

New Hampshire in the Civil War Lesson Plan

Life during the Civil War

Created by: New Hampshire in the Civil War workshop participant Christina O'Brien and the New Hampshire Historical Society, 2014–15

Topic: Postcards from the Civil War

Level: 8th Grade

ABSTRACT / SUMMARY

Students will select a Civil War nurse or soldier from New Hampshire to research for an oral presentation. Taking on the persona of their person, the students will perform a two-minute monologue in which they will describe daily life and challenges.

QUESTIONS / TASKS

What was life like for the nurses and soldiers in the Civil War? What were their motivations for joining the war? What were the challenges of daily life? What can we learn from reading the letters written by the nurses and soldiers of the Civil War?

View the various websites containing primary source letters. Select a nurse or soldier and read several of their letters written during the Civil War. Pretend that you are that person. Create a 30-second monologue for your classmates telling them about who you are, what you are doing in the war, and what your life is like. Feel free to pull quotes from your letter. Perform for your partner to practice before performing for the class.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Learn to use primary sources and secondary sources to answer research questions
- Explore what life was like for soldiers and nurses during the Civil War

SEQUENCE OF ACTIVITIES

1. Select a letter from a soldier and a letter from a nurse.
2. Read both letters with the class as a whole. Show on projector, if possible.
3. Facilitate discussion about who the author was and what we can learn about his or her life, challenges, and worries.
4. Model how to create a 30-second monologue from primary source letter.
 - a. Perform monologue.
5. From a prepared list of soldiers and nurses, students choose which person they would like to research and portray.
6. Direct students to read one or more letters written by their person during the Civil War and create a two-minute monologue.
 - a. Explain that students need to take on the persona of their person and talk about what their lives were like, based on the information they read in the letters.
7. Assign partners. Students will practice monologue with partner before performing to the class.
8. Students perform monologues for class.

ASSESSMENTS

20 points total

0-5 points: diligently working in class to read letters, gather information about person.

0-5 points: Monologue—took on persona.

0-5 points: Monologue—included facts from letters.

0-5 points: Monologue—good summary in two minutes to reflect character of person.

PROJECT DURATION

In-Class Time (estimated): 4 class periods

Out-of-Class Time (estimated): 30 minutes to revise monologue and practice performance

RESOURCES AVAILABLE AT THE NEW HAMPSHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Archives and Special Collections:

Albert Aspinwell Correspondence, 1865	2011.031 (m)
Albert A. Buxton Correspondence, 1862–1875	2011.018 (m)
Captain George W. Gordon Papers, 1860–1864	2014.002
Charles H. Phelps Papers, 1840–1863	2012.006 (m)
George Hamilton Perkins Papers, 1837–1902	1982.068
George E. Whitman Correspondence, 1863–1864	1997.048 (m)
Harriet Patience Dame Papers, 1866–1897	1995.002 (m)
J. M. and Esther Hawks Letter, 1861	1995.128 (m)
J. W. Kingman Correspondence to N.S. Berry, 1862–1863	1994.078 (m)
John Gilbert Correspondence, 1862	1990.001 (m)
Joseph Gilmore Papers, 1842–1866	1926.006
Kate Sanborn Correspondence, 1864–1879	1995.053 (m)
Ladies Civil War Aid Society Records, 1861–1866	1927.004
Morrison Family Papers, 1861-1865	2012.023
Olof Jewett and Alonzo Jewett Correspondence, 1862–1863	2010.061 (m)
Rodney H. Ramsay Correspondence, 1862	1990.031 (m)
Sarah Low Papers, 1844–1965	1965.010
Theodore V. Nutting Correspondence, 1858–1864	2008.065 (m)
Thomas B. Leaver Letterbooks, 1861–1862	1915.006
William W. Fish Correspondence, 1862–1863	2012.070 (m)

Library Collections:

Adams, John W. <i>A Civil War Chaplain's Story: 2nd NH Volunteers, 1863–1865</i> . Wells: Book Barn Press, 1995.	973.781 A214
Attie, Jeanie. <i>Patriotic Toil: Northern Women and the American Civil War</i> . Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998.	973.708 A885
Benton, Charles Edward. <i>As Seen from the Ranks: A Boy in the Civil War</i> . New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1902.	973.78 B4782
Bolster, W. Jeffrey. <i>Soldiers, Sailors, Slaves, and Ships: The Civil War Photography of Henry P. Moore</i> . Concord: New Hampshire Historical Society, 1999.	973.7 B687

