congress or made it impossible to enforce them.

These states have also encouraged and assisted thousands of our slaves to leave their homes; and have incited to insurrection those who remain with books and pictures.

The northern states have also united in the election of a President whose opinions are hostile to Slavery.

We, therefore, the people of South Carolina, declare that the Union existing between this State and the other states of North America is dissolved, and that the State of South Carolina has resumed her position among the nations of the world.

1. The South Carolina legislature stated that the Constitution is a “compact”? Explain what that means and why, according to South Carolina, that view of the Constitution would allow for a state to secede under certain circumstances.
2. How did 14 Northern states break the compact between states? What laws was the South Carolina Legislature referring to?
3. In addition to the laws passed by 14 Northern states, explain two other complaint of South Carolina.
4. Do you think South Carolina was justified in leaving the United States?