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Torn Loyalties : The Civil War in New York City and Beyond

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Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond

by

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Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
UNIT ABSTRACT

By Alicia Fessenden

The Civil War is a frequent topic of study for New York City fifth grade classrooms. However, it is often studied as an historical event that took place far away. Many teachers are unaware of the myriad resources, museum, literary, and other resources that can connect the Civil War to New York. *Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond* is an interdisciplinary curriculum designed to take advantage of these resources, bringing the Civil War closer to home and connecting it to students' own lives and experiences. The series of experiential lessons will pique the interests of students, draw them into the subject, and give them a taste of what life was like in a time that was very different from our own.

In fifth grade, at the age of ten, children begin to be able to understand complex topics and to see shades of gray, rather than through the dichotomous lens of good versus evil. The Civil War is an ideal topic to take advantage of this ability and push it to a new level, since it allows for multiple perspectives. Fifth graders thrive in situations in which they are given choice and the ability to work independently or in small groups. *Torn Loyalties* gives students multiple entry points into the Civil War, then allows them to pursue, through projects and research, the topics which are of the most interest to them. By allowing students the freedom to explore their passions and taking advantage of their creativity, this unit will turn learning into an exciting adventure.

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Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
UNIT RATIONALE

Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond is an interdisciplinary curriculum designed as a resource for New York City teachers. Incorporating English language arts, social studies, and arts standards, it is a series of experiential, inquiry-based lessons that are developmentally appropriate for children in the fifth grade. The Civil War is a popular subject of study in fifth grade classrooms in New York, but many teachers are unaware of the myriad museum resources available to them in the city. The object of *Torn Loyalties* is to help them take advantage of these resources and make the subject New York-specific, helping to connect the Civil War to students' own lives and experiences. John Dewey believed that "Anything which can be called a study, whether arithmetic, history, geography, or one of the natural sciences, must be derived from materials which at the outset fall within the scope of ordinary life-experience." (1988) By starting out with a historical fiction account of the life of a boy of their own age during the war, then moving on to lessons which help students to step into the shoes of people who lived through the war, this unit will be rooted in everyday experience.

Learning is naturally fun; everyone is "born with a desire for knowledge, and some of the most stupendous feats of learning - to walk, talk, get along with others, to take care of oneself - are accomplished without seeming effort in the first few years of life." (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991) Through the use of historical fiction and experiential lessons, the unit will take advantage of this natural desire, making learning exciting rather than rote.

The best way to learn is to “interact with sensory data” (Hein, 1991), combined with penetrating questions posed by the teacher that do not have one correct answer. “We must hold constantly before us the idea of training students in clear thinking and sound reasoning power. No one has discovered any better method in teaching than the open, frank discussion of a problem.” (Muessig, 1987) Open-ended questions that stimulate students’ thinking will help them to reflect on the experiential lessons they will partake in, and visits to museums that pertain to the Civil War – including the New-York Historical Society, the Tenement Museum, and Weeksville Heritage Center – will give the class opportunities to observe and interact firsthand with objects and original documents pertaining to their study.

At the age of ten, when children are in the fifth grade, they are on the cusp between childhood and adolescence. They are conscious that they will soon be entering junior high and leaving behind their elementary school lives, and while they are still childish in many ways, they are anxious to move forward toward adulthood. They respond well to being treated as mature and responsible people, but still require nurturing from their teacher. Their focus is more on their peers and social life, and less on their teachers and other adults in their lives.

Children at this age begin to be able to conceive of some of the complexities of life, and to see things in shades of gray, rather than black and white. They are able to take on more complicated curricular material, and to see it from different points of view. Dorothy Cohen says of children who are approaching adolescence,

As they grow in capacity to see shades of meaning, the possibilities offered by alternatives begin to replace the either/or polarity of their younger years. Even such appraisals as “bright” and “stupid” take on degrees, and in their own self-

evaluations they become capable of recognizing that they are neither all good nor all bad, but more likely to be “some good, some bad.” (1972)

Delving deeply into a study that allows for multiple perspectives pushes them to expand their understanding of the world, and to feel a sense of pride in their mastery of the subject. As P.G. Richmond says in his *Introduction to Piaget*, “As the intelligence develops, the cognitive processes can encompass greater temporal distance, greater spatial distance, greater penetration beneath the surface of things, and greater understanding of the complexity of cause and effect. This penetration occurs in both the physical and social world.” (Richmond, 1977)

Likewise, as their ability to understand complexities increases, many fifth graders are able to grasp abstract concepts. This is not true of all students, however. For some children of this age, it comes naturally to conceptualize of something they have never experienced first-hand; other children need concrete experiences to gain understanding. Therefore, in order to achieve comprehension for all students, teachers need to provide fifth graders with experiential opportunities. Educators can take advantage of the students who are more advanced in this regard to scaffold other students.

There tends to be a wide range of maturity levels at this age. Some students have made the leap into the difficult world of adolescence, while others linger behind, their lives still centering on their parents. Fifth grade studies need to focus on a subject that is compelling to all students, though their interest may be piqued by different aspects. A common occurrence is that students whose interests have turned to their social lives and the opposite sex may lose interest in school, and though they have been successful learners in the past, their understanding sharply drops off.

Again, the curriculum should be exciting enough to draw back the wandering attention of these students.

In the fifth grade class that I student taught in Park Slope, Brooklyn, there were twenty-six students, about half of whom were white, and the other half a mix of black, Hispanic and Middle Eastern. Most of the students were from fairly affluent backgrounds, but about 25% were from working-class families, and five children had single parents. The school is known for being academically successful, and many of the students excelled in their learning. However, five children were reading at the third-grade level.

The students were in the midst of applying to junior high schools, and were keenly aware that they would soon be leaving their elementary school. Several expressed to me that they did not want to leave this familiar, comfortable realm, while others conveyed excitement at the new opportunities ahead of them. As the year progressed, the students became increasingly absorbed by their peers and social lives. Flirtation between students became commonplace, and girls were increasingly self-conscious and aware of their bodies, while boys grew more rambunctious. The children attended weekly sex education classes with a mixture of intense embarrassment and fascination. During these sessions, female students talked to me about their feelings of embarrassment about being too skinny or too fat, not having front teeth because they had not yet grown in, and being too short or too tall.

Students were conscious of their clothing as well as their bodies, and many sported identical Converse sneakers or baseball caps. While some wanted only to blend in with their peers, others took pride in their individuality and unique abilities.

Many students enjoyed the opportunity to participate in theatrical activities, and their teacher and I took advantage of this by integrating acting into our lessons as much as possible.

Though students of this age can have striking insights, their knowledge of the world is not complete, and the teacher needs to be careful not to take their knowledge for granted. While they might be able to step into the shoes of colonial Americans and imagine what their experience is like, they could also have confusion over what is represented on a map or what is in the United States. (One of my students once asked me, "What language do people speak in Maine?") Their understanding of time is developing, and they are able "to differentiate the past into periods, for example, colonial times." (Vukelich, 1984) However, teachers of these students need to devote to the nurturance and development of skills and knowledge involved in any subject.

Though fifth graders need this support, they thrive in situations in which they are given choice and the ability to work independently or in small groups. As Cohen states, "The major thrust in the middle years of childhood is toward increasing freedom from adult authority and direction." (1972) If given the proper tools and support, individual or group projects provide an important way to engage and motivate students.

Fifth grade is an exciting and complicated time. Children at this stage of development benefit from feeling that adults are ready to support them when they need it, but enjoy feeling that they have the freedom to make their own choices and express their identities. If they are given the chance to take pride and ownership in

their learning at this age, it can be the seed for a lifelong passion. However, it is also a time in which students can disengage from school, and the longer they are disengaged the harder it is to re-engage them. Teachers need to find subject matters and plan lessons in a way that gives all children the opportunity to feel excited and successful.

The Civil War may at first glance appear to be a simple struggle between good and evil, abolition versus slavery, North versus South. However, on further exploration, this binary opposition turns out to be not at all the case; there are many further levels of complication. For example, most Southern soldiers were not slaveholders, and many people in the North were deeply prejudiced against African Americans and resentful that they were fighting a war over slavery.

