

CIVIL WAR PERSPECTIVES
LESSON PLAN 15

1. Title

Understanding the Battle Experience: *Fredericksburg & Gettysburg*

2. Overview

The class will view images & read diary entries about the battles of Fredericksburg and Gettysburg. After viewing & reading this material, students will imagine themselves in these battles and record the sensory details that may have been a part of the experience on the battlefield. Students will then use this material along with research to write their own battle diary entries.

3. Goal

Students analyze primary sources in order to understand what soldiers & nurses might have experienced during battle.

4. Objectives

- Analyze primary sources and draw conclusions about the battle experience
- Make inferences about the sensory experiences involved in the battles of Fredericksburg and Gettysburg
- Identify sensory details within a text
- Research Civil War battles and the various personal experiences connected with these battles
- Compose a diary entry from the perspective of a Civil War soldier or nurse detailing the battle experience

5. Time Required (0-10)

2 - 3 class periods (90 - 120 min)

6. Recommended Grade Range

Grades 7-8

7. Differentiated Instruction

- The teacher should be continually circulating the room and coaching students/small groups who are struggling. While groups are working, the teacher may also take the time to read the diary entry aloud and discuss it individually with students who need reading support.
- 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

Reading/Language Arts

9. Common Core Standards

- CC. 7.R.I.1 – Key Ideas and Details: *Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.*
- CC.6-8.R.H.7 – Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: *Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.*
- 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.*

10. Credits

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PREPARATION

11. Materials Used

- Fredericksburg Drawings (2 drawings -1 set for each small group)
- Battle of Fredericksburg Sensory Organizer
- Diary of Joshua Chamberlain: Fredericksburg - transparency (*Read-Aloud*)
- Gettysburg Photographs (3 photos -1 set for each small group)
- Battle of Gettysburg Sensory Organizer
- Diary of Joshua Chamberlain: Gettysburg
- Research Guides: Battle (*see lesson 14*)

12. Resources Used

See Appendix

PROCEDURE

13. Description of Procedure

PART 1 -

- Place students in small groups (3-4) and pass out a set of Fredericksburg drawings to each group. Pass out the “Battle of Fredericksburg Sensory Organizer” to each student.
- Say: *“Yesterday we talked about how technology changed warfare forever and you began doing some research. Today we will continue to examine some important battles & think about what soldiers and nurses may have experienced during combat. Battle can be a very intense experience and we will be looking at some pictures and reading diary entries to try and understand what many Civil War nurses and soldiers went through.”*
- Place the “Battle of Fredericksburg Sensory Organizer” transparency on the overhead projector.
- Tell students that we will be starting with the Battle of Fredericksburg. Read-aloud the battle summary at the top of the worksheet as students follow along.
- Next, ask students to silently examine the Fredericksburg drawings and imagine what they might have seen, heard, smelled, felt and tasted. Tell students that they may need to make inferences based on what they see in the pictures. Give students 5-10 minutes to think and write responses in the columns

on their organizer. During this time, the teacher should circulate the room assisting students who seem “stuck” or need guidance.

- Share responses with the class as the teacher records student responses on “Battle of Fredericksburg Sensory Organizer” overhead transparency.
- Next, tell students that you will be reading a diary entry about Fredericksburg written by Union general, Joshua Chamberlain. As you read, ask students to listen for the sensory details included in the diary and record these details on their worksheet.
- Place the “Diary of Joshua Chamberlain: Fredericksburg” transparency on the overhead projector and read it aloud as students listen.
- When you have finished, place the “Battle of Fredericksburg Sensory Organizer” transparency back on the overhead projector and ask students to share the sensory details they heard within the diary. As they share, record their responses on the transparency.

PART 2- (Extended Practice)

- Next, tell students they will be looking at the Battle of Gettysburg and repeating this activity on their own with their small groups.
- Pass out a set of Gettysburg Photographs & a copy of the “Diary of Joshua Chamberlain: Gettysburg” to each group. Pass out the “Battle of Gettysburg Sensory Organizer” to each student.
- Read-aloud the battle summary at the top of the worksheet. Then, give students 5-10 minutes to examine the photographs and work with their groups to write sensory details in the columns on their organizer. (Once again, the teacher should circulate the room assisting students.)
- After examining the photos, ask students to shift their attention to the “Diary of Joshua Chamberlain: Gettysburg”. Groups may pick a member to read the diary entry aloud and students should work with their group to continue identifying sensory details included in the text & add to their organizer. (7-10 min)
- Finally, ask students to share the sensory details they recorded with their groups. Based on the activity today, discuss what it may have been like to be at the Battles of Fredericksburg or Gettysburg. Ask students to share how looking at pictures & reading personal diary entries might help them understand a soldier’s experience better than simply reading about the battle out of a text book.

PART 3-

- Give students time to finish researching the battle experience (using their Battle Research Guide).
- Have students begin writing their 2 battle entries based on their research.
 - Remind students to include sensory information pertaining to their experience.
 - Students who have chosen the “prisoner of war” role will write about their experience at Gettysburg and life after their capture.
 - NOTE: *As noted in lesson 13, the teacher may choose to take these diary entries through the writing process (drafting, editing, revising, etc.) if there is time.*

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: Battle
 - Battle of Fredericksburg Sensory Organizer
 - Battle of Gettysburg Sensory Organizer
 - Small group & Class Discussion
 - 2 Battle Diary Entries
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