

Lesson Title: "Read All About It", A Civil War Newspaper
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Social Studies, 5th grade
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Teaching Traditional American History Program

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<http://www.chillihistoryproject.com/>

Lesson Overview: This lesson will let students investigate and analyze leaders and the battles they led during the Civil War. Students will explore reasons for the victory or defeat of a specific battle. Students will become investigative journalists and create a Civil War era newspaper.

Essential Question: How did personalities and strategies of Commanding Officers affect battle outcomes?
How did such things as troop size, geography, and location affect the outcome of battles?

Objectives:

- SS 2A Knowledge of continuity and change in US History. Causes and consequences of the Civil War.
- SS 7D Use technological tools for research and presentation.
- CA Informational Literacy 1A Develop research questions in order to establish a focus and purpose for a project
- CA Writing 3D Write effectively in various forms and types of writing. Write nonfiction and fiction articles

Assessment: The student will create the front page of a newspaper for either the Union or the Confederacy. The newspaper will consist

of a factual battle article, an interview with the officer in charge, and a fiction piece of the student's choice. The student will present the newspaper to the class.

Materials:

- Famous Battles of the Civil War Card Game
- Famous Generals of the Civil War Card Game
- Computer with Publisher Program available
- Internet capabilities
- Paper
- Pencil

Class Time: At least four 50 minute periods will be needed.

Teacher Input: There were many primary battles of the Civil War. Check students for prior knowledge of battles and/or leaders. Let them say as many as they know and discuss their prior knowledge. Students might be familiar with General Grant and General Lee. Students will probably not be familiar with any details of specific battles or the generals who led them.

Q: What factors can determine the outcome of each battle?

A: Number of troops engaged in the fighting for each side.

Geographical locations, land formations and terrain, such as hills, roads, rivers and such.

Q: Yes, geography and troops play a major part in the determining the outcome of the battle. Does anything else?

A: Yes, also the commanding officer, his tactics, strategies, experience and personality also play a major part in the outcome of battles.

Activities:

- Students will create the front page of either a Confederate or Union newspaper. Students will use Publisher Program on the computer to do this. Union or Confederate will be decided by the battle card drawn from the card deck.

- Each student will draw one battle card from the deck. Students will read the information on the card. Students will conduct additional research via the internet on their specific battle. The student will then take the commanding general card of that battle from the Generals Card Deck. Additional information for General will also be found via internet searches conducted by the students. Students will take notes and write a draft of their articles before starting on the computer.
- The student will write three articles for the paper.
 1. A non-fiction article about the specifics of the battle, such as geographical location, troops engaged, wounded and killed in action, terrain, and outcome.
 2. Write an article in the form of an interview with the commanding general of the battle. Make sure to include his tactics and strategies used for the battle. Personal questions may also be addressed.
 3. Write an entertaining, fiction article about a subject of your choice, keeping in mind the time period.
 4. Include at least 2 graphics on the page. Create a title for the newspaper and each article.

Review: There are many reasons why battles are won or lost. What are some of the additional reasons you discovered? Students should respond with new reasons not previously discussed such as, strength of weapons, supplies, troop experience, leader experience, leader strengths and weaknesses, moral of troops, intelligence before and during the battles, communication between all parties involved, battle tactics and strategies of the leaders.

Closure: Time will be used for students to present their newspapers to the class for discussion. A bulletin board can be made of the newspapers.

Assessment: Students will be assessed by the scoring guide.

Extension: Students may compare the commanding generals personality and battle strategies from the beginning of the war until the end of the war to see if they have changed.

Newspaper : Civil War Newspaper

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Layout - Headlines & Captions	All articles have headlines that capture the reader's attention and accurately describe the content.	All articles have headlines that accurately describe the content.	Most articles have headlines that accurately describe the content.	Articles do not have adequate headlines.
Who, What, When, Where & How	All articles adequately address the 5 W's (who, what, when, where and how).	90-99% of the articles adequately address the 5 W's (who, what, when, where and how).	75-89% of the articles adequately address the 5 W's (who, what, when, where and how).	Less than 75% of the articles adequately address the 5 W's (who, what, when, where, and how).
Articles - Purpose	90-100% of the articles establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph and demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic.	85-89% of the articles establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph and demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic.	75-84% of the articles establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph and demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic.	Less than 75% of the articles establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph and demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic.
Articles - Supporting Details	The details in the articles are clear, effective, and vivid 80-100% of the time.	The details in the articles are clear and pertinent 90-100% of the time.	The details in the articles are clear and pertinent 75-89% of the time.	The details in more than 25% of the articles are neither clear nor pertinent.

Articles - Interest	The articles contain facts, figures, and/or word choices that make the articles exceptionally interesting to readers.	The articles contain facts, figures, and/or word choices that make the articles interesting to readers.	The article contains some facts or figures but is marginally interesting to read.	The article does not contain facts or figures that might make it interesting to read.
Spelling and Proofreading	No spelling or grammar errors remain after one or more people (in addition to the typist) read and correct the newspaper.	No more than a couple of spelling or grammar errors remain after one or more people (in addition to the typist) read and correct the newspaper.	No more than 3 spelling or grammar errors remain after one or more people (in addition to the typist) read and correct the newspaper.	Several spelling or grammar errors remain in the final copy of the newspaper.
Graphics	Graphics are in focus, are well-cropped and are clearly related to the articles they accompany.	Graphics are in focus and are clearly related to the articles they accompany.	80-100% of the graphics are clearly related to the articles they accompany.	More than 20% of the graphics are not clearly related to the articles OR no graphics were used.
Layout - Columns	Columns are neatly typed in the "justified" type style. There are adequate and consistent "gutters" between all columns and articles. A glance at the newspaper makes you think "professional."	Columns are neatly typed. There are adequate and consistent "gutters" between all columns and articles. A glance at the newspaper makes you think "fairly professional."	Columns are typed. There are adequate "gutters" between most columns and articles. It is easy to read, but looks somewhat nonprofessional.	Columns are not neatly typed and/or "gutters" are not adequate, so newspaper is somewhat difficult to read.