

## **8<sup>th</sup>-Grade Denton and the Civil War: Open Lesson Plan**

**Lesson Title:** Where Do We Begin the Inquiry Process?

**Inquiry Phase:** Open

**Grade Level:** 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

### **Essential Questions:**

1. What was the impact of the Civil War on Denton County citizens?
2. How can we assess primary source artifacts and secondary source materials in terms of validity and bias and use these resources to support a particular interpretation of historical events?

**Lesson Plan Objectives:** At the end of these lessons, students will be able to:

1. Respond to new information in various formats by connecting background knowledge about the Civil War with information about Denton County at that time.
2. Define a secondary source.
3. Brainstorm and discuss broad topics for an inquiry unit.
4. Reflect on their process.

**Social Studies TEKS** (for this lesson):

**§113.20.** (b) Knowledge and skills.

**(29) Social studies skills.** The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired through established research methodologies from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to:

(A) differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as computer software, databases, media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information about the United States;

(B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions.

(G) evaluate the validity of a source based on language, corroboration with other sources, and information about the author.

**ELA-R TEKS** (for this lesson):

**§110.18b**

(22) Students ask open-ended research questions and develop a plan for answering them.

(A) brainstorm, consult with others, decide upon a topic, and formulate a major research question to address the major research topic

### **Standards for the 21st-Century Learner Indicators:**

1.1.2 Use prior and background knowledge as context for new learning.

1.1.6 Read, view, and listen for information presented in any format (e.g., textual, visual, media, digital) in order to make inferences and gather meaning.

**Assessment Tools:** Admit Slip, Brainstorm, and Exit Ticket

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**Resources for this Unit of Study:** <http://tinyurl.com/di4ll-8-resources>

### **Resources for This Lesson:**

Admit Slip

Educator Reader's Theatre Script: "A Conversation Overheard at Lovejoy's General Store, 1863"

History.com Video: "Civil War's Greatest Myth" - <http://tinyurl.com/CWgreatestmyth>  
(2 minutes 41 seconds)

Brainstorming Web 2.0 Tools, Apps, or paper

Exit Ticket

**Estimated Lesson Time:** One 50-minute Lesson

### **Instructional Plan Outline:**

#### **Classroom Teacher – School Librarian Collaboration:**

- The classroom teacher and school librarian review prepare the reader's theatre. They may decide to dress in costume.
- Educators prepare for think-alouds to demonstrate brainstorming, connecting with background knowledge and identifying broad topics.
- Educators comonitor students' guided practice.
- Educators jointly review the students' Admit Slips, brainstorms, and Exit Tickets.

**Measurable Outcome or Final Product:** Students will complete an Admit Slip and Exit Ticket. They will work with a partner or small group to brainstorm broad topics that stimulate their curiosity and connect with their background knowledge. Some teams may begin to identify questions.

### **Preparation**

- The educators make one copy of the Admit Slip for each student and an Exit Ticket for each team (two-person partnership or small group).
- The educators review the reader's theatre script.
- Note: Educators may decide to include the Evaluate: Reflection Graphic Organizer in students' inquiry journals. Students can then record feelings, accomplishments, and challenges at each inquiry phase throughout the unit.
- Integrate academic vocabulary into think-alouds: inquiry, background knowledge, historical fiction.
- Integrate discipline-specific vocabulary into the lesson: secondary source documents, Unionist, abolition/abolitionist, secede, validity, bias, and point of view.

### **Motivation**

1. Educators distribute the Admit Slip to each student.
2. Read the script as a class or individually and circle unknown vocabulary words and respond to the question at the end of the slip.

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3. Educators share the background information on the reader's theatre script and present the script.
4. Students think-pair-share their response to the reader's theatre with an elbow partner and/or add another idea that surprised them on the Admit Slip.
5. Educators project the Works Consulted for the reader's theatre script. Point out the dates of publication for these resources. Are these primary or secondary sources?
6. Review the definition of secondary sources.
7. Educators post the lesson objectives and let students know the class will begin an inquiry into the time period before, during, and after the Civil War with a focus on Denton County.

### **Presentation**

8. Educators play "Civil War's Greatest Myth" - <http://tinyurl.com/CWgreatestmyth> (2 minutes 41 seconds)
9. Educators ask, "Are the opinions of these historians primary or secondary sources?" "Does every resource have a point of view?" "Who determines the facts?" "What makes a source valid?"
10. Educators use think-alouds to briefly ponder the information in the reader's theatre script and video.

### **Student Participation**

11. Divide the students into partners or small groups.
12. Students discuss the ideas presented in the Admit Slip, reader's theatre, and video; they document their discussion with a brainstorm using a Web 2.0 tool, app, or on paper.

### **Guided Practice**

13. Educators monitor as students discuss and document big ideas related to the broad topics of the Civil War and the Civil War in Denton County, in particular.

### **Closure and Reflection**

14. Student groups select the most compelling topic (or question) on their brainstorm and record it on the Exit Ticket. They email the URL to their brainstorm to the librarian or classroom teacher and/or print it out.
15. Educators and students review: "What is a secondary source?"
16. Student partners or small groups complete Exit Tickets.

### **Assessment**

17. Educators assess the students' individual Admit Slips, brainstorms, and Exit Tickets.