These layers of complexity make the Civil War an ideal topic for fifth graders, who have the ability to comprehend multiple perspectives. For many students, this ability was recently acquired, and it is beneficial to them to study a complicated topic in order to further develop this skill. Exploring these complexities will help them to “learn how to inquire for himself and build an interior culture of his own.” (Bruner 1961) Students are able to grasp the difficult decisions that people were forced to make, even children of their own age. At a time when they are on the cusp of adolescence, imagining what it would be like to live during the Civil War and have to make difficult enables them to experience autonomy in their imaginations, without any accompanying vulnerability.

The Civil War provides multiple entry points for students. Some may be excited by the issues of slavery and prejudice; others could enjoy the drama of

battles, while still others could focus on the consequences of the nation being split. A study of the Civil War is an ideal topic to allow fifth graders to “explore the conflicts, suffering, joys, and despair of those who lived before us.” (Freeman and Levstik, 1988) Thus, the topic would appeal to children with a wide range of maturity levels and diverse interests. Furthermore, there are many resources available on the Civil War, and while most of them are for the upper elementary grades, there are resources geared toward younger children as well. These would be well suited to children whose academic skills are lagging.

The class will learn about the events of the Civil War throughout the country, but the curriculum will be grounded in the experience of New York City. Focusing on a place that is familiar to students will help those who require concreteness in order to achieve understanding. Some students at this age are able to comprehend both temporal and spatial distance; “the capacity to deal with many variables simultaneously, for example, with time and space, as in geography and history... is an intellectual capacity that emerges during the middle years.” (Cohen, 1972) This skill is still emerging at this age, however, and basing the study in New York will help scaffold the learning of students who have yet to master it.

Furthermore, field trips, role playing, and arts activities will help students to “enter” the time period in their imaginations; since “learning at any age needs contact with concrete reality.” (Richmond, 1977) These experiences, as well as the historical fiction and hands-on components of the curriculum, will bring the Civil War to life for students, so that it feels like living history, rather than the dusty past. Children will

“see themselves as an extension of a living past – part of the continuity of human existence.” (Freeman & Levstik, 1988)

Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
ANNOTATED LESSON SEQUENCE

Below is a general outline of lesson plans, beginning with introductory lessons designed to stimulate interest, followed by lessons whose intent is to educate the class about various key aspects of the Civil War, and concluding with lessons which draw connections for students and allow them to make use of the knowledge they have gained over the course of the unit. In addition, there are several components that are not single lessons, but are ongoing components for the teacher and class to do throughout the unit. These components are marked by asterisks. Nine of the lessons have been developed in detail on the following pages; these lessons appear in bold below. The remaining lessons, which are not in bold, are meant as outlines which will require further developing by the teacher.

- I. ***Fiction component**** **A historical fiction novel will be read aloud in installments by the teacher as an introduction to the unit, and historical fiction will be used throughout the curriculum to introduce important events, initiate classroom discussions, and engage students' interest. Two books, *Charley Skedaddle* by Patricia Beatty and *Across Five Aprils* by Irene Hunt, will plunge the class into two different realities of the war.**

- II. *Learning from photographs* Students will learn of the invention of photography shortly before the onset of the war. There are no photographs of battle scenes, due to the dangers of being too close to the battle, but the Civil War is the first major war for which there is an extensive photographic record of soldiers and battlefields before and after the battle. Students will examine several of these photographs as primary documents and pose questions raised by the photos, following the methodology laid out by Image Detective:

www.edc.org/CCT/PMA/image_detective/index.html

Photography resources:
American Memory Project

**III. *Pre-trip lesson:
Whose side are we
on?***

The class will be introduced to some of the people who are represented in the New York Divided exhibit at the New-York Historical Society through a role-playing activity. Each child will read a description of a historical figure who played a role in New York in the lead-up to the Civil War, then the class will have a debate over which side of the war New York should fight with, with each student arguing from the point of view of their historic figure.

IV. *Trip to N-YHS*

The class will visit the New-York Historical Society's New York Divided exhibit, focusing on New York's divided loyalties before and during the Civil War. The group will be divided in three parts, and each group will explore and answer questions about one aspect of this wide-ranging exhibit.

For information regarding a visit to the New York Historical Society, please go to www.nyhistory.org.

**V. *Post-trip
presentations***

The groups will present what they learned at the exhibit to each other. Each group will meet for half an hour to decide what the most important information they learned is and make a poster for their presentation, then make a ten minute presentation to the rest of the class. Every student should speak during the presentations.

**VI. *Model research
project****

Another ongoing component of the unit, the class will work as a whole to research the draft riots of 1863. After completing the research, they will work in groups to write a research paper on the topic. This will serve as a model for their individual research projects that follow.

**VII. *Pre-trip lesson:
Mapping the war***

The class will work with a terrain model to gain understanding of geographical features and their impact on human behavior. They will then apply this knowledge to the Draft Riots, examining maps to understand how they were shaped by

**geography and answering questions such as:
What effect did the Battle of Gettysburg have on
the riots? How could people escape from the
island of Manhattan?**

- VIII. *Trip to Weeksville:
“Weeksville as a
place of refuge”* During a visit to the Society for the Preservation of Weeksville in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, the class will learn about African American communities in Brooklyn that people fled to during the draft riot of 1863. They will visit two houses that are interpreted to the 1860s during the “Weeksville as a place of refuge” tour.

*Note: While the “Weeksville as a place of refuge” tour is designed for students in grades 6 through 12, the tour can be adjusted to accommodate for a fifth grade group.

For information regarding a visit to Weeksville, please go to www.weeksvillesociety.org.

- IX. *Post-trip lesson:
Letters from
Weeksville* **After visiting Weeksville, students will be asked to write letters to a relative or friend who does not live in New York as if they were victims of the draft riot who fled to Weeksville. They will describe what happened to them during the riot, how they got to Weeksville, and what Weeksville is like. Finally, they will discuss their plans for the future – do they plan to stay in Weeksville, go back to Manhattan, or move on to somewhere new, like Canada? To make the letters appear authentic, the class will tea-stain them.**
- X. *Individual
research projects** After the model research project has been completed, students will select topics of interest to them (see Lesson VI for a list of suggestions) and use classroom and school resources to research and write a paper. They will put to use the research skills they learned while working on the group research project.
- XI. *Timeline* As the class begins to become knowledgeable about the Civil War, this timeline lesson will help them understand the chronological connections among the events they are learning about, and the timeline will serve as a resource throughout the rest of the lesson. As whole, the class will make a list of what events are

important, with input from the teacher. Each student will then choose one or two events that interest them, and write the event's name, date, a short description of it, and make an illustration to accompany it on an index card. The index cards will be placed in chronological order in a visible spot in the classroom.

XII. Trip to St. Paul's Church

At St. Paul's Church, a National Historic Site in Mount Vernon, NY (just north of the Bronx), museum educators will lead the class in an exploration of the important role that music played in the war. They will have the opportunity to sing songs from the war and play instruments, in a historical setting that played a role in the events of the war as a stop on the Underground Railroad. They will also learn about the role the area played in the war, as a training camp for Union soldiers; see Civil War-era cannons in the church yard; and watch an artillery demonstration.

For information regarding a visit to St. Paul's Church, please visit www.nps.gov/sapa.

*XIII. Post-trip lesson:
Sounds of War*

After learning about the importance of music in the Civil War through the visit to St. Paul's Church and *Charley Skedaddle*, students will make music of their own. They will brainstorm messages that they could want to convey using a drumbeat if they were alive during the war, then demonstrate the beat to the rest of the class.

*XIV. Pre-trip lesson:
Daily life during the war*

The visit to the Moore apartment at the LESTM will provide the class with much information about how people lived in New York in the 1860s, but will not explicitly address the Civil War. The teacher should explain this and ask students to think about what they can learn about the war based on the lives of civilians at the time. The teacher can re-read a section of *Charley Skedaddle* describing his living conditions in New York to refresh their memories. Then, the class will make a KWL chart: what they know about daily life in New York during the war, what they want to know, and what they learned (the last section should be filled out after they visit the museum).

