



GOAL 3 | LESSON PLAN | ELEMENTARY

Life at War

GRADES: Elementary

APPROXIMATE LENGTH OF TIME: 50 minutes

GOAL: The student will describe the day-to-day life of a Civil War soldier

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will be able to describe the use of the equipment, uniforms, weapons, and other items that soldiers would have carried.
2. Students will be able to identify three reasons why battles happened in a certain location.
3. After reading portions of soldiers' letters, students will be able to identify and discuss hardships soldiers faced.

COMMON CORE:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.9

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.1

Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

NCSS STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES:

- 1—Culture
- 2—Time, Continuity, and Change
- 3—People, Places, and Environment
- 5—Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- 6—Power, Authority, and Governance
- 10—Civics, Ideals, and Practices

MATERIALS:

1. Life at War PowerPoint
2. Anticipatory Questions
3. Life at War Worksheet
4. Where Battles Happen
5. Samuel Cabbie's Letter Home
6. John Sweet's Letter Home

7. Analyzing a Primary Source Letter

ANTICIPATORY SET/HOOK:

1. Distribute *Anticipatory Questions* to each student
2. Have students complete their observations and answer questions with a partner.

PROCEDURE

Print out the PowerPoint with notes prior to class. There are notes included with the slides that can be seen on the printouts, but won't be seen by your students during the presentation.

Activity 1

1. Pass out the *Life at War Worksheet* to each student.
2. Read and discuss *the Life at War PowerPoint* with your class, discussing different aspects of soldiering.
3. Work together to complete the *Life at War Worksheet* during the Power Point presentation.

Activity 2

1. For the last two slides in the Power Point, pass out *Where Battles Happen* and discuss as a class why battles happen in relation to railroads, waterways, and capitals, filling in the boxes.
2. Discuss the second question, "Where else might a battle occur?"

CLOSURE:

1. As a class, read *Samuel Cabbie's* and *John Sweet's* letters home.
 - a. If you have are not planning on using the Antietam and Emancipation Lesson Plan, have your students watch [Black Soldiers In4](#) on battlefields.org.
2. Analyze their letters using the *Analyzing a Primary Source Letter*.

ASSESSMENT IN THIS LESSON:

1. Completed the *Life at War Worksheet*
2. Responses to the *Anticipatory Questions*
3. Informal assessment through questions during the PowerPoint presentation
4. Primary source letter analysis



Anticipatory Questions

My Dear Jennie,

At this writing the sun is mounting the heavens seemingly in a chariot of fire. The morning is very fine, but I think there are indications of a storm. The river for miles on either shore seems lined with boats, loaded with troops, stores, and munitions of war. Truly it is an imposing sight. I don't know how long we remain here, and when we leave, I don't know where we are going. ¹

Can you describe the person who you think is writing this letter?

How do they seem to feel at this time? Why do you think this?

What information can you learn from the citation at the bottom of the page?

¹ "Samuel D. Lougheed letter to his wife." Samuel D. Lougheed to Jane "Jennie" Lougheed. December 22, 1862. Arkansas.



Anthony, E. & H.T. . *War views. No. 1501, Camp life, Army of the Potomac - writing to friends at home.* June 1861. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

oston Light Artillery soldiers in camp at Relay House in Maryland sitting at a long table, writing letters, as one soldier, in the foreground, appears to be sewing.

Who are the men in the picture?

What do they appear to be doing?

What year was this taken? What is happening at this time?

What does their mood seem to be? Why do you think this?



Life at War Worksheet

Directions: While viewing the PowerPoint, use the words in the word bank to fill in the blanks.

Word Bank:		
drilling	620,000	food
adventure	16	23
letters	sickness	available
	memories	privates

The majority of soldiers were _____

The age of the average Civil War soldier was between _____ and _____ years of age.

One reason why someone might sign up to fight in the Civil War would be:

Hardtack and salt pork are examples of _____ eaten by Civil War soldiers.

Civil War soldiers kept in touch with family by writing

_____.

The majority of a soldier's time was spent _____ in camp, not fighting on the battlefield.

_____ men died in the Civil War.

Most men died of _____, not war wounds.

Hospitals were set up in any _____ structure, including houses and barns.

Soldiers faced _____ of the war for the rest of their lives.

The Things They Carried



All of a soldier's personal possessions were carried by the soldier, often in his haversack.