- Chandonnet, Ann Fox, and Roberta Gibson Pevear, ed. *Write Quick: War and a Woman's Life in Letters, 1835–1867*. Wilmington: Winoca Press, 2010. 973.78 W955
- Child, William. *Letters from a Civil War Surgeon: The Letters of Dr. William Child of the Fifth New Hampshire Volunteers*. Solon: Polar Bear and Company, 2001. 973.781 C5356
- Commager, Henry Steele. *The Blue and the Gray: The Story of the Civil War as Told by Participants*. New York: Bobbs Merrill, 1950. 973.7 C728
- Gerrish, Theodore. *Army Life: A Private's Reminiscences of the Civil War*. Portland: Hoyt, Fogg and Donham, 1882. 973.78 G378
- Hawks, Esther Hill. *A Woman Doctor's Civil War: Esther Hill Hawk's Diary*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1984. 973.775 H395w
- Kelly, Margaret Wyte. *Sarah—Her Story: The Life Story of Sarah Parker Rice Goodwin, Wife of Ichabod Goodwin, New Hampshire's Civil War Governor*. Portsmouth: Back Channel Press, 2006. 920 G6563
- Kelsey, D. M. *Deeds of Daring Both by Blue and Gray: Thrilling Narratives of Personal Adventure, Exploits of Scouts and Spies, Forlorn Hopes... During the Great Civil War*. Boston: D. L. Guernsey Publisher, 1883–84. 973.78 K29d
- Lawler, Lee Anne Rogers. *"Dear" Aunt Harriet: The Story of Harriet Patience Dame, Civil War Nurse*. McHenry. L. A. R. Lawler, 2001. 920 D157h
- Leonard, Elizabeth D. *All the Daring of the Soldier: Women of the Civil War Armies*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1999. 973.708 L581
- Leslie, Frank. *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Famous Leaders and Battle Scenes of the Civil War*. Concord: Frank Leslie Publisher, circa 1896. 973.7 L634f
- Leslie, Frank. *Frank Leslie's Illustrations: The American Soldier in the Civil War*. New York: Bryan, Taylor, and Company, 1895. 973.7 L634a
- Long, Richard R. *Dearest Carrie: The Civil War Romance of a Myerstown Girl and a New Hampshire Boy*. Morgantown: Masthof Press, 2004. 920 L1543
- Pierce, Sally. *Citizens in Conflict: Prints and Photographs of the American Civil War*. Boston: Boston Athenaeum, 1981. 973.79 P618c
- Shaffer, Duane E. *Men of Granite: New Hampshire Soldiers in the Civil War*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2008. 973.7478 S525
- Silber, Nina. *Yankee Correspondence: Civil War Letters Between New England Soldiers and the Home Front*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996. 976.781 Y23

Museum Collections:

Hardtack biscuit, 1865	1969.040
Cartridge Box, 1863	1966.545.122
Document Box, circa 1861	1946.037.13
Bugle, circa 1860	2012.031.05
Bullet, 1861–65	1956.048
Bullets, 1861–65	1992.507
Canteen, 1862–65	1965.545.01
Cloth Fragments/ Bandages, 1861–65	1983.002.39
Military Coat, 1861–64	2005.002.01
Portable Writing Desk, 1864	2013.012.01
Drum, 1863	1966.544.02

Flag, 1864
Knife, Fork, Spoon Set, 1861

2005.500
1952.029

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Primary Sources:

“Civil War Washington,” University of Nebraska. Accessed July 20, 2015. <http://civilwardc.org/>

“The Diary of a Civil War Nurse,” Albert H. Small Documents Gallery, Smithsonian: National Museum of American History. Accessed March 10, 2014.
http://americanhistory.si.edu/documentsgallery/exhibitions/nursing_1.html

“Discovering The Civil War,” National Archives. Accessed July 20, 2015.
<http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/civil-war/>

Greenhagen, Sue. “Letters, Diaries, Reminiscences, and Manuscripts of New York Soldiers and Nurses,” Letters, Diaries, Reminiscences and Manuscripts of New York Soldiers and Nurses. Accessed March 10, 2014. <http://localhistory.morrisville.edu/sites/letters/>

“Historical Document: Sullivan Ballou Letter,” Ken Burns on PBS, The Civil War. Accessed March 10, 2014. http://www.pbs.org/civilwar/war/ballou_letter.html

“Letters Home from The Civil War.” The Civil War Archive. Accessed March 10, 2014.
<http://www.civilwararchive.com/LETTERS/letters.htm>

Secondary Sources:

“The Civil War in Four Minutes: Black Soldiers,” Civil War Trust, 2013.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOyO75HJygl>

“The Civil War in Four Minutes: Prisoners,” Civil War Trust, 2015.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KpRZ7OkrbNU>

“The Civil War in Four Minutes: Soldier Life,” Civil War Trust, 2014.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FxnDnxUw14Y>

“The Civil War in Four Minutes: Women,” Civil War Trust, 2014.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ufdcQVVFkbc>

Northern Colonist Historical Society. “Sarah Low—Civil War Nurse from Dover,” Dover Public Library. Accessed March 10, 2014. http://www.dover.lib.nh.us/DoverHistory/sarah_low.htm