XV. Trip to LESTM

The class will visit the apartment of the Moore family, who emigrated from Ireland and lived at 97 Orchard St.

in 1869. (Note: the Moore apartment is scheduled to open in Spring 2008.) The visit will give students a glimpse of daily life in New York during the war for an immigrant family living, like Charley from *Charley Skedaddle*, in a tenement apartment in the Lower East Side. Though the tour is not explicitly related to the Civil War, the class should feel free to ask the tour guide questions about the war, and the teacher can mention that the class is studying the Civil War when booking the tour or to the guide just prior to the tour.

XVI. "How the Other Half Lives During the War"

The class will brainstorm a list of ways that life for immigrants living in tenement apartments was affected by the war. Then, working individually, students will write a newspaper article portraying an invented family in the Lower East Side and how they have been impacted by the war, complete with an illustration.

XVII. Role play

Students will observe paintings of Civil War battle scenes, then use their imaginations to "step into" the scene and imagine what the soldiers they see could be thinking and feeling.

XVIII. Creative writing*

Students are now experts on the Civil War, and will be able to write authoritatively on the subject. They will have a choice of assignments: a historical fiction story, a song composed by someone involved in the Civil War, or a series of letters. They will also be asked to illustrate their writing.

Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
LESSON 1: READ-ALoud FICTION COMPONENT

Component Objectives:

- Students will become interested and engaged in the history of the Civil War through realistic fiction accounts of the war.
- Students will participate in discussions about issues raised by the books and formulate opinions and questions about the war.
- Students will activate their prior knowledge of the war, and share this information with each other.
- Students will gain knowledge about the aspects of the war portrayed in the books, and will make sense of them through class discussion.

Procedure:

To launch the Civil War study, the teacher will begin a read-aloud of *Charley Skedaddle* by Patricia Beatty. The story of twelve-year-old New Yorker Charley Quinn, whose brother recently died in the Battle of Gettysburg, will draw students into the topic of the Civil War and give them a glimpse of what life would have been like for a child about their age in New York City during the war. Though the story is far from presenting a complete picture of the war, it will serve well to pique the students' interest, and will begin to give them a sense of the war in a much more effective way than any lecture would. Starting out with a historical fiction read-aloud about a child of their own age will help students to perceive the Civil War as something which connects to their life experiences, not as a chronologically and geographically distant event. Charley is a poor Irish orphan who lives in the Lower East Side with his sister,

and the book describes many aspects of New York life at this time, including the building of the subway, gangs and poverty in the Lower East Side, child labor, the draft riots, and other impacts of the war.

The beginning of the story gives a flavor for life in New York, and introduces the major issues of the Civil War. The war is introduced as an event that did not only impact far-away places, but also the streets and neighborhoods the children are familiar with:

He looked up and down the street and saw nothing, so he hurried toward Broadway, pushing past drunken men going in and out of saloons. Yes, there it was. Stepping lively were lines of musket-carrying, marching men led by a brass band. Out of respect, carriages and carts moved to the curbs and streetcars stopped to permit passage over their rails. Yankee soldiers! Men in the Union blue with haversacks, knapsacks, and bedrolls, going off to fight for Abe Lincoln against slavery. By Jiminy, weren't they grand and glorious, though? Charley caught his breath, thrilled to see the green silken flag borne by the color-bearer. The 140th New York Volunteers, Johnny's regiment! (Beatty, p. 15)

Later, Charley runs away to become a drummer boy in the Union Army, and the reader is introduced to life in army camps and battles. Charley is excited to see action, and thrilled when he finally gets to participate in the Battle of the Wilderness. However, his reaction to the battle is not what he expected, and after killing a Confederate soldier, he deserts and is later taken in by a mountain woman. Living with her, Charley's life is very different from what it was in New York City, and as he comes to terms with his desertion of the army, Charley learns to rethink his conceptions of bravery. He also learns that not all Southerners are pro-slavery through his discovery of the involvement of Granny Jerusha, the woman who takes him in, with the Underground Railroad.

Charley's long journey, both physically and emotionally, will give fifth graders a broad introduction to the Civil War. Any preconceived notions they have, like the idea that all Southerners lived on plantations and owned slaves, will be called into

question. Furthermore, they will empathize with Charley's struggles, the peer pressure he faces in his gang, and his desire to act like a grown-up before he is ready.

As the events of the book unfold, the class needs to work to comprehend what is described through class discussion. This will ensure that all students are engaged and learning from the book, and clear up any confusion that arises. Daily read-alouds of approximately twenty minutes should be followed by discussions of ten to thirty minutes, depending on the difficulty and significance of the passage read aloud. Some students will pick up on subtleties that others miss, and will be able to explain them to each other, enriching both their understanding and their classmates' through their explanations. Furthermore, the class will talk about the actual events of the war, and the teacher should draw their attention to important events that come up through questioning: "Charley mentioned a place called Gettysburg at the end of the chapter. What did he say about it?" They will also talk over their personal reactions and what they would do if they were in Charley's shoes. They will discuss cultural differences between the North and the South.

As students learn about Charley's experiences, the accuracy of Beatty's account will be confirmed through consultation of other sources that the teacher will bring in and share with the class. For instance, after reading Charley's description of the Battle of the Wilderness, the class can watch that section of Ken Burns' film, then compare the two descriptions. Firsthand accounts of the war, such as relevant letters from Virginia Schomp's *Letters from the Homefront*, can also be read, and students will examine photographs from the war. These sources will confirm that, although the

characters are invented, *Charley Skedaddle* is a historical account to be trusted, not just a fictional book.

As the class is finishing Beatty's book, they should be in the midst of their study of the Civil War. At this point, the teacher can turn to another literary masterpiece depicting the era, *Across five Aprils* by Irene Hunt. This novel has some elements in common with Beatty's book, such as a young, male main character (Jethro Creighton, age 9 in 1861) who is put into situations requiring the maturity of someone far beyond his age. However, while *Charley Skedaddle* took place only in 1864-65, *Across five Aprils* spans the entire war, from its build-up to the death of Lincoln, and the book provides an amazingly complete overview of the war.

Jethro's story illustrates the impact of the war on a very different part of the country, his state of Illinois. The tale depicts the divisions within the state; while two of Jethro's brothers enlisted in the Union army, the third enlisted in the Confederate army. His family is persecuted for refusing to denounce their son who is fighting for the South. As Jethro matures, he struggles to understand the far-off battles through descriptions of them in letters and newspapers:

John went on to say that things weren't going to well with Sherman's men, and the Cumberland boys waited with excitement mounting by the minute. Then finally the command came for them to take the front-line trenches at the base of Missionary Ridge, which towered like a steep wall opposite Lookout. That was when pandemonium broke out! "...We wanted to pitch in like we had never wanted to before. We must have bin a littel crazy becus we didnt stop with the first-line trenches but we started up the slope of the old Ridge and ther was yellin and screechin like I hev never heered. Ther was officers alookin fine in ther best uniforms and they went yellin with us. Ther was a short littel Irish officer named Sheridan and he took hisself a drink and shook the bottle at the rebs and went yellin up that slope like he didnt care was he an officer or not." (Hunt 180)

One of the compelling aspects of Hunt's book is that it is based on a true story. Jethro Hallam Creighton was a real person born in 1852, and was the author's grandfather; she grew up listening to his stories of life during the Civil War. "There is

hardly a page in this book on which a situation has not been suggested by family letters and records and by the stories told by my grandfather.” (Hunt, 211)

Assessment:

- Did students participate in class discussions about the books, and make sense of the history told through the stories?
- Did students access their prior knowledge about the Civil War and share it with the rest of the class?
- Did students formulate opinions and questions about the events recounted in the story?

Read-aloud fiction bibliography:

Beatty, Patricia (1987). *Charley skedaddle*. New York: Morrow Junior Books.

Hunt, Irene (1993). *Across five Aprils*. Morristown, NJ: Silver Burdett Press.

*Note: For more fiction and non-fiction resources, please the Annotated Resources section.

Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
LESSON III: PRE-TRIP LESSON - WHOSE SIDE ARE WE ON?

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will become familiar with aspects of the New York Divided exhibit, so that they will be in a position to learn as much as possible from the exhibit.
- Students will be able to make an educated guess about what the opinion of a historic person would be about the Civil War based on biographical information about the person, and be able to explain their position.
- Students will gain knowledge about the kinds of people living in New York before the Civil War and what the political landscape was like.
- Students will understand that not all Northerners were anti-slavery.
- Students will make connections to *Charley Skedaddle*.

Materials:

- Two sets of ten cards with information about historical people living in New York before the Civil War
- Flip chart for taking notes

Procedure:

Before beginning this lesson, it is crucial to have a brief discussion of the colonization movement and the role it played politically in the lead-up to the Civil War. This is a vital concept that must be grasped in order to understand the people who the class will discuss in this lesson, the New York Divided exhibit, and the tensions that existed before the Civil War.

The colonization movement, it should be explained to the class, was a movement based on the belief that former slaves should be able to return to Africa. Many thousands of people did move back, mostly to the country of Liberia. However, some of the strongest supporters of the movement believed that African-Americans should go back to Africa not for their own good, but to rid the United States of black people. Thus, many African-Americans opposed the movement because of its racist undertones; others embraced it. In New York, many of the people who were involved in the colonization movement were actually Southern sympathizers.

After explaining the colonization movement, the teacher should ask the class a question about what they've just learned (for instance, "What do you think the main reasons are why someone would support or oppose the colonization movement?"), then have them turn and talk to partners about the answer. The teacher should listen to some of the groups, then ask a few people to share what they said. This will ensure that students have grasped the basic concepts.

The class will be divided into two groups for this lesson. The teacher will give each child in the two groups a short description of a person who lived in New York before or during the Civil War, and who is represented in the New York Divided exhibit. Most of these people are historical figures, with names and factual information attached to them; several are more generalized "types" who played a role in shaping the political and social landscape of New York in the mid-19th century. Since two children – one from each group – will have the same person, they will be given the chance to meet and discuss ahead of time who their person is, and what opinion they would have of the war. The teacher will provide them with a list of

questions to guide their discussion. During this time, the teacher should make sure to walk around the class and check in with students, particularly those who might have a hard time figuring out what politics a person might have based on the information provided.

At this point, the two groups should gather round into two circles for their discussion. There are ten roles, for a total of twenty students; if there are more than twenty students, or if there are students who the teacher feels would be inappropriately challenged by the assignment, they can be assigned as note-takers. (If not, someone else should take this role – the teacher, classroom assistant, etc.) Each child should have a chance to talk, explain who they are and which side of the war they believe New York should be on. The teacher should encourage debate among students by asking questions or making comments. At the end, time permitting, students can step out of their roles and share what their own thoughts are. Finally, the notes from the discussions should be compiled into lists of reasons why New Yorkers should fight for the South or the North and put up around the classroom for future reference.

Civil War Student Roles:

Samuel Cornish: A white man born in Delaware, Cornish was one of two founding publishers (with John Russworm) of the Freedom's Journal, the first African-American newspaper in the United States.

Gerrit Smith: A wealthy heir, Smith gave liberally to abolitionist causes, including support of John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry. After Brown's failure, Smith became disillusioned and retreated from support for black causes.

John Russworm: An African-American man born a slave in Jamaica, Russworm was one of the first African-Americans to go to college. He was a founding publisher (with Samuel Cornish) of the Freedom's Journal, but surprised his readers when he embraced the colonization movement and emigrated to Liberia.

Moses Taylor: A self-made man who was born in New York and became a sugar magnate, importing sugar from the Caribbean, where it was grown by enslaved Africans.

Ellen Craft: An African-American woman born into slavery who escaped by posing as a white male while her husband, William, posed as her servant. After moving to New York, they organized and spoke for the anti-slavery cause.

Julianna Tappan: Tappan, who was white, fought for emancipation of slaves by founding the Ladies' New York City Anti-Slavery Society.

Jeremiah Thompson: Thompson was born in Yorkshire, England, and became involved in the cotton industry in New York. He was responsible for establishing New York as the departure point for ships sailing to Europe filled with cotton. This link to the cotton industry, which greatly benefited New York economically, gave New York strong ties to the South, where cotton was grown on plantations. As a Quaker, Thompson was anti-slavery, but relied on the products of slavery in his work as a cotton exporter.

Peter Williams: Williams was a rector of an African-American church, St. Philip's. An African-American himself, he opposed the colonization movement until the 1834 riot, during which his church was attacked. After this, he resigned and renounced his former views.

Fernando Wood: Mayor of New York City who served his second term of as mayor from 1860-62. Wood, a Democrat, sympathized with the South and proposed that New York secede from the United States.

Sylvester Murphy: An immigrant from Ireland who worked as a carpenter and builder. Murphy was too old to be drafted in 1863; it is not known if he participated in any way in the draft riots, in which angry Irish immigrants played a major role.

Questions to put on board to guide discussion:

- What clues about their life give you an idea about what their opinion would be about slavery and the war?
- Would your person have a strong opinion about which side New York should fight on, or would they feel divided?
- Since you have limited information on your person, feel free to elaborate! What are details that you could invent that would impact this person's opinion?

(Note: Be sure to emphasize that there is no right or wrong answer about which side anyone would be for.)

Assessment:

- Were students able to make an informed decision about what their person's belief would be about the war, and explain their position?
- Did students display an understanding that not all Northerners were anti-slavery before the Civil War?
- Were students able to come up with valid reasons why New York should fight on the side of the North and why it should fight on the side of the South?

- Did students exhibit new knowledge about the kinds of people living in New York before the Civil War?
- Did students make connections to *Charley Skedaddle*?

Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
LESSON IV: TRIP TO THE "NEW YORK DIVIDED" EXHIBIT AT N-YHS

Trip Objectives:

- Students will examine primary documents to learn about different aspects of the build-up to the war in New York City.
- Students will discuss what they learn and make connections to what they have learned in previous lessons.
- Students will be able to make sense of what they see in the exhibit in order to teach it to their classmates in the post-trip lesson (Lesson V).

Materials:

- Map of the exhibit with areas marked for different groups to go to
- Questions for each group related to the section they go to and extra space for taking notes
- Clipboards

Procedure:

To learn more about New York during the Civil War and many of the themes the students have been learning about, the class will visit the New-York Historical Society to see the New York Divided exhibit. A unique opportunity to focus on New York's divided sympathies up to and during the war, the exhibit is on view through September 2007. The museum offers visits with educators or self-guided visits. Since aspects of the exhibit are much more pertinent to a fifth-grade study of the Civil War, a teacher-led visit will be more rewarding for the class. While the exhibit is very rich,

not all aspects of it are coherent, and in order for the trip to be successful it will require careful planning on the teacher's part.

During the visit, the class will split into three groups to explore three interconnected themes: pre-Civil War images of slaves in New York, abolitionist groups and the colonization movement, and soldiers in New York. The small groups will be better able to maneuver the crowded exhibit than the whole class would be, and students will have the chance to visit a section of the exhibit that is of interest to them. Each group will take on one of these themes, observe the pertinent aspects of the exhibit, have a discussion of their theme guided by a list of questions the teacher will give them, and later present their theme to the rest of the class. The teacher can explain the themes ahead of time, and have each student write down their first and second choices to ensure that they will learn about a topic of interest to them. Each group should have at least one chaperone, a clipboard, a sheet of paper with a short list of questions pertaining to their theme designed to stimulate their thinking and help them to look critically at the material presented, and a map of the exhibit pointing them to which places they should visit. After the visit, the groups will have time in class to reflect on what they learned and put together a presentation using their notes. If time remains, the groups can visit the sections of the exhibit that the other groups are focusing on.

