

One Tennessean's Story from the Civil War: Creating a Museum Exhibit in Your Classroom

Grade Level: 8-12

Lesson Duration: 2 class sessions

Introduction:

In this lesson, students will discover the personal stories of those Tennesseans that lived through the Civil War. They will discover the decisions they faced and the hardships they endured. For most it was a time of personal pain and loss. For some it was an opportunity for freedom and hope. But all would carve out their own stories of how the war impacted their lives. After reading and researching the biographies listed below, students will divide into groups and learn about one person's story. Then, they will create a museum exhibit by using the images and artifacts included in this web site's database. At the end, your class will become a large panorama of stories from the Civil War in which students can show off their displays by giving their classmates tours or perhaps holding a parent visitation night.

Goal: To understand the personal decisions and hardships that individuals faced during the war.

Objectives: Students will read and comprehend one individual's wartime experiences.
Students will research and analyze artifacts pertaining to their selected stories.
Students will evaluate and synthesize their story into a museum exhibit.

Curriculum Standards:

8.1.01 Understand the nature and complexity of culture.

- a. Explain why people living in the same region maintain different ways of life.
- b. Analyze how human migration and cultural activities influence the character of a place.

8.5.18 Recognize the causes, course, and consequences of the Civil War.

- a. Identify sectional differences that led to the Civil War.
- b. Chart the course of major events throughout the Civil War.
- c. Explain the technological, social and strategic aspects of the Civil War.
- d. Weigh the political, social, and economic impact of the Civil War on the different regions of the United States.

8.5.19 Identify the contributions of African Americans from slavery to Reconstruction.

- a. Recognize the economic impact of African American labor on the United States economy.
- b. Analyze the social and cultural impact of African Americans on American society.

8.5.20 Identify Tennessee's role within the Civil War.

- c. Discuss the contributions of significant Tennesseans during the Civil War.

Orlando Poe	Samuel Palmer
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http://www.civilwarshades.org/visualizing-the-war/orlando-poe/	http://www.civilwarshades.org/walking-a-fine-line/richard-poyner/
Christopher Haun http://www.civilwarshades.org/walking-a-fine-line/christopher-haun/	James Cameron http://www.civilwarshades.org/walking-a-fine-line/james-cameron/
Sarah Polk http://www.civilwarshades.org/holding-fast-to-beauty/sarah-polk/	The McKissak Family http://www.civilwarshades.org/building-a-future/mckissacks/
Gates P. Thruston http://www.civilwarshades.org/building-a-future/gates-p-thruston/	Susan Brownlow http://www.civilwarshades.org/capturing-the-flag/susan-brownlow/
Lucy Virginia French http://www.civilwarshades.org/holding-fast-to-beauty/lucy-virginia-smith-french/	Adelicia Acklen http://www.civilwarshades.org/taking-care-of-business/adelicia-acklen/
Johann Albert Lotz http://www.civilwarshades.org/walking-a-fine-line/johann-albert-lotz/	Richard Poyner http://www.civilwarshades.org/walking-a-fine-line/richard-poyner/

Procedures:

1. Display Samuel Palmer's sketch of Knoxville. When the question of secession arose in the state of Tennessee during the spring of 1861, every Tennessean was forced to make a decision, either in favor of secession and joining with the new Confederate government or against secession and remaining with the Union. As students will discover, Tennessee was a divided state.
2. Divide your class into 12 groups, one group for each person listed.
3. Explain to the class that each group will read about and research their assigned person. They will learn who they were during the war, what happened to them, what decisions they made, and how the war affected their lives.
4. Have students spend about five minutes in silent reading time, reading their biographies.
5. Allow students time to take notes on their biographies.
6. Next students will discuss among their group whether they think the person was Pro-Confederate or Pro-Union. Did they change sides during the war when an army conquered their region?
7. Have students pay particular attention to places, people, and objects that relate to their story. Jot down notes about the person's story. Draw a storyboard about the person's life.
8. Explain that they will now design and develop a mini-exhibit about their person.
9. Once they have created a storyboard about their person's life, the group should write an introductory label about the person. This is a very short paragraph that explains the life of their

Tennessean. Be sure to include decisions they made, challenges they faced, and what ultimately happened to them.

10. Every exhibit needs artifacts to help tell its story. Have the students search for artifacts related to their person, or artifacts related to places or events that they would have encountered in their life. For example, Johann Lotz's house survived the Battle of Franklin so be sure students remember to find artifacts related to that battle. Research may be conducted outside the www.civilwarshades.org web site but many great artifacts are already there on the site.

11. Next, students will learn about the artifacts they selected. Each student should select at least one artifact to tell the story.

12. Once they have learned about the artifact, they will then need to write a label describing it. Artifact labels are very short--no more than three to five sentences. Use the form provided in this lesson plan and consider these guidelines for labels:

- Describe and identify the artifact.
- Tell how it relates to the person's story.
- Provide the date when the artifact was created.

13. Lastly, have students print out the images from the web site and adhere them to the wall in an exhibit format. The images and labels should be exhibited in a way that is logical and sequentially lays out the person's life.

14. Teacher note: You might want to display some biographies in more than one category: Confederate, Union, or both, to show that no matter which side they were on, all faced adversity and hardship.

15. The last step in creating a museum exhibit is interpretation. After all biographies have been exhibited on the classroom wall, students should spend time standing in front of their exhibit and telling about their person to visitors (other classmates).

Assessment:

Student evaluation of learning should be conducted based on the group's introductory label, the individually-written artifact label, and participation in the project including the interpretation portion. Each student should have the opportunity to explain their exhibit to at least one other person.