The Battle that Saved America: Gettysburg

Overview: Students will view primary source images and read diary entries from the Battle of Gettysburg in order to increase understanding and promote student engagement.

Goal: Students will be able to explain what happened during the Battle of Gettysburg and what the effect of the battle was on the overall war.

Objectives: Students will be able to (SWBAT) fill out an analysis sheet after viewing various primary source images.
- SWBAT summarize diary entries from James Longstreet and George Pickett in order to understand the events surrounding Pickett’s Charge.
- SWBAT create a short video summarizing the Battle of Gettysburg.

Guiding Question: After viewing primary source images from Gettysburg and reading the journals of General Longstreet and General Pickett, students will create a 2-3 minute video documentary on the Battle of Gettysburg using primary source images and referencing material from the diaries.

Time Required: 4-5 class periods (60 min. in length)

Recommended Grade Range: 7-12

Subject Area: Social Studies/Civil War


Materials Used: Video projector, laptop computers, analysis handouts, primary source images, diary entries, textbook

Resources Used:


Instructional Procedure

-Students will view a short, one minute video introducing the Battle of Gettysburg.

-Background information would have already have been assigned the night before with a guided reading and review worksheet. This will provide students with background knowledge and give them a solid foundation for the activity in class.

-Students will be divided collaborative learning groups and assigned one primary source image from the Library of Congress. Each group will be given an image analysis sheet and asked to analyze the photograph that they have been given. When this is complete, each photograph will be shown on the overhead to the class and groups will report their findings.

-Students will then be handed the journal entries of General Longstreet and General Pickett. They will be given an analysis sheet that asks them to reveal the opinions of Longstreet about Pickett’s Charge and analyze the reactions of Pickett to his failed attack. Students will report to the class about their findings.

-After these activities are complete, students will be broken into groups and assigned a project where they are going to create a short (2-3 minute) documentary about the Battle of Gettysburg, utilizing the Library of Congress primary sources and referencing the diaries discussed in class.

Assessment

-Analysis mini-tasks (images, diaries)

-LDC = (This lesson will be done before this lesson). What was the cause of the American Civil War? After reading primary sources on the Kansas-Nebraska Act, John Brown, the Dred Scott case, and the election of Abraham Lincoln, write an essay in which you argue which event most led to war and explain why. Support your discussion with evidence from the text.