The first group, investigating Northern portrayals of slaves, will examine a series of artifacts from the era. These artifacts are grouped together in one of the last rooms in the exhibit, past the video depicting a debate over the colonization movement. They include newspaper clippings, drawings of slaves, pro- and anti-

slavery cartoons, and a game entitled "Slavery and Freedom: A Game for Young and Old." (Note: The exhibit contains several videos of re-created performances by white performers in black face during the 19th century. While these videos may contain factual information that would be interesting to adults, it is best to avoid them with students, as they might easily be confused by what is being portrayed, and not understand that the videos do not depict actual performers from the 19th century.)

Questions for Group 1:

- As you look at different images, consider how you would feel about them if you were a freed slave living in New York.
- How would you feel about them if you were a worker in the cotton shipping industry?
- How does the objective of the pro-slavery cartoons influence their depiction of African-Americans? What about the anti-slavery cartoons?

The second group, investigating abolitionist forces and the colonization movement, will learn about individuals and groups in New York, both white and black, who worked to help slaves and abolish the institution of slavery, such as the American Anti-Slavery Society. They will find out about the strategies these groups employed to achieve their goals. They will learn of the efforts of Ellen Anderson, an 1860s equivalent to Rosa Parks, to desegregate New York's trains after being kicked off a whites-only train. They will peruse copies of *Freedom's Journal*, the first African-American publication in the United States, to discover how the publication was used to further their cause. They will also learn of the colonization movement, watch a

short video in which African-Americans argue for and against colonization, and have the opportunity to vote themselves on whether it would be better to stay in the United States and fight slavery or move back to Africa.

Questions for Group 2:

- What do you think the feelings were of the African-Americans who believed in colonization toward the African-Americans who believed in emancipation, and vice versa?
- Do you think these feelings changed over time?
- Why do you think New York's transit system was segregated in the 1860s, even as they were fighting against slavery?

The third group will learn about soldiers in New York, including the draft and African-American soldiers. These artifacts are in the penultimate room of the exhibit, just before the long hall about reconstruction. This room also contains many graphic descriptions of the draft riots; it will be important to keep the group focused on the objects of interest to them, since the draft riot section is inappropriate for children of this age. The group will have a chance to observe a wooden draft wheel from the Civil War that was used to select names. They will see illustrations of Irishmen mobbing the U.S. consulate in Dublin, and learn of the Irishmen who came to the U.S. in order to fight in the war and take advantage of the \$777 bounty. They will learn that New York sent more soldiers to the Union army than any other state, including many African Americans, some of whom had to go out of state to enlist in

the 54th Massachusetts. Even after New York finally assembled a black regiment, they were paid less than white soldiers.

Questions for Group 3:

- If you were an African-American New Yorker during the Civil War, would you agree to join the army for lower wages and probably do manual labor rather than fight?
- How would you feel if you were an immigrant who had arrived in the U.S. shortly before the war and were drafted?
- If you were drafted and had the money to pay someone else to fight in your place, would you do so?

After putting together their presentations, students will have the chance to teach each other about their topics. This will give the whole class some understanding of all three themes, give the groups a chance to reflect on what they learned after the visit, and help students to master their topic by teaching it to the rest of the class. The small groups will be better able to maneuver the crowded exhibit than the whole class would be, and students will have the chance to visit a section of the exhibit that is of interest to them.

Assessment:

Most of the assessment for this lesson will take place during the subsequent lesson, when groups teach each other what they have learned. However, the teacher should observe the groups while at the exhibit as well, if possible, and note:

- Did students discuss and ask questions about the objects and documents they are looking at?
- Did students make connections to previous lessons?

Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
LESSON VI: MODEL RESEARCH PROJECT

Project Objectives:

- Students will learn research skills, such as note-taking and finding sources appropriate to their topic.
- Students will learn writing skills, such as writing in their own words, using quotations, and citing sources.

Materials:

- Photocopied materials from books about the Draft Riots (see Bibliography at end of this section)
- Chart paper for taking notes

Procedure:

Based on a very brief description in the historical fiction novel, *Charley Skedaddle*, as well as some of the information gleaned from the New York Divided exhibit, the class will embark on a group research project of the New York City draft riots of 1863. The class should know some basic information about the riots, and be interested to learn more. To get started, the teacher can lead the class in making a list of information that they know about the draft riots; however, she should be sure to remind them that, since they will be writing a research paper on the subject, they will need to confirm these facts and find sources for them. Students can also brainstorm questions that they have about the riots.

The class will then start out their research, first by reading an entry in the Columbia Encyclopedia. The teacher will ask what they should first look up in the encyclopedia to initiate research; if someone suggests a specific entry, like "draft riot,"

she will tell them that it is a good idea to start with a more general entry, "Civil War," since that will help determine where specific information about the Draft Riots is located. She will hand out photocopies of the page of the encyclopedia with this entry). By glancing through the entry, the class will discover that there is a separate entry for "Draft Riots;" when someone in the class has made this observation, the teacher can hand out the photocopies of that entry. Volunteers from the class can read the entry aloud, and the teacher will demonstrate how to take notes, asking for suggestions of what to write. Using the information in this entry, the class can generate a list of keywords, including Irish-American, conscription, African-American, abolitionist, Metropolitans (which, from *Charley Skedaddle*, the class will know is the historic word for the police), and draft. The teacher should point out that in the historical fiction the class read a lot about several Irish-American gangs such as the Bowery Boys, since the main character was a member; during our research, they could try to find out if there was any connection between the gangs and the riots. By asking this question, the teacher will connect the draft riots to a topic that is already of interest to them, and make the students curious to find out the answer.

After reading and taking notes on the encyclopedia entry, the class will spend a subsequent lesson period in the computer lab, where the teacher will lead them to look up "draft riots 1863" in Google. The second hit is from Wikipedia; the class can have a short discussion of whether Wikipedia is a reliable source, and how to distinguish a reliable source from an unreliable source. The teacher will encourage them to click on the third hit, from civilwarhome.com. She will explain that students should check if there is a source, and to determine whether the source is reliable: the

source for this material is the Civil War Encyclopedia, a reliable source. Students will read the short excerpt aloud, and the teacher will again help them to take notes on it as a class. If time permits, they can also enter the terms "Bowery Boys draft riots 1863" into Google, and analyze the result. Though there are many responses to this query, it turns out that all are references to an earlier riot between gangs in 1857. The class can discuss why the Bowery Boys do not seem to have been involved as a group in the riots, and whether they may have been involved individually.

Now that they have had note-taking modeled to them, students will have a chance to take notes in pairs. They will move on to two excerpts from *The Great Civil War Draft Riots* by Deborah Kant. Written for children, it is an informative book that fifth graders will have no trouble understanding. As a whole class, they can peruse the index for key words and find "draft lottery," and turn to page 23 to read about the context and events of the draft riots. Later, they can turn to page 30, under "Metropolitan police force" in the index, to learn about law enforcement in the city and how the riot was quelled. After students have finished taking notes in pairs on these readings, they will be compiled into class notes.

As this research is conducted, the class can simultaneously have discussions analyzing the findings. Through these discussions, they will grapple with difficult questions raised by the riots, such as: Why would people in an abolitionist state persecute blacks? After the research is complete, students will divide into groups of 3-4 and each group will write a section. The class will decide on the chronological order that makes sense for the paper to be in by writing out an outline for the paper,

then assigning students to sections based on their interest. Finally, each group will read their section aloud to the rest of the class.

After the class research project is complete, students will embark upon their individual research projects, using many of the skills they have acquired doing the group project. Investigating a topic that is of particular interest to a child and then presenting it to the class is a great way for kids to concentrate on areas of interest to them, but learn about a wide range of topics. Students will be allowed to select their own topics, and they do not have to be limited to New York City. Possibilities include:

- The Battle of Gettysburg
- Sherman's March to the Sea
- Abraham Lincoln
- 54th Massachusetts (African-American regiment)
- Women in the Civil War
- Musicians in the war
- Border states
- Quakers in the South
- Bounty jumpers

Model Research Bibliography:

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Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
LESSON VII: PRE-TRIP LESSON - MAPPING THE WAR

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will understand how the geography of New York City affected the Draft Riots, and how the geographic location of the Battle of Gettysburg affected New York City.
- Students will be able to make predictions of the routes people would take, based on their understanding of geography.

