

Virtual Capitol Lessons

The Civil War with Primary Documents

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Grade Level	Fourth
Class Period(s)	2

This lesson is designed to precede or follow a field trip to Lincoln or a virtual field trip (<http://nebraskavirtualcapitol.org>) to the Nebraska Capitol.

Nebraska Social Studies Standards (2019)

SS 4.4.1 Investigate patterns of continuity and change over time in Nebraska.

SS 4.4.1.a Analyze the chronology of key state and/or regional events and communicate their impact on the past, present, and future.

SS 4.4.2 Analyze and explain multiple perspectives of events in Nebraska, including historically marginalized and underrepresented groups.

SS 4.4.2.a Compare and contrast primary and secondary sources to better understand multiple perspectives of the same event.

SS 4.4.2.b Identify and describe how various sources relate their perspectives of Nebraska history.

SS 4.4.4 Develop historical inquiry and research skills.

SS 4.4.4.b Identify and cite primary and secondary sources to research the history of Nebraska.

SS 4.4.4.c Gather, analyze, and communicate historical information about Nebraska.

Nebraska Language Arts Standards

LA 4.1.5 Vocabulary: Students will build and use conversational, academic, and content-specific grade level vocabulary.

LA 4.1.5.c Acquire new academic and content-specific grade-level vocabulary, relate to prior knowledge, and apply in new situations.

LA 4.1.6 Comprehension: Students will construct meaning by using prior

knowledge and text information while reading grade-level literary and informational text.

LA 4.1.6.e Determine main ideas and supporting details from informational text and/or media.

LA 4.1.6.f Use text features to locate information and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of print and digital text.

LA 4.1.6.h Compare and contrast similar themes, topics, and/or patterns of events in literary and informational texts to develop a multicultural perspective.

Overview

Students will consider how the Civil War affected different groups of Americans.

Key Vocabulary

Drafted-ordered by the government to serve in the military

Preserver of our life-God

Unscathed-unhurt

Mourning-a period of sadness after someone has died

Calamity-disaster

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Materials

Copies for each student:

- William H. Hendrick's letters of January 24th and April 24th, 1865 (Modified)
- Undated Photo of William R. Hendricks
- Enlistment Poster
- Samuel Cabbie enlistment letter, (Modified)

Procedures

SESSION ONE

1. Ask students to share what they think they know about the Civil War.
 - US was divided in two sections, North/South, Union/Confederacy
 - The South supported slavery because of their reliance on agriculture as an industry
 - Abraham Lincoln was president at the time
 - Nebraska was not yet a state
 - Our state capital was named for President Lincoln (after his death, after the Civil War had ended)
 - Nebraska settlers included Civil War soldiers and freed African American slaves

Clarify misunderstandings. Tell students this lesson will focus on how the Civil War affected people across the US. If they have not worked with primary documents, explain the differences between primary and secondary documents. Also, make students aware that these are only *excerpts* from the actual documents.

2. Distribute the Hendricks letters that William H. Hendricks wrote to his son, William R. Hendricks, who was serving in the Union Army in 1865. Discuss the historical background information and guide students through the first letter. Allow students to discuss two things that they believe are important in this letter. It can be about facts, feelings, or inferences. They should use evidence from the document to support their opinions. Lead a class discussion so students can share their thoughts. Ask for predictions about the content of the second letter. Then repeat the procedure for the second letter. Check accuracy of predictions but emphasize that "incorrect" predictions are still valuable if they were supported with reasonable evidence.
3. Distribute the Enlistment Poster and allow time for students to examine it and discuss in small groups. Students should understand that families were in terrible distress because the men were fighting in the War and were not able to provide for their families. Thus, enlistment bonuses were enticing. Ask students if such tactics would be effective in current times and what other benefits might help recruit service members. Discuss incentives you use in the classroom or students have at home to complete difficult or unpleasant tasks. Compare these to employment benefits that workers often receive.

SESSION TWO

1. Distribute the last "primary" document, the letter from Samuel Cabbie. Students can view an image of the actual letter at <https://www.docsteach.org/documents/document/letter-from-samuel-cabbie-to-his-wife-and-mother> Guide students through the reading and compare this letter to those written by Hendricks. Consider the tone of the letter as well as the content, especially how Mr. Cabbie views the War as an opportunity for himself, his family, and all people who seek freedom.

Assessment

Ask students to respond to how the Civil War affected different groups by comparing the different points of view expressed in the documents. They should share at least two observations or inferences about each of the three

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perspectives (Hendricks, Cabbie, and the military) and cite evidence in the documents that supports their statements. Choose a format that you prefer such as a paragraph or essay, web, or Venn diagram.

Extensions

Virtual Capitol Tour-Nebraska's Role in the Civil War

Students should open the tour and enter "Civil War" in the search bar. They will find several references to the Civil War:

- North Façade - "What Brings You Here?" A relief sculpture depicting Nebraska's entrance into the Union as the first new state after the Civil War
- Memorial Chamber – A plaque showing the order from Washington DC that that sets aside the 30th of May as Memorial Day
- Memorial Chamber - A plaque showing the Gettysburg Address of 1863, a speech by President Lincoln given during the middle of the Civil War
- Capitol Interior - Hall of Fame NE Side – The bust of Robert W. Furnas who was the second governor of Nebraska in 1873. Before becoming governor, Furnas was a colonel in the Civil War
- West Façade - A Civil Society - West of the Capitol is the memorial to President **Abraham Lincoln** from the previous Capitol

Sources/Resources

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Recruiting_poster_179th_Pennsylvania_Infantry_Regiment.jpg
Recruitment Poster

<https://www.docsteach.org/documents/document/letter-from-samuel-cabbie-to-his-wife-and-mother>
Image of Samuel Cabbie letter

Virtual Capitol Tour Website
<http://nebraskavirtualcapitol.org/>

<http://capitol.nebraska.gov/building/rooms/memorial-chamber>
Memorial Chamber art