

Chapter 4: Tennessee's Coming of Age Discussion Questions

1. Discuss why Tennessee would be best suited for farming.
2. Consider the issue of abolition. Why would East Tennessee be more in favor of abolition than Middle and West Tennessee? Discuss land type, politics, landscape, etc.
3. The 1796 Constitution made it possible for slave owners to free their slaves, but laws were passed making the freeing process more difficult. Why do you think law makers changed the laws? Who could have influenced the lawmakers? If you were a lawmaker, what could you have done to make freeing slaves easier?
4. Why was corn such an important crop in/for Tennessee?
5. Compare and contrast the two main industries in Tennessee (iron/corn). How could these two industries rely on each other?
6. In what ways did Tennessee participate in the lead-up to the Industrial Revolution?
7. Tecumseh promised the earth would tremble as a sign of the coming struggle with the Native Americans. Shortly after, the New Madrid earthquakes hit the Mississippi River.
 - a. How do you think the settlers felt after the earthquakes, knowing about Tecumseh's promise?
 - b. How do you think the settlers viewed Reelfoot Lake?
8. Describe Tennessee's involvement in the War of 1812.
9. Consider the bounce back of the economy after the Panic of 1819 due to cotton. What might have been some of the arguments that pro-slavery supporters used to justify the institution of slavery?