Materials:

- Map of the Draft Riots [see back flap of: McCague, James (1968). *The second rebellion; The story of the New York City draft riots of 1863*. New York: Dial Press.]
- Map of Civil War battles
- Clay terrain model

Procedure:

The terrain of the United States had a huge impact on the events of the Civil War. Through work with the terrain model, students will begin to understand the features of mountain, river and coastal terrains, and to consider how geography impacts human behavior. They will connect vocabulary words of terrain features to the features on the terrain model, find the best route from one place to another, and predict what will happen when precipitation falls on the model. Creating a map of the flooded terrain model will cement many of these concepts in their minds, and make it easier for them to read a map and create a mental picture of the land that the map is depicting. [For more information on how to teach geographical concepts through

work with a terrain model, please consult: Brian, Sam (1994). *Geography and mapping from terrain models: a 4th through 6th grade curriculum*. New York: Bank Street College of Education.]

Following this groundwork, the class can turn its attention to how geography impacted the Draft Riots, the topic for the model research project. They will start out by looking at a map of Manhattan during the Draft Riots showing the locations of events and movement of people. Students will examine the map to determine the answer to questions, such as:

- Where did the mobs go, and why did they follow those routes?
- How did the fact that Manhattan is an island affect the riots?
- How could African Americans escaping to Brooklyn cross the East River before there were any bridges?

From their work on the model research project, students have discovered that the battle of Gettysburg was virtually simultaneous with the Draft Riots. After taking a close look at the map of Manhattan, the class will turn its attention to how the two events impacted each other. Students will identify Gettysburg as the northernmost battle of the war, and the closest geographically to New York. Discussion will ensue about how a battle in an adjacent state might impact New York in a variety of ways, ranging from raised tensions and fear that the war would come to New York to the absence of most law enforcement officers, who were away at the battle.

Finally, students will take a close look at the terrain between Gettysburg and New York City, consider what route the New York regiment would have taken to return to New York, and how long it might have taken them. How would they have

been traveling? How many miles could they cover in a day? Students can estimate the rate at which they would have been traveling; figures don't need to be exact. What obstacles lay in their path (rivers, other lakes, etc.)? Upon their arrival, they were quickly able to quell the riots and restore order to New York. Thus, the path they took from Gettysburg to New York City and how long it took them had a direct impact on the Draft Riots.

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LESSON IX: POST-TRIP LESSON – LETTERS FROM WEEKSVILLE

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will be able to combine their imaginations with the information they learned at Weeksville and in their research project on the draft riots to write realistic letters as if they were victims of the riots.
- Students will be able to include relevant facts about the Draft Riots in a first-person account of imagined experiences.

Materials:

- Heavyweight paper [note: test the paper ahead of time to see how well it stains]
- Lined paper for rough draft
- Dark tea
- Large plastic container for tea staining

Procedure:

The teacher will begin by introducing the idea that students will be writing letters to relatives or friends as though they were some of the victims of the draft riots who fled to Weeksville. She will model a letter with the class's input on chart paper, which will be left up for their reference. She will start by asking students how their letter should begin. If someone suggests a greeting or beginning with a phrase like "How are you?", she could ask, "Is there anything that goes before that in a letter?" The letter should begin with the date, either during or shortly after July 13-16, 1863. Next should come a greeting; the class can generate a list of

possible greetings, such as “Dear –,” “My dear –,” “Dearest –,” “My friend –,” etc. The class can also discuss who the letter could be written to: a friend, relative, sibling, aged parent, etc. If someone suggests a spouse or young child, the teacher can remind them that, realistically, families would probably have fled Manhattan together.

The class can then brainstorm ideas for what to include in the body of the letter. Depending on the writing skills of the class, the teacher could set a requirement for the number of facts that they need to include, perhaps 3 to 6. Facts could take the form of dates, description of events that caused the riots, accounts of what happened to people during the riots, or details of what Weeksville is like. These can be made personal by connecting them to people the letter-writer knows. The teacher can also remind them that they can take on the persona of someone different from themselves, a grown-up or elderly person. They could also write it from the perspective of someone who already lived in Weeksville before the riots and describe the arrival of the refugees. Finally, the class can make a list of possible ways to close the letter: “Yours,” “Sincerely,” “With love,” etc. They can sign with their own name or, if they prefer, make up a name; if they do not use their own name, remind them to write their name on the back of the letter.

The students can then begin work on their rough drafts. Teachers should work closely with students who struggle with this kind of writing, to ensure that it is written in the first person and in a realistic manner. After students have completed their rough draft, the teacher can look it over, make suggestions for changes, and

then give the students the heavyweight paper for the final draft, with a reminder that they should use their best cursive handwriting. When students are done, their letters can be crumpled up to make them look old, then tea stained immediately; seeing their classmates' completed letters will motivate other students to finish their letters. It is better to stain them in small groups as they are completed to avoid space problems while the letters are drying. The letters should remain in the tea for about five minutes, though the paper should be tested ahead of time as different types of paper are dyed differently by the tea. Finally, the stained and dried letters can be hung up in the classroom or hallway for display.

Assessment:

- Did students include facts in their letter?
- Did they write in a realistic voice? [Note: for an excellent "voice," see example of letter in Appendix A.]
- Did they include the date, greeting and closure?

Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
LESSON XIII: POST-TRIP LESSON - SOUNDS OF WAR

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will think of messages that soldiers in the Civil War might want or need to convey to each other using music, and think of a drumbeat that conveys this message.

Materials:

- “Li’l Dan, the drummer boy: A Civil War story” by Romare Bearden
- Drum [if possible, borrow from a music teacher; if a drum is not available, the lesson can still be done without it]

Procedure:

During the trip to St. Paul’s, the class learned about the importance of music in the Civil War. Begin the lesson by reminding them of that, and asking volunteers to remember the ways that music was used: to express feelings, as a communication tool during battles, as a timekeeper to let people know what time of day it was, etc. Make a list of these ways on the board. Then, begin the read-aloud. [Note: this lesson might work best if spread over two days, since the story is fairly lengthy; in that case, teachers may wish to first read the book, then generate the list of ways that music was used in the war].

Li’l Dan is the story of a young slave who runs away and becomes a drummer boy in the Union Army, and uses his drum to imitate the sound of cannons to frighten the enemy. Have the students turn and talk to the person next to them about a message that they could convey using a drum, what the drumbeat would be that would go along with that, and which category from the list on the board it would fit

into. For instance, the message might be “My friend just died and I’m sad,” a sad, slow drumbeat might convey this message, and this would fit into the category of “expressing one’s feelings.” Or, the message might be “It’s time to wake up,” it might be a beat that starts out softly and gets louder and quicker, and this would fit into the “Music as a timekeeper” category. Students can work collaboratively with their partner, or they can each come up with their own ideas and discuss them with their partner. They should clap their hands on their knees to make the drumbeats. As the students generate ideas, the teacher should circulate among them to see if anyone is struggling with the lesson and needs help.

After about ten minutes, the teacher should get the class’ attention and ask for volunteers to come to the front of the class and share their drumbeats. These students can use the drum to make their beat. They should begin by explaining what their message is and which category it fits into, then they can begin their drumbeat. After a few seconds of listening, the class can join in the drumbeat by clapping on their knees again.

Assessment:

- Did students come up with a wide variety of messages that would make sense in the context of the Civil War?
- Were students able to accurately decide which category their message would fit into?
- Did the drumbeat match the message the students wanted to convey?

Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
LESSON XVI: HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVES DURING THE WAR

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will make connections between what they've learned about the Civil War and what they learned about life in the 1860s in New York at the Tenement Museum.
- Students will identify ways in which the Civil War would have impacted immigrants living in tenements.
- Students will write about these connections in the style of a newspaper article and make an illustration that matches their article.

