

CIVIL WAR PERSPECTIVES
LESSON PLAN 8

1. Title

Identifying the Major Characters of the Civil War

2. Overview

The class will examine pictures and read a brief biography of Robert E. Lee. As a class, they will then summarize the information in a brief character description. Students will then move into small groups and repeat this same activity using another Union or Confederate leader assigned to them. After each group has written a brief character description for their historical figure, they will summarize the information for the class. After sharing, each character description will be posted on the wall under either “Union” or “Confederate” to be used as a reference for the remainder of the unit.

3. Goal

Students will use photos & expository texts to create character biographies for the Union & Confederate leaders of the Civil War. Students will identify important details from the text & summarize the information for their peers. Finally, students will categorize each historical figure as a “Union” or “Confederate” leader.

4. Objectives

- Analyze primary sources (photo analysis)
- Identify important details within a text
- Identify and differentiate between Union & Confederate leaders

5. Time Required (0-10)

1-2 class period (45 - 60 min)

6. Recommended Grade Range

Grades 7-8

7. Differentiated Instruction

Students needing extra support may be paired with stronger readers who are able to help guide them through this activity.

8. Subject / Sub-Subject

Social Studies

Reading/Language Arts

9. Common Core Standards

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.*

10. Credits

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PREPARATION

11. Materials Used

- Photo sets of Robert E. Lee (1 set for each student pair)
- Transparency of Robert E. Lee biography worksheet
- Photo sets of other historical figures (1 different set for each student pair)
 - Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson
 - J.B. Hood
 - Abraham Lincoln
 - Ulysses S. Grant
 - William Tecumseh Sherman
 - George McClellan
 - Jefferson Davis
- Character biography worksheets
- Red & Blue butcher paper
- Tape or glue
- Diary of a Tar Heel Soldier – Lesson 8
- KWL chart (*Continued from Lesson 4*)

12. Resources Used

See Appendix

PROCEDURE

13. Description of Procedure

- At the beginning of the class period, tape a large piece of red butcher paper on the wall & write “Union” at the top. Next to this, tape a large piece of blue butcher paper and write “Confederate” at the top. (*You will be taping/gluing four pieces of paper on each of these pieces of butcher paper, so leave plenty of blank space below the label.*)
- Tell students that they will be learning about the major leaders on both sides of the Civil War today. Explain to students that it may make sense to include some of the historical figures they will be learning about today within their diary entries.
- Start off the class period by reading aloud the “Diary of a Tar Heel Soldier – Lesson 8” diary entry in which the author references Robert E. Lee.
- After reading this diary entry aloud, ask students to share any background knowledge they have pertaining to Robert E. Lee. *Has anyone heard his name before? Does anyone know who he is? Can you make any inferences based on the diary entry? – Allow students to share their knowledge*
- Tell students that they will be learning about the major Civil War leaders today, beginning with Robert E. Lee.
 - Pair up students and pass out a “Robert E. Lee photo set” to each set of partners.
 - Display the transparency of Robert E. Lee biography worksheet.
 - Ask students to take 2 minutes to examine the photos silently and make observations about Lee’s appearance: physical features, clothing, stature, etc.
 - After 2 minutes, ask students to turn to their partners and share their observations (1 minute).
 - Ask students to share their observations as a class & record these observations in the space provided on the overhead transparency.

- Next, read aloud the biographical paragraph at the top of the transparency & ask students to answer the next set of questions on the transparency: *Who was he fighting for? What was his rank?...*
- When you have finished completing the biography worksheet together, ask students to briefly share what they've learned about Robert E. Lee.
- Next, explain to students that they will now be completing this same activity in pairs. However, they will be receiving a different historical figure to study.
- Distribute photo sets & matching character biography worksheets to each pair of students. (Some student pairs may receive the same historical figure, but make sure that each historical figure is being studied by at least 1 pair of students.)
- Have partners complete the character biography worksheet for their historical figure.
- When students finish, ask a representative for each of the 7 historical figures to share the information on their character biography worksheet with the class. (There will be some repetition, so not all partnerships necessarily need to share.)
- After each student shares their information, ask the class to recall whether the historical figure being presented is a "Confederate" or "Union" leader. Then, ask the student representative to tape or glue their character biography worksheet on the corresponding piece of butcher paper (red or blue).
- When the class has finished sharing, each historical figure should be taped to either the blue (Union) or red (Confederate) butcher paper. Make a photocopy of the Robert E. Lee biography worksheet transparency to add to the red butcher paper. This display of Union & Confederate leaders can be left on the classroom wall as a reference throughout the unit.
- End the lesson by returning to the class KWL chart & adding to the "L-Learned" column of the chart. Ask students to share what they learned & encourage them to share any new questions that have come up. New questions can be added to the "W-Want to Know" column of the chart.

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

- Character biography worksheet
- KWL chart

