



Civil War – Home Front Lesson Plan

Lesson written by Tina Lyons

STANDARDS:

Era 5: Civil War and Reconstruction (1850-1877)

- Standard 1A: The student understands how the North and South differed and how politics and ideologies led to the Civil War.
- Standard 2A: The student understands how the resources of the Union and Confederacy affected the course of the war.
- Standard 2B: The student understands the social experience of the war on the battlefield and the homefront.
- Standard 3C: The student understands the successes and failures of Reconstruction in the South, North, and West.

LESSON:

Compare and contrast the North and the South before the Civil War.

Have each student locate a family in the North and a family in the South in the 1860 United States census. For farming families, locate the agriculture schedules for the 1860 census to determine what was grown on their farms. Have them compare how each family was the same and how they were different. As a class, make a list of trends found in the census records for families in the North. Make another list for families in the South.

Questions to guide the discussion:

- What were the main industries in the North and the South? How would these industries have helped during the war?
- What crops were grown on farms in the North and the South? Was the size or value of the farms different? Did they raise different animals?
- How did the differences affect the course of the war?

Other records to consult include: historical maps, newspapers, city directories.

Compare families in the North and the South before and after the Civil War.

Have students find families in the 1860 census and the same families in the 1870 census. Discuss how their lives changed. Questions to guide the discussion include:

- How did the war affect their lives?
- Did they stay in the same place or move? If they moved, what might have been their reasons?
- Did the values of their real estate or personal property change?
- Did their occupations change? If they were farmers, did their crops change? Did their production change? Did the number of workers change?

Other records to use: agriculture schedules for 1860 and 1870, city directories, historical maps, newspapers, local histories

Research your community during the Civil War

Use census records, agricultural schedules, historical maps, newspapers, local histories and Civil War draft records to determine how the Civil War affected the lives of the people within your community. Questions to guide the discussion include:

- How many soldiers enlisted or were drafted in the war? What military regiments were formed by men in your community? How many soldiers died?
- What was your community's attitude toward the Civil War draft (in the North)? Were there incentives (bounties) for men to join the military?
- What did the men and women left behind do? How did they help the war effort?
- What was life like for the veterans when they returned home? How did the community care for the wounded? How did the community care for widows and orphans?
- Did the community create memorials to honor those who died and those who served in the Civil War?