Materials:

- *How the other half lives* by Jacob Riis
- Pencils and pens with black ink

Procedure:

Following the visit to the Moore apartment at the Tenement Museum, the class will have some sense of what everyday life was like during the 1860s. Now it is time for them to combine this knowledge with what they have learned from reading *Charley Skedaddle*, their study of the draft riots, their visit to the New York Historical Society, and other sources in order to think about what impact the war would have had on people living in the Lower East Side during this time. The class will start out by brainstorming together a list of ways that life would be impacted by the war. Students may have some ideas about this based on questions they have asked the educator at the Tenement Museum; other ideas the teacher may need to introduce,

like women doing men's work while the men were at war. The list may look something like this:

- Rations – can't get supplies they normally have
- Women forced to do work men were doing
- Less money because of lost wages from men
- More children need to work to make up for lost wages
- People in garment industry working on making uniforms

After the list is complete, the teacher can introduce materials such as Jacob Riis' book *How the Other Half Lives* or newspaper articles from the 19th century describing life in the tenements. Since people from more wealthy parts of the city rarely visited the Lower East Side, these sources were the only glimpses they had of what life was like for these immigrants. Each student will write an article profiling an invented family of immigrants in the Lower East Side, focusing on one of the impacts the class has brainstormed. They can use *How the Other Half Lives* or newspaper articles to have a sense of the style of writing during the 19th century. Finally, since photography was a new technology at that time and was still rarely used, they should do an illustration to accompany their article. Since color was rarely used, the illustrations should be done with black pen.

Assessment:

- Were students able to make connections between what they learned about daily life in the 1860s at the Tenement Museum and the Civil War?
- Were students able to use a language that imitated newspaper writing in the 19th century?

- Did students invent a plausible immigrant family?
- Did students apply one of the changes that the class discussed to their newspaper article about the family?
- Did the illustration match the article?

Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
LESSON XVII: ROLE PLAY

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will be able to express, through drama and/or journal entries, what soldiers fighting in the Battle of Gettysburg might be thinking.
- They will be able to choose a figure in a painting of the battle and interpret his body language and expression, as well as their background knowledge, to come up with ideas of what the figure could be thinking and feeling.

Materials:

- Overhead projector
- Painting by Currier and Ives of the Battle of Gettysburg, photocopied onto acetate (see Appendix A)
- Writing journals

Procedure:

Many fifth graders relish the opportunity to be dramatic, and literally stepping into the shoes of someone from the past can help them understand the thoughts and feelings that person might have been experiencing. On the other hand, not all children enjoy drama, and it would be a mistake to force unwilling students to take the spotlight. Therefore, this role play activity would give those who wanted it the opportunity to “play” a Civil War soldier, and give everyone the chance to imagine what it would be like to be in a battle.

They should start out by examining a Currier and Ives painting depicting the Battle of Gettysburg (see Appendix A, or download the image from the following link:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Battle_of_Gettysburg%2C_by_Currier_and_Ives.png). The painting shows both Yankee and Confederate troops, cannons, bayonets, and people in a variety of poses that convey a variety of emotions. The teacher can put this painting on the overhead projector and ask students to make observations about it and about the specific people they see. Then, she can ask everyone in the class to choose one person in the painting and imagine what they might be thinking during this moment.

At this point, she would ask for volunteers to come one by one to the front of the class. If the teacher thinks too many kids will want to participate, she can explain the activity ahead of time, ask for volunteers, tell them that not everyone will have the chance to participate, and then choose the participants before the lesson. There should be a total of about eight volunteers, and as they are called up, they will get in the physical position of the person they chose. If someone else has already taken the pose of that person, they will need to choose another figure in the painting. When everyone is in place, the teacher can turn off the projector and each student will say what it is they are thinking as they fight in the battle.

After all the students have spoken, they will go back to their tables. The teacher can turn the projector back on, and students will have a few minutes to write out in more depth what their thoughts are. Finally, students who wish to can read aloud what they have written to the rest of the class.

Assessment:

- Were students able to express, in writing or in dramatic form, thoughts that soldiers might have in the midst of a battle?

- Did their ideas match what the figure in the painting that they chose seemed to convey?

Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
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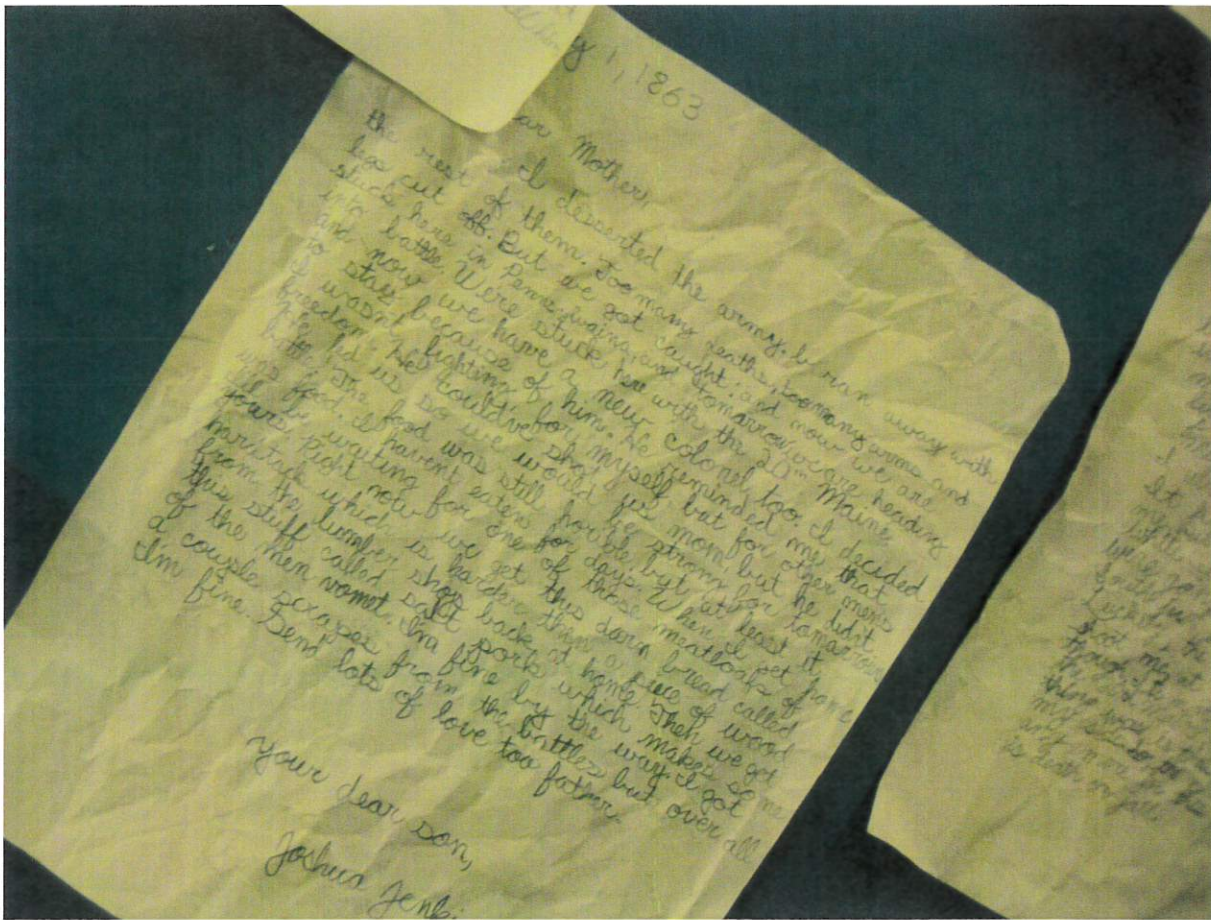
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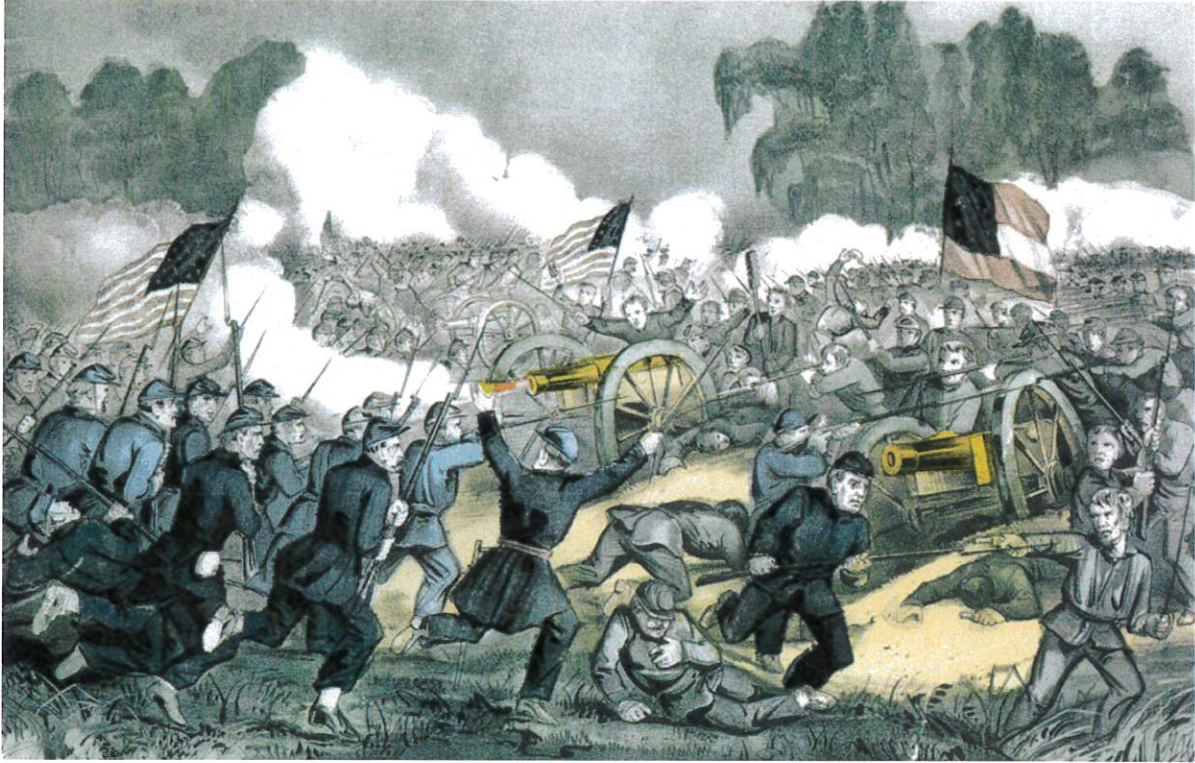
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Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
APPENDIX A: LESSON MATERIALS