Identify and briefly write about five items in the table below:

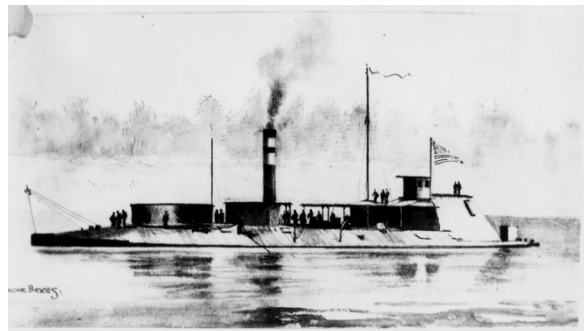
Number	Name	What it was used for



Where Battles Happen



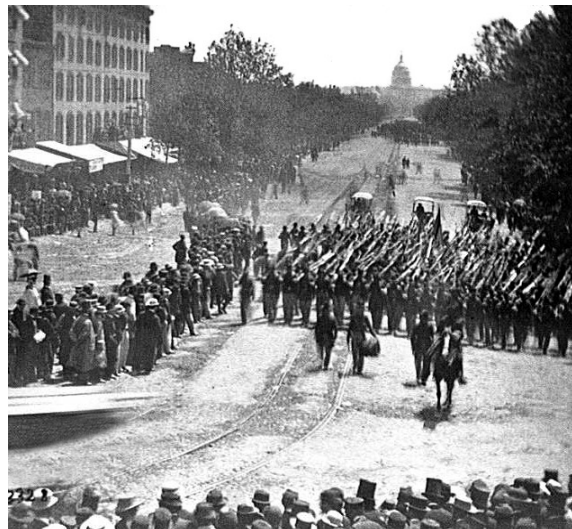
Near Railroads



Near Waterways



Richmond, VA



Washington, D.C.

Why did Civil War battles occur near or around these areas?

Railroads & Waterways	Capitals

Where else might a battle occur? Why?



Samuel Cabbles Letter Home

Samuel Cabbles, a Private in the Fifty-fifth Massachusetts Infantry (colored), was a slave before he joined the U.S. Army. He was twenty-one years old. Massachusetts 1863

Dear Wife i have enlisted in the army i am now in the state of Massachusetts but before this letter reaches you i will be in North Carlinia and though great is the present national dificulties yet i look forward to a brighter day When i shall have the opertunity of seeing you in the full enjoyment of fredom i would like to no if you are still in slavery if you are it will not be long before we shall have crushed the system that now opreses you for in the course of three months you shall have your liberty. great is the outpouring of the colered peopl that is now rallying with the hearts of lions against that very curse that has seperated you an me yet we shall meet again and oh what a happy time that will be when this ungodly rebellion shall be put down and the curses of our land is trampled under our feet i am a soldier now and i shall use my utmost endeavor to strike at the rebellion and the heart of this system that so long has kept us in chains . . . remain your own affectionate husband until death*

Samuel Cabbles

Samuel Cabbles returned to Missouri for his wife, and together they moved to Denver, Colorado.

**Spelling and grammar are in the original.*



John Sweet's Letter Home

Letter from John Sweet, Confederate Soldier, to His Parents Tennessee November 1863

We have just returned from a trip into East Tenn where we got big amounts of everything to eat and everything we eat is so good to me as I had been starved out so long on some bread & beef, all that we got while we were here besieging Chattanooga. up there we got sweet and Irish potatoes, chickens, molassas, wheat bread and everything that was good for a poor soldier. Oh, how I do wish that I could be at home now, for it is getting late in the evening and I have had nothing to eat since breakfast and no telling when we will get rations for our rations are out, since we left our ration wagons behind in coming here to this place, for I know you have all had a good & plentiful dinner. I know you will say poor John, but this is only a chapter in military service which we often read, but I am content and will be more so when we get rations. The independence of the bounty is what I want and I am willing to suffer for something to eat many, many days if it will only send me to my dear parents, a full and independent boy.

John H. Sweet



Analyzing a Primary Source Letter

Samuel Cabble -

1. When was Samuel's letter written?

2. Where was Samuel when he wrote his letter?

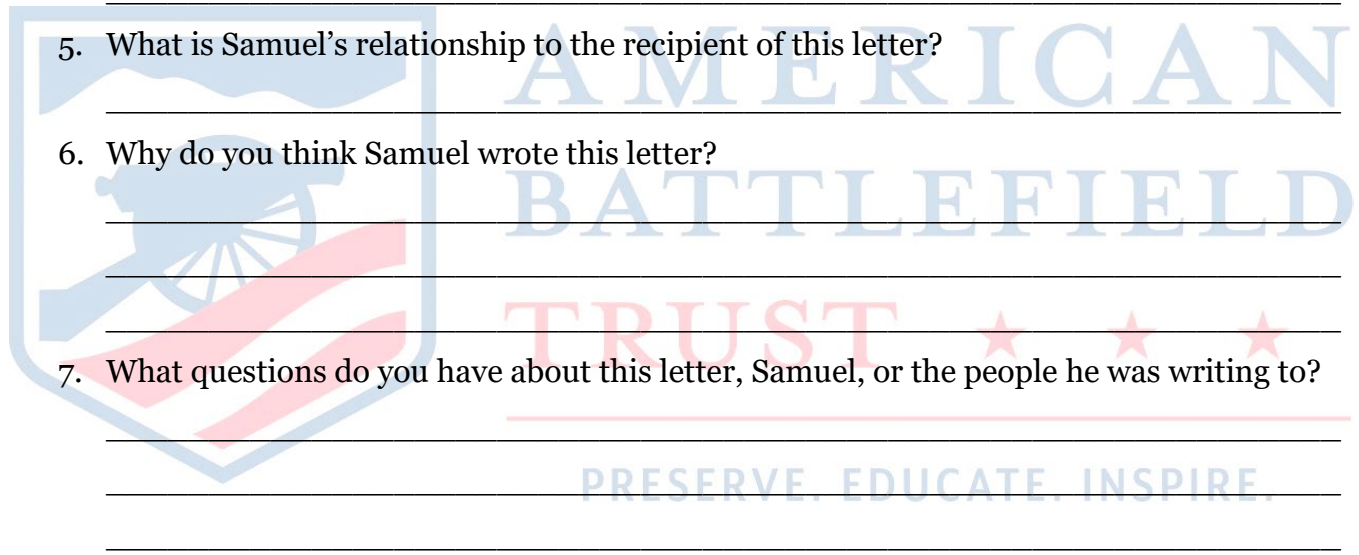
3. Was Samuel a Union soldier, Confederate soldier, or civilian?

