

Teacher Project Pack

Photos & Perspectives of the Civil War

Overview

Photographs can often help students grasp the reality and impact of historical events. This project connects students to events and different perspectives of the Civil War by having them report on selected topics using historical photos to research and illustrate their learning.

To complete this project, students will . . .

- visit the Library of Congress website and other websites to familiarize themselves with the events surrounding the Civil War.
- gain an understanding and appreciation of the perspectives of the North and the South.
- learn and practice how to analyze primary sources, particularly photographs.
- learn and practice how to write news and feature articles.
- synthesize learning by creating a Civil War newspaper.

Objectives

Upon completing this project, students will be able to . . .

- examine primary source documents on the Library of Congress and other reputable websites.
- examine the northern and southern points of view towards the war.
- describe the daily life of a Civil War soldier.
- identify key battles and people.
- write in newspaper and feature article form.
- utilize technology during research and product creation.

Standards

This project meets the following Illinois learning standards and goals for grades 6-8 in Language Arts and Social Science.

- 1.B.3b** Identify text structure and create a visual representation (e.g., graphic organizer, outline, drawing) to use while reading.
- 1.B.3c** Continuously check and clarify for understanding (e.g., in addition to previous skills, draw comparisons to other readings).
- 1.B.3d** Read age-appropriate material with fluency and accuracy.
- 1.C.3a** Use information to form, explain and support questions and predictions.
- 1.C.3b** Interpret and analyze entire narrative text using story elements, point of view and theme.
- 1.C.3c** Compare, contrast and evaluate ideas and information from various sources and genres.
- 1.C.3d** Summarize and make generalizations from content and relate them to the purpose of the material.
- 1.C.3f** Interpret tables that display textual information and data in visual formats.
- 2.A.3a** Identify and analyze a variety of literary techniques (e.g., figurative language, allusion, dialogue, description, word choice, dialect) within classical and contemporary works representing a variety of genres.
- 2.A.3d** Identify ways that an author uses language structure, word choice and style to convey the author's viewpoint.
- 3.A.3** Write compositions that contain complete sentences and effective paragraphs using English conventions.
- 3.B.3a** Produce documents that convey a clear understanding and interpretation of ideas and information and display focus, organization, elaboration and coherence.
- 3.B.3b** Edit and revise for word choice, organization, consistent point of view and transitions among paragraphs using contemporary technology and formats suitable for submission and/or publication.

3.C.3a Compose narrative, informative, and persuasive writings (e.g., in addition to previous writings, literature reviews, instructions, news articles, correspondence) for a specified audience.

3.C.3b Using available technology, produce compositions and multimedia works for specified audiences.

5.A.3a Identify appropriate resources to solve problems or answer questions through research.

5.B.3a Choose and analyze information sources for individual, academic and functional purposes.

5.B.3b Identify, evaluate and cite primary sources.

5.C.3a Plan, compose, edit and revise documents that synthesize new meaning gleaned from multiple sources.

5.C.3c Take notes, conduct interviews, organize and report information in oral, visual and electronic formats.

16.A.3b Make inferences about historical events and eras using historical maps and other historical sources.

16.A.3c Identify the differences between historical fact and interpretation.

16.D.3a (US) Describe characteristics of different kinds of communities in various sections of America during the colonial/frontier periods and the 19th century.

18.B.3a Explain how human activity is affected by geographic factors.

17.A.2b Analyze how individuals and groups interact with and within institutions (e.g., educational, military).

18.C.3b Explain how diverse groups have contributed to U.S. social systems over time.

Guidelines

Review background information: Students will need background knowledge of the Civil War, familiarity with the geographic boundaries and points of view of the North and the South; a good understanding of primary sources and primary source analysis; and an understanding of the format and function of newspaper writing, particularly news and feature articles, to complete this project.

Prepare materials for implementation: Students will need the [Articles Assignment](#), [Analyzing a Primary Source Worksheet](#), [Newspaper Checklist](#) and access to the Internet to conduct research.

Be flexible with implementation: Include students of mixed-ability levels in each newspaper staff; assign roles based on student readiness level (People in the News article for lower level and On the Battlefield for higher level); modify rubrics as needed.

Allow for sufficient time to implement: Working both online and offline in class and independently, students will need approximately four 40-minute sessions plus time for independent and group work to complete the project.

Directions

Session 1: Point of View

1. Complete the [Point of View Lesson](#) with students.
2. Connect this idea to your study of the Civil War through the eyes of a Union sympathizer and the eyes of a Confederate sympathizer.

Session 2: Introducing Primary Source Documents

1. Model analyzing primary source documents with a photo not used in this project (see the LOC collection, [Selected Civil War Photographs](#)) using the [Analyzing a Primary Source Worksheet](#).
2. Monitor and assist, as needed, while students work in pairs to analyze another photo.
3. Direct students to share their discoveries in small groups, assessing their work using the [Analyzing a Primary Source Rubric](#).

Session 3: Introducing News and Feature Articles

1. Review the Internet-based [Newspaper Writing Lessons](#).
2. Cut out and copy a news article. As a class, read the article and identify the main components (who, what, where, when, why, and how), paying attention to inverted pyramid style. If needed, have students repeat the activity as homework.
3. Cut out and copy a feature article. As a class, read the article and discuss how it differs from a hard news story.

Session 4: Beginning the Project

1. Divide students into groups of four. (You may choose to group by ability or mixed-ability, but it is recommended that students do not choose their own groups.) When forming groups, think about the perspective (Northern or Southern) the students will assume. For students in Illinois, a Southern perspective will usually be more challenging. A straight news story is also more challenging than a feature story.
2. Walk students through the project, noting where task instructions and resources are located.
3. Review the [sample project](#) and the project rubrics.

Independent/Group Work Time (a few class periods)

- 1.** Direct students to complete the research and writing portions of the project.
- 2.** Assist students, as needed, with the publishing process.
- 3.** Share final products with the class.

Assessment

Review the project rubrics.