

CIVIL WAR PERSPECTIVES
LESSON PLAN 13

1. Title

Diary Entry Research & Drafting: *Daily Life of a Civil War Soldier/Nurse*

2. Overview

After reading a Confederate soldier's diary entry describing his daily life, students begin researching common daily life experiences within the military in order to write their first 2 "Daily Life" diary entries.

3. Goal

Students will conduct research in order to understand what daily life was like for a soldier/nurse in the Union army. Students will then compose 2 diary entries based on their research.

4. Objectives

- Research the daily life experiences of a Union soldier or nurse
- Reflect on research and make inferences about the thoughts & feelings of a Union soldier or nurse in regard to their experiences.
- Compose 2 diary entries detailing the daily life experiences of a Union soldier or nurse.

5. Time Required (0-10)

2-3 class period (90 - 120 min)

6. Recommended Grade Range

Grades 7-8

7. Differentiated Instruction

- The teacher may research websites that he/she deems appropriate for various reading levels & provide students with a list of various websites that match student reading levels. The teacher may also make leveled trade books available for students to conduct their research.
- While writing diary entries, the teacher may work in small groups with struggling writers to assist students with their planning and composing a rough draft. The teacher may have struggling writers write their diary entries in list or web format first, writing out events & details that they want to include in their diary entry. The teacher may then have students add thoughts & feelings their character may have experienced as a result of these events.

8. Subject / Sub-Subject

Social Studies

Language Arts

9. Common Core Standards

- CC.6-8.WHST.7 – Research to Build and Present Knowledge: *Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.*
- CC.6-8.WHST.4 – Production and Distribution of Writing: *Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.*

- CC.7.W.3 – Text Types and Purposes: *Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.*
- CC.6-8.R.H.6 – Craft and Structure: *Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).*

10. Credits

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PREPARATION

11. Materials Used

Research Guide: Motives

Research Guide: Daily Life

“Diary of a Tar Heel Soldier – Lesson 13a”

“Diary of a Tar Heel Soldier – Lesson 13b”

“Bloodshed Among Brothers: A Civil War Diary” Unit Packet → *Website Research page*

12. Resources Used

See Appendix

PROCEDURE

13. Description of Procedure

PART 1-

- Have students who are researching the same character get into small groups of 3-4 (*i.e. nurses in one group, Sherman’s soldiers in one group, etc...*).
- Ask students to take out the “Research Guide: Motives” worksheet from the previous lesson & begin sharing their research with each other.
 - Give students 5-7 minutes to share their reasons for joining, any feelings about being drafted, and ways that life may have changed for them after becoming a soldier or nurse.
 - After students have discussed in small groups, ask for 1 person from each group to share their group’s various motives and feelings about enlisting with the class.
 - Next, give students 5-7 minutes to discuss how they might feel if they had a family member in the Union or Confederate armies.
 - After students have discussed in small groups, ask students to share their responses with the class.
- After discussing the previous day’s research as a class, tell students that they will be continuing their research today and writing their first 2 Daily Life diary entries based on this research.
- Pass out the “Research Guide: Daily Life” worksheet & go over the research questions with students.
- Read-aloud the “Diary of a Tar Heel Soldier – Lesson 13a” diary entry from the Confederate soldier’s diary.
 - After reading, ask: *“What types of hardships does this soldier mention? What details does he include? How does he describe the experience of traveling with his regiment??”*
- Allow students to begin conducting research using the “Research Guide: Daily Life” worksheet.

- Once again, students may use a combination of web-based & trade book research. Refer to Website Research page in the Unit Packet for a list of recommended websites.

PART 2-

- Bring the class together and read-aloud “Diary of a Tar Heel Soldier – Lesson 13b” diary entry.
- Tell students that they will be writing their first 2 Daily Life diary entries using information from their research guides. They will need to choose the setting (time & place) & describe their character’s experience, including thoughts & feelings.
- Reread the “Diary of a Tar Heel Soldier – Lesson 13b” diary entry.
 - Before reading, ask students to listen for the following things: Setting, Details & Personal Reflections (thoughts & feelings)
 - As you read, stop and ask the following questions: “*What is the setting here? What time of year is it? How do you know? What details does he include? What personal thoughts does he share?*”
- Briefly review the rubric for their diary entries (*Page 4 of the Unit Packet*) as a class so that students are clear about the expectations for each diary entry.
- Have students pick a setting/focus and begin writing their first 2 daily life diary entries using the information from their research guides.
 - *Note: If the teacher has the luxury of time, he/she may want to ask students to take these diary entries through the writing process before completing a final draft (prewrite, rough draft, revising, editing, final draft).*

The Inquiry Cycle:

Connect - Students connect new insights to self or previous knowledge; gain background and context; observe, experience

Wonder - Students develop questions and create hypotheses or predictions

Investigate - Find and evaluate information to answer questions; test hypotheses; think about information to illuminate new questions and hypotheses

Construct - Construct new understandings connected to previous knowledge; draw conclusions about questions and hypotheses

Express - Apply understandings to a new context, new situation; express new ideas to share learning with others

Reflect - Reflect on own learning; ask new questions

EVALUATION

14. Evaluation

- Research Guide: Daily Life
- 2 Daily Life diary entries