Example of a tea-stained letter [see Lesson IX] about the Civil War written by a fifth grader.



Currier and Ives painting of the Battle of Gettysburg for use in Lesson XVI.

*Note: This painting is in the public domain. It is available for download online at the Library of Congress' website: www.locweb2.loc.gov.

Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
APPENDIX B: ANNOTATED RESOURCE LIST

Library of Congress. *The American Memory Project*.
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>

The Library of Congress's American Memory Project contains several valuable Civil War links in the "war, military" category, including maps and photos. Since the Civil War was the first major war after the invention of photography, an investigation of Civil War photographs can be a great project.

Bearden, Romare (2003). *Li'l Dan, the drummer boy*. New York: Simon and Schuster for Young readers.

Wonderful illustrations by Bearden accompany his text about a slave who runs away and becomes a drummer boy in the Union Army. One of the few good picture books about the Civil War.

Beatty, Patricia (1987). *Charley skedaddle*. New York: Morrow Junior Books.

The story of a young boy who starts out as a member of a Lower East Side street gang, goes on to become a drummer boy in the Union Army, and then deserts. Very historically accurate depiction of both New York and the South.

Beatty, Patricia (1992). *Jayhawker!* New York: Morrow Junior Books.

Another interesting story from Beatty, this time about abolitionists in border states who help slaves escape to go north on the Underground Railroad. Good discussion of the period leading up to the war, including the story of John Brown.

Beatty, Patricia (1994). *Turn homeward, Hannalee*. New York: Morrow Books.

This unusual story provides insight into the Southern experience during the war through the story of workers in a mill who were arrested by the Union Army and brought north. It is a somewhat limited view of the war, since there is little discussion of its causes, but it is a great, adventuresome story that kids will love.

Beatty, Patricia (1992). *Who comes with cannons?* New York: Morrow Junior Books.

The story of anti-slavery Quakers who live in the South.

Burns, Ken (1990). *The Civil War*.

This documentary is a fantastic resource for teachers. For those unfamiliar with the Civil War, it provides an in-depth look at the entire war, from start to finish. Though many parts will go over the heads of ten-year-olds, teachers can pick and choose

and find segments that will work well. The film contains a tremendous amount of information that keeps viewers interested and gives a great feel for what the war was like.

Fleischman, Paul (1993). *Bull run*. New York: Harper Collins.

A very well-written book with a wide scope, Fleischman's writing tells the story of the Civil War through a series of unrelated characters who describe their experiences in the first person. Because the book consists of very short segments that do not connect to each other, it doesn't work as well as a read-aloud since it is hard for children to get drawn into the story.

Hakim, Joy (1993). *War, terrible war*. New York: Oxford University Press.

A good reference book with lots of visuals and written in an entertaining voice.

Hunt, Irene (1993). *Across five Aprils*. Morristown, NJ: Silver Burdett Press.

Compelling account of the effect of the Civil War on rural Illinois through the story of a young boy named Jethro, the author's grandfather. Two of his brothers are soldiers for the North, the third for the South.

Polacco, Patricia (1994). *Pink and say*. New York: Philomel Books.

This picture book tells the wonderful, tragic story of a friendship between two soldiers, one white and the other African-American. As usual, Polacco's illustrations and writing are beyond compare. Though this book may look like it's for younger audiences, it contains complex themes and two important characters who are cruelly murdered.

Reeder, Caroline (1989). *Shades of gray*. New York: MacMillan.

The story of an orphaned boy in the South just after the Civil War who has to go live with abolitionist relatives. This book is a great discussion of slavery, the impact of the war on the South, and the divisions caused by the war.

Schomp, Virginia (2002). *Letters from the homefront: The Civil War*. Tarrytown, NY: Benchmark Books.

A mix of letters and other first-hand accounts (some of them oral histories from the American Memory Project) provide excellent primary sources on a wide variety of topics.

Stanchak, John (2000). *Civil War*. New York: Dorling Kindersley Pub.

Another reference book with useful visuals, but the text has a dry, textbook style.

Torn Loyalties: The Civil War in New York City and Beyond
APPENDIX C: NEW YORK STATE LEARNING STANDARDS

Lesson	English Language Arts	Social Studies	Mathematics, Science, and Technology	The Arts
I. Fiction Component	1, 2, 3	1		
II. Learning from Photographs		1		3
III. Whose Side Are We On?	4	1		
IV. Trip to N-YHS	1	1		
V. Post-trip Presentations	1	1		
VI. Model Research Project	1	1		
VII. Mapping the War		1, 3	4	
VIII. Weeksville as a Place of Refuge	1	1, 3		
IX. Letters from Weeksville	4	1		
X. Individual Research Projects	1	1		
XI. Timeline	1	1		1
XII. Trip to St. Paul's Church		1		4
XIII. Sounds of War		1		1
XIV. Daily Life During the War	1	1		2
XV. Trip to LESTM		1		
XVI. How the Other Half	4	1		

Lesson	English Language Arts	Social Studies	Mathematics, Science, and Technology	The Arts
Lives				
XVII. Role Play	4	1		1, 3
XVIII. Creative Writing	1, 2, 4	1		

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- There is one abstract after the title page of each copy of my independent study.
- The table of contents includes page numbers.
- All of the pages are in the correct order and face right side up.
- I have included a copy of the document(s) granting me permission to include any copyrighted material in the study.
- The left margin is 1 ½ inches wide.
- I have included a blank sheet of bond paper at the beginning and at the end of each copy.
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- I understand that the Library's copy of this independent study will be bound exactly as I am submitting it, and that the Library is not responsible for any errors in organization or appearance.

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Name

4/24/08
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