

Facilitation Guide



Civil War & Reconstruction (1860 - 1896) Visual Timeline