

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

Lesson Title – Civil War Photographs

Grade – 8th grade

Length of class period – 80 minutes

Inquiry – The Reality of the Civil War

Objectives –

Students will make deductions about the Civil War time period using primary source documents.

Students will understand the impact of the new technology of the time period (namely photographs).

Materials –

Photographs taken by Matthew Brady

Activities –

Warm Up – What is the difference between a photograph and a picture/drawing. (Discuss with students. Show them examples in power point of drawings of Civil War and pictures depicting similar events. Discuss further.)

Group Activity – Break students into groups. Start each group with one photograph (printed out) to analyze. Use chart to guide students' analysis. Give groups 4-6 minutes per photo to discuss and record their findings on the chart. Then pass photos around. Groups should analyze 5-6 pictures within the allotted time. The pictures I use are the ones in the attached power point. I have copies of them at school. You could simply print them out and laminate or have students view them on the computer.

Class Discussion – Gather class together. Use power point presentation to focus class discussion around their findings in the photos. Ask students to share deductions about photos, guiding them to accurate analysis.

Wrap Up - What photograph impacted you the most? Why? If you could investigate one of these photos further, which would it be? Why?

Homework – Students can select from several reading selections addressing different issues analyzed in the photographs – for example Civil War medicine or soldiers' lives. I use readings from books that I have at school. However, there are many good websites to investigate and find follow up readings. I've listed some possibilities below, but I use my students' interests to drive my article selection. Students will have the option of using Cornell Notes or a Spider Map graphic organizer (see attached) to record their findings.

Civil War Soldier's Diary can be found at <http://www.ioweb.com/civilwar/>
Secondary Source - <http://www.civilwarhome.com/soldierslife.htm>

Civil War Medicine Secondary Source –
<http://www.nps.gov/archive/gett/gettkidz/doctor.htm>

How will you assess what students learned during this lesson?

Informally – class discussion and small group discussion

Formally – completion of chart analyzing photographs

Connecticut Framework Grade Level Expectations

- Compare information about historic events using a variety of primary sources
- Assess primary and secondary sources, including internet sources, to determine accuracy and validity.