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Integrated learning solutions

## CIVIL WAR CHARACTERS Grade Band: 4-5 Content Focus: Theatre & Social Studies



### LEARNING DESCRIPTION

In this lesson, students use photos that relate to the American Civil War as a springboard to write a first person monologue embodying the person who is pictured. This monologue explores the character’s views on the subject of the second photo that deals with the historical context. Next, students will bring the photo to life in an improvisation. By allowing your students to explore what they have read and heard about the American Civil War through the eyes of another person, they learn empathy and better embody the concept. This exercise is a wonderful tool to increase presentation skills, empathy and ensemble in your classroom.

### LEARNING TARGETS

Essential Questions	“I Can” Statements
What impact does a photograph have on our perception of a society and/or historical event?	I can write a monologue using photography as inspiration.
How can theatre techniques help me better understand the American Civil War?	I can improvise a scene with a partner using photography as inspiration.



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	I can use theatre techniques to help me better understand a historical event.
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## GEORGIA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
<p><b>Grade 4:</b>            SS4H5 Explain the causes, major events, and consequences of the Civil War.            a. Identify Uncle Tom’s Cabin and John Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry and explain how each of these events was related to the Civil War. b. Discuss how the issues of states’ rights and slavery increased tensions between the North and South. c. Identify major battles, campaigns, and events: Fort Sumter, Gettysburg, the Atlanta Campaign, Sherman’s March to the Sea, and Appomattox Court House. d. Describe the roles of Abraham Lincoln, Robert E. Lee, Ulysses S. Grant, Jefferson Davis, Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson, and William T. Sherman. e. Describe the effects of war on the North and South.</p>	<p><b>Grade 4:</b>            TA4.CR.1 Organize, design, and refine theatrical work.            TA4.PR.1 Act by communicating and sustaining roles in formal and informal environments.</p>

## SOUTH CAROLINA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
<p><b>Grade 4:</b>  <b>Standard 4:</b> Demonstrate an understanding of economic, political, and social divisions during the United States Civil War, including the role of South Carolina between 1850–1870.</p>	<p><b>Anchor Standard 1:</b> I can create scenes and write scripts using story elements and structure.</p> <p><b>Anchor Standard 3:</b> I can act in improvised scenes and written scripts.</p> <p><b>Anchor Standard 8:</b> I can relate theatre to other content areas, arts disciplines, and careers.</p>

## KEY VOCABULARY

Content Vocabulary	Arts Vocabulary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>The American Civil War</u> - Fought from 1861 to 1865; a pivotal event in American history that resulted from deep-rooted tensions between the Northern and Southern states over issues such as slavery, states' rights,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Ensemble</u> - All the parts of a thing taken together, so that each part is considered only in relation to the whole</li> <li><u>Theater</u> - Dramatic literature or its performance; drama</li> </ul>



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and economic differences

- Union - The federal government of the United States and the states that remained loyal to it during the Civil War
- Confederacy - Also known as the Confederate States of America (CSA), was a self-proclaimed independent nation formed by Southern states that seceded from the United States
- John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry - On the night of October 16, 1859, Brown and his followers, numbering around 21 men, seized the federal armory and arsenal at Harpers Ferry taking several hostages
- Slavery - The system of forced labor and exploitation of African and African-descended people in the United States from the colonial period until the abolition of slavery after the Civil War
- Emancipation Proclamation - Declaration by President Abraham Lincoln that all enslaved people in Confederate-held territory to be free
- State's rights - The balance of power between state governments and the federal government; Southern states asserted their right to secede from the Union
- The Anaconda Plan - A military strategy proposed by Union General Winfield Scott at the beginning of the American Civil War
- Fort Sumter - The Battle of Fort Sumter, which took place on April 12-13, 1861, marked the beginning of the American Civil War
- Gettysburg - The Battle of Gettysburg is often considered the turning point of the Civil War and one of the most

- Improvisation - A creation that is spoken or written without prior preparation
- Monologue - A speech by a single character in a play, film, or other dramatic work; often used to give the audience deeper insight into the character's motivations and feelings
- Scene - A division of a play or act that presents continuous action in one place or setting
- Dialogue - The conversation or interaction between characters in a written work



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significant battles in American history

- The Atlanta Campaign - A series of military operations conducted by the Union Army of the Cumberland against the Confederate Army of Tennessee
- Sherman's March to the Sea - A Union military campaign aimed at destroying infrastructure and resources in Georgia to weaken the Confederacy
- Appomattox Court House - The site of General Robert E. Lee's surrender to General Ulysses S. Grant on April 9, 1865, effectively ending the American Civil War
- Expository Writing - Writing with the purpose to demonstrate or explain

## MATERIALS

- Printed photos of events and people related to the American Civil War
- Index cards and pencils
- Music and sound source

## INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

### Opening/Activating Strategy

*Classroom Tip: This activity works best in an open space with room for students to move.*

- Begin by playing music from the American Civil War era quietly as you pass out the images (photographs).
  - Each student should have one sheet of paper with two images, an index card, and pencil.
  - The first picture is of two people engaged in an activity. The name of the country or event should be written at the bottom of the photo. One of the people should be circled so you can pair up the students to act out the scene later.
  - The second picture is of a prominent figure who played a key role in a specific event related to the American Civil War, such as the Battle of Gettysburg.
    - The photo should be titled with the reference to the event.
  - Have students write their name in the top right hand corner of their index card.
  - Ask the students to closely observe the person that is circled in the top photo.
  - Ask questions for them to more deeply embody their character.



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- They should list the following on the left hand side of the card: Character's name, character's age, home country, how does the character feel about what is happening or who is pictured in the second photo and how is it affecting them and their people.
  - What is the character's greatest fear?
  - What is the character's greatest dream?
  - Encourage students to use descriptive phrases and relevant details and facts from the unit of study as they complete their cards.
- Provide time for students to pair-share or share responses with the class.

## Work Session

- Tell students that they will be writing a monologue in the first person introducing themselves as the person in their photograph.
  - Tell students that a monologue is a speech by a single character in a play, film, or other dramatic work. Monologues are often used to give the audience deeper insight into the character's motivations and feelings.
  - Tell students to turn the card over and write a monologue in the first person introducing themselves and including all of the elements on the front side of the card.
    - Tell students to make sure to summarize the paragraph with their character's greatest dream for themselves and their country.
    - Turn up the volume of the music while students are writing. Give them a set amount of time to write. *This could also be a longer exercise or assignment that they bring in the following class period.*
  - When everyone is finished writing, introduce the next section.
  - Tell students, "Today we are going to learn about the American Civil War (or a specific event related to the American Civil War) through the eyes of the people who lived through it. Each of you have been brought here to help us explore this time. Welcome!"
  - Tell students, "Using a voice different from your own, the voice of the character in the picture, on a count of three, softly but out loud, tell me what you had for breakfast this morning. Now sit like your character sits, different from yourself. Imagine your character is wearing an article of clothing that you don't have on. On a count of three adjust that article of clothing."
  - Next, ask a student to walk to the front of the class as that character would walk.
  - Once they get to the front of the classroom, ask them to pick one person to tell their story to. Ask the student to look at this person as they are telling their story. Have them read their character's monologue aloud.
    - If you desire or time permits, you can open the floor up for questions so the other students can interview the character. Let the class know that they can openly discuss the issues at hand and help the character answer questions that they might know the answers to.
- Now, tell students to find the classmate who has the other character depicted in the photograph on their page. Pass out two index cards to each pair.
  - Have students read their monologues to each other practicing embodying the character they have created.
  - Students should then discuss the historical context from the photographs and establish each of their character's points of view.



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- On each card, students should write a sentence in the first person with the first thing their character wants to say about the event depicted.
- When you say “action,” students bring the photo to life using improvisation.
- Beginning with the first line they previously generated on their index card, students should improvise a scene between the two characters discussing the event.
- Say “freeze!” and have students return to their seats.

*NOTE: Instead of improvising scenes, students can write a script for their scene and present it to the class.*

### Closing/Reflection

- On the back of their index cards students should reflect on the process and how both embodying their character and listening to another character’s point of view helped them gain a deeper understanding of the historical event.
- Allow students time to share with the whole class.

## ASSESSMENTS

### Formative

Teachers will assess students by observing students’ responses to class discussion around photographs in the opening strategy, consulting with students during the writing process, and observing students’ work with their partners creating improvisational scenes.

### Summative

- Students can write a monologue in the first person using photography as inspiration that addresses all parts of the prompt.
- Students can use historical context and relevant facts to create a realistic first person account of an event related to World War II.
- Students can work collaboratively to improvise a scene with a partner to investigate a historical context or event.

## DIFFERENTIATION

### Acceleration:

- Challenge students by telling them in the middle of the improvised scene, to swap characters with their partner and continue the scene from the new perspective. This tests their adaptability and understanding of character dynamics.
- Pair two partner teams together to create a new scene with all four characters.

### Remediation:

- Pair English Language Learning students with native English speakers.
- When writing the questions about the pictures, provide the students with a graphic organizer on which to write answers and to assist with organization of thoughts and ideas.
- Have students choose fewer items from the list about the character in the picture.
- Conference with students who struggle with writing.



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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Library of Congress - Civil War photographs](#)

*\*This integrated lesson provides differentiated ideas and activities for educators that are aligned to a sampling of standards. Standards referenced at the time of publishing may differ based on each state's adoption of new standards.*

*Ideas contributed by: Susie Spear Purcell. Updated by Katy Betts.*

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