

Diseases in the Civil War

Grade Level: Grade 5

Topic: History, Social Studies, Science

Resources Needed:

- Pre-selected letters from the Vermonters in the Civil War Collection
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention website:
<http://www.cdc.gov/diseasesconditions/>
- Visual aid materials - poster board, computers for Powerpoint, etc.
- Books on disease for research purposes
- Writing journals for note taking

Learning Context: As stipulated by the Common Core standards, students in the fifth grade are expected to integrate information from several texts on the same topic to write or speak about it knowledgeably. Students will benefit from being able to practice these necessary skills through an historical lens. They will be asked to look for instances of disease in a letter collection, which will improve their abilities to analyze information from multiple angles while simultaneously getting them to explore common concerns and courses of action during the Civil War era. Ultimately students will gain perspective across subject areas. This will lead to future comparisons between the past and the present so that students may develop an understanding of how modern medicine has shaped the way we live today.

Student Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to integrate information from several sources on the same disease-related topic in order to present their research in a knowledgeable manner.
2. Students will demonstrate understanding of past and present practices regarding disease in their presentations.

Assessment of Stated Objectives:

Student Learning Objective	Assessment	Below Expectation (1)	At Expectation (2)	Above Expectation (3)
<i>Students will be able to integrate information from several sources on the same disease-related topic in order to present their research in a knowledgeable manner.</i>	The student will conduct independent research on a disease-related topic pertaining to the information gathered from the letter collection to put into a presentation.	The student does not conduct independent research or fails to put gathered information into a presentation.	The student conducts independent research on an appropriate topic to put into a presentation.	The student conducts independent research on an appropriate topic to put into a presentation that involves classmates' input.
<i>Students will demonstrate understanding of past versus present practices regarding disease via their presentations.</i>	The student will relate the research on their topic from how it was handled in the past to how it is handled in present day via his/her presentation.	The student does not relate the research to either the past, the present.	The student relates the research to the past as well as the present and describes how the topic affects both the past and present.	The student relates the research to the past as well as the present and describes how the topic affects both the past and present. The presentation is engaging and the basis for a classroom discussion.

Standards:

USA- Common Core State Standards (June 2010)

Subject: English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Grade: Grade 5 students:

Content Area: Informational Text K–5

Strand: Reading

Domain: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Standard:

9. Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

VT- Vermont Grade Level Expectations

Subject: History & Social Sciences

Grade: Grades 5 – 6

Strand: History

GE Stem: H&SS5-6:8 Students connect the past with the present by...

Expectation: Describing ways that life in the United States and/or the world has both changed and stayed the same over time; and explaining why these changes have occurred (e.g., In what ways would the life of a teenager during the American Revolution be different from the life of a teenager today? What factors have contributed to these differences?).

Differentiation: *Struggling* learners will be grouped with more advanced learners to prepare their presentations and to bolster their motivation to work hard and to do well.

Advanced learners will help struggling learners prepare their presentations by acting as a "teacher helpers" during the time allotted for students to begin piecing together their presentations.

Procedures:

Orientation: The idea of illness and disease during the Civil War era is introduced. Students will participate in a "round robin" discussion style and begin to answer questions such as, "*What do people think were prevalent diseases at the time? How are they different from modern day? How do you think they were treated then versus how they are treated now? What do these kinds of diseases do to your body?*"

Students will be asked to investigate the diseases and illnesses mentioned in the pre-selected letter collection they are given. Each student will choose a specific disease, illness, or aspect of a disease (e.g. treatment at the time, transportation of sick soldiers, etc.) that they will research. Later, they will present their findings to the class with the help of a visual aid.

Students must use at least 5 sources in their research, one of which can be the letter collection.

Teaching/Learning Process:

Students will use highlighters as they read the assigned letters to mark instances of disease, illness, or treatment. They will each read four letters that discuss disease, illness, or treatment in some capacity. The instructor will circulate around the classroom as students work independently. If students are having trouble identifying a research topic, the instructor can provide additional letters to read or

ask students to use paper and pencil to brainstorm ideas. Once students have finished reading a minimum of four letters, they should be reminded that they will begin research the following day and need to have a disease, illness, or treatment identified for tomorrow's research.

The second class period consists of independent research. Students will be exposed to various resources from the library for browsing and taking notes in their journals. Students should identify at least 5 sources to put into their presentations.

The third class period is dedicated to finishing research and starting construction of their presentations. Ideally, students should be able to access prepared materials such as computers for multimedia, poster boards, diorama materials, etc. By the end of this class period, students should have their research complete and be ready to put their information into presentation form. Presentations do not need to be overly-detailed. They should cover the main points about the disease/illness/aspect of the given disease. Students should be reminded that their presentations ought to include a comparison of the disease, illness, or treatment as it was during the Civil War versus what it is today. For instance, some diseases may now have cures or medicinal remedies.

On the fourth day, students will finish their presentations. Students will be given time to add finishing touches on their projects before presenting.

Closure / Wrap Up:

Students will present to their classmates in small groups. The instructor will group students by topic. Student presenters will teach their classmates about their chosen disease, illness, or treatment. The instructor will circulate the room taking notes on students' presentations.

Time allotment: 4 class periods of 45 minutes per class

Lesson plan created by Kathryn Seelen 4/17/2013 as part of the University of Vermont Education Class: *EDEL 157 – Social Education and Social Studies*.