

Chapter 19: The Civil War

Fighting during the Civil War

Objective: To understand the key conflicts of the Civil War, and the war's impact on military and civilian life.

Standard: *Indicator 8-3.5 — Military engagements during the Civil War*
Indicator 8-3.6 — Daily lives during the Civil War

Mapping Activity

Ask your students to imagine that they are leaders of the Union army and are preparing to attack South Carolina. Have them review a map and come up with an effective strategy for the assault. Remind your students to consider the geographical characteristics of the state, the major cities, the important ports, and other vital landmarks that might have an impact on the attack.

Have your students compare their plans with the actual strategy used by the Union Army when it invaded the South (*i.e. the invasion of Port Royal, the blockade of Charleston, Sherman's March, etc.*). Why did the Union use the strategy it did?

Perception vs. Reality

Most young and healthy men living in South Carolina during the Civil War volunteered for the fight. Of course, there was often a difference between what they expected and what they found on the battlefield. Ask your students to try to list the **positive perceptions** of the war, as well as the **negative realities**.

Positive Perceptions of War

- It is glorious and exciting
- A soldier is treated like a hero
- The fight is for a worthy cause
- Soldiers learn about their "true character"

Negative Realities of War

- There is always a high risk of injury or death
- The conditions can be harsh
- The ideology can be tainted by attempts for political gain
- In large wars, soldiers are often viewed as "chess pieces" rather than living men.

Language Arts Integration

Ask your students to imagine that they are soldiers from South Carolina who have gone off to fight in the Civil War. Have them **write a letter** back home, describing the living conditions of a soldier. Make sure they consider the daily experiences of a common soldier (*i.e. battles, food, camping, supplies, morale, etc.*).

When General William Sherman marched his Union Army through South Carolina, he destroyed everything in his path (*i.e. houses, farms, plantations, railroads, etc.*). Ask your students to imagine that they are members of the Confederate Army and have just returned home after years of violent fighting in the war. Have them write a **journal entry** that describes their reaction upon seeing the destruction of their homes and farms at the hands of the Union Army.