



Lesson Plan

The Bloodiest One Day Battle in American History

23,000 soldiers were killed, wounded or missing after twelve hours of savage combat on September 17, 1862. The Battle of Antietam ended the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia's first invasion into the North and led to Abraham Lincoln's issuance of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation.

Introduction-

Level: 5th-8th Grade

Length of Lesson: Three class periods.

Essential Question: Why was the Battle of Antietam a significant turning point in the Civil War and in American History?

Materials: Large format paper, drawing and/or art supplies, pens and pencils.

Procedure-

Students will assume the role of war correspondents and gather facts about the battle through utilizing primary and secondary sources.

Using the resource section on the next page, students will learn about the Battle of Antietam and then write and illustrate a period newspaper.

During the first class period, students will work in small groups to read, discuss,



Alexander Gardner, Confederate Dead, View Looking Toward the Dunker Church, September 19, 1862, Library of Congress.

and evaluate primary and secondary resources.

During the second class period, students will use a newspaper size piece of paper to illustrate and write articles about the battle.

During the third period students will present their newspapers to the class and explain what they learned.

Extension Activities-

Have the groups report on the battle from different perspectives, i.e.

Northerners, Southerners, Free Blacks, Abolitionists, etc.

Download and print the [Civil War Word Bank](#) worksheet for your students to complete. Go to page

Have students read three Civil War Era letters. Ask them to pretend they are a soldier, surgeon, nurse, or civilian and write a letter home to their loved ones.

Have students research and report on communication during the Civil War (for instance War Correspondents often sent their reports to their editors via telegraph).

Learning Objectives-

Students will be able to:

Evaluate provisions of the Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln's reasons for issuing it, and its significance. [Examine the influence of ideas]

Explain the causes of the Civil War and evaluate the importance of slavery as a principal cause of the conflict by analyzing the Emancipation Proclamation. [Compare competing historical narratives]

Identify the turning points of the war and evaluate how political, military, and diplomatic leadership affected the outcome of the conflict. [Assess the importance of the individual in history]

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

National Education Standards-

Common Core Standards, English Language Arts Standards, History/Social Studies, <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/6-8>.

National Center for History in Schools, UCLA, <http://www.nchs.ucla.edu/Standards/us-history-content-standards/us-era-5#section-2>, United States Era 5, Civil War and Reconstruction (1850-1877), Standard 1: The causes of the Civil War, Standard 2, The course and character of the Civil War and its effects on the American people.

NCTE / IRA Standards for the English Language Arts, Standards 2-8. <http://www.ncte.org/standards/ncte-ira>.

Assessment Tools-

Completed newspapers and student presentations.

Resources

Primary Sources-

Library of Congress, American Memory photographs of Antietam. <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/v?ammem/cwar:0126-0156:T8>.

Library of Congress, Map of the Battle of Antietam, [Sept. 17, 1862]. <http://www.loc.gov/item/99447397>.

New York Times, Sept. 18, 1862, Text of "Battle of Antietam Creek." <http://www.nytimes.com/1862/09/20/news/battle-antietam-creek-full-particulars-our-special-correspondent-most-stupendous.html?ref=battleofantietam>.

National Archives, Emancipation Proclamation. <http://blogs.archives.gov/prologue/?p=11447>.

National Park Service, Antietam National Battlefield, eyewitness to battle web page. <http://www.nps.gov/anti/historyculture/eyewitness-to-battle.htm>.

National Park Service, Antietam National Battlefield photo gallery web page. <http://www.nps.gov/anti/photosmultimedia/photogallery.htm>.

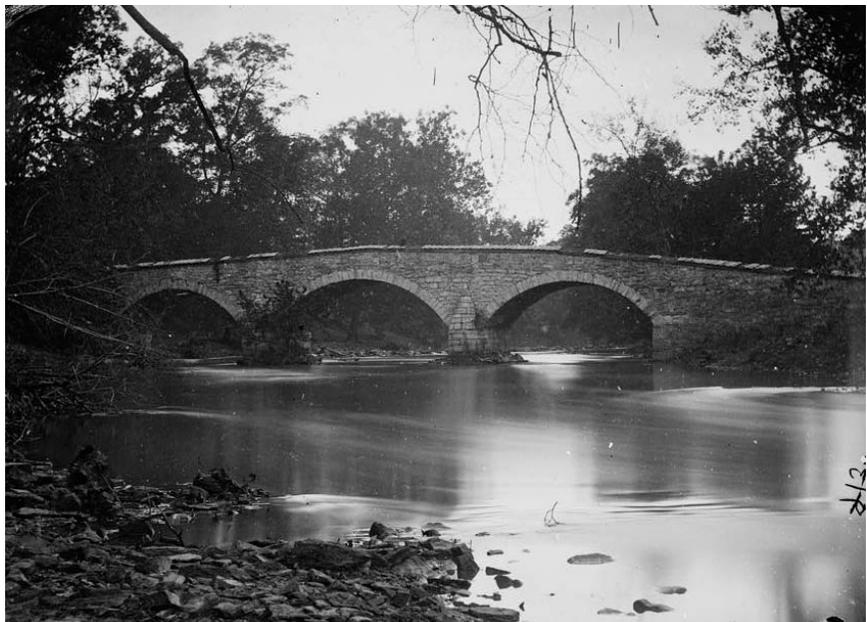
Son of the South, The Civil War. (Site has over 7,000 pages of original Civil War content). <http://www.sonofthesouth.net/>.

The Valley of the Shadow: Two Communities in the American Civil War. Extensive archive of letters, diaries, and other primary sources from two American Communities, one Northern and One Southern. <http://valley.lib.virginia.edu/>.

Secondary Sources that Provide an Overview of the Battle-

Civil War Trust, Antietam web page <http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/antietam.html?tab=facts>.

National Park Service Antietam National Battlefield web page. <http://www.nps.gov/anti/>.



Alexander Gardner, Burnside Bridge, September 1862, Library of Congress.