4. Can you gather any other information about Samuel from the letter?

5. What is Samuel's relationship to the recipient of this letter?

6. Why do you think Samuel wrote this letter?

7. What questions do you have about this letter, Samuel, or the people he was writing to?



John Sweet –

1. When was John’s letter written?

2. Where was John when he wrote this letter?

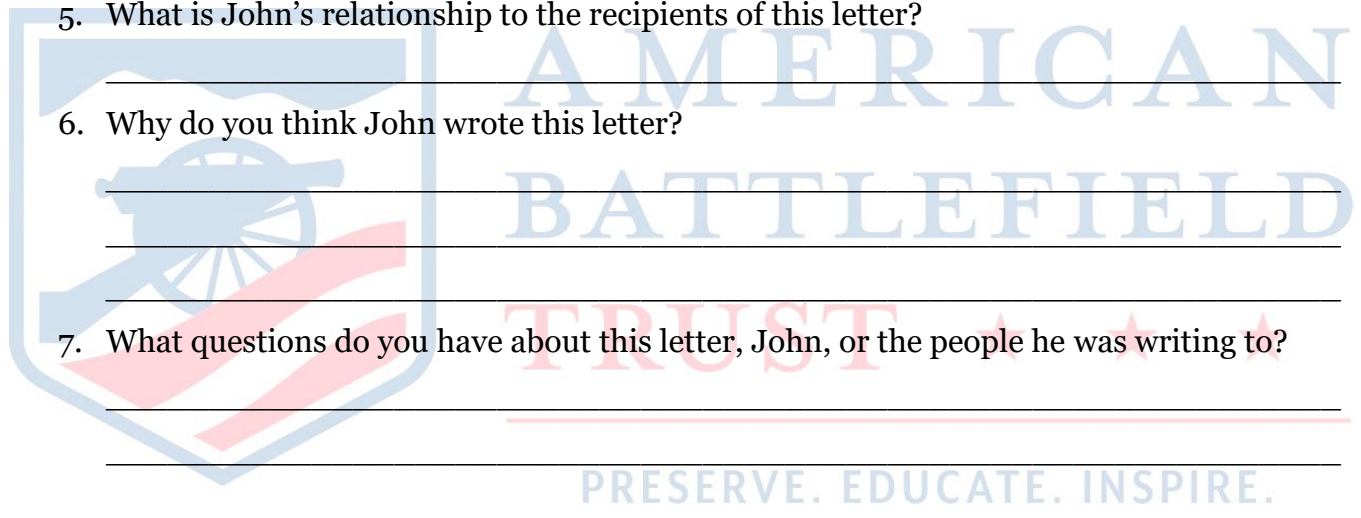
3. Was John a Union soldier, Confederate soldier, or civilian?

4. Can you gather any other information about John from this letter?

5. What is John’s relationship to the recipients of this letter?

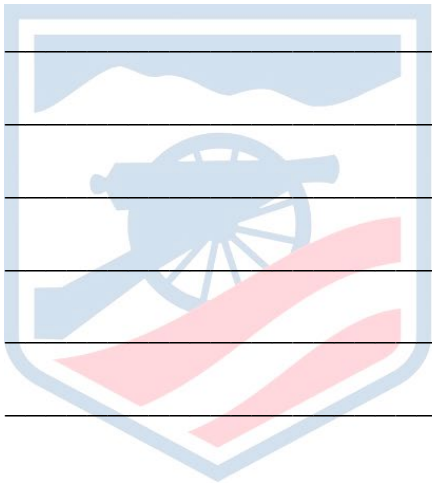
6. Why do you think John wrote this letter?

7. What questions do you have about this letter, John, or the people he was writing to?



Describe one similarity you can find in both letters. What does this tell us about soldiers fighting the Civil War?

- Provide a quote from each letter that shows this similarity.



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