

Moving to your Specific Topic

Once you have a general topic and read some, you need to ask a good question to narrow your topic. Look for controversial topics raised in your textbook. Look for an issue that seems debatable. Then narrow your general topic to a specific topic. This more specific topic is not yet a thesis; but it is the next best thing. Some potential specific topics are below.

General military topics:

The training and superiority of Southern Generalship
Political Generals were a disadvantage (advantage)
Why McClelland Hesitated at Antietam
Why the Peninsular Campaign Failed
The Role of Attrition in Union Victories
Was the Anaconda Plan Successful?
Overconfidence at First Bull Run
Significance of the New Orleans Union Victory
How Ironclads changed Naval Warfare
The Morality of Sherman's Atlanta Campaign and/or March to the Sea
The Andersonville Prison Camp
The Wisdom of Pickett's Charge
Strategic Importance of Capturing Vicksburg
Punishment of Confederate Leaders
Importance of the Mississippi River
Was defending Washington DC that critical?
The Importance of Blockade Runners
The fall of Richmond
Why the Oklahoma Cherokee Fought for the South
Advances in Military Technologies
Significance of Fort Monroe

General political topics:

Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation's Effect on Northern Democrats
The Election of 1864
Lincoln's Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction
The Diplomatic War with Britain

Effects of Secretary of State William Henry Seward's foreign policy
Lincoln's Suspension of Habeas Corpus
Civil War Amendments to the *Constitution*
Ex Parte Milligan
Why Andrew Johnson was Chosen Vice President
Northern Draft Riots
Conscientious Objectors (Shakers & Quakers)
Rationing
Profiting from the War
Immigrants Serving in Union Armies
Civil War Soldier Rations
Prostitution among the Troops
The Civil War in Art
Effect of the War on the Home Front
How the Civil War Split Families