

Lesson provided by: Meredith Groom: Bartow County

“Reporting on a Battle”

Georgia Performance Standards:

SSUSH9 The student will identify key events, issues, and individuals relating to the causes, course, and consequences of the Civil War.

- c. Describe the roles of Ulysses Grant, Robert E. Lee, “Stonewall” Jackson, William T. Sherman, and Jefferson Davis.
- d. Explain the importance of Fort Sumter, Antietam, Vicksburg, Gettysburg, and the Battle for Atlanta.

Assignment:

You are a member of a newspaper staff working during the Civil War years. Your job is to report the Battle of _(selection must be approved by instructor)_ completely as possible. It’s your job to determine how to best cover the story, write it, and then to create a front page for your "newspaper", highlighting the following:

- An account of the battle, along with battle statistics (generals in charge, number dead, areas captured by which side, and other information).
- Eyewitness statements (quotes) of those directly involved in the battle.
- Maps of the various phases of the battle.
- Photographs of the battle scene or of the aftermath of the battle.
- An editorial position regarding one of the major issues of the period.

You should go about this task in the following manner:

- Do the appropriate "reporting" (research on the web), and write the stories.
- Find pictures that effectively highlight the story as well as maps that will let your readers know what happened in this battle.
- Write headlines, and "layout" the information into an "as easy to read" format as possible.
- Remember, all work should be readable, but it should also be in your own words. If you use a source, be sure to "quote" that source when you write the story.

Finally, some simple journalism rules:

Remember good newspaper stories contain a strong lead, that is a opening sentence which contains enough information and is interesting enough to "hook" the reader into reading the rest of the story.

Also, good newspaper stories answer the following questions:

Who (the people or groups involved in the incident)

What (what happened)

When (at what time/date did the event occur?)

Where (geographically, what is the location of this event?)

Why (for what reasons did the event occur?)

How (in this instance, how did this incident occur... how was the battle fought, what types of strategies were used, etc.)

Finally, an editorial is an opinion story. The writer is trying to persuade his audience. A news story is factual, although during wartime, stories may be altered because of censorship, or because the news source wants to save the feelings of civilians at home. Editorials are usually not the opinion of one individual, but the stand of the publication on a particular issue.

You must use a MINIMUM of 3 different sources and DOCUMENT those sources.

You may use your book and the internet.

Recommended sites: nps.gov (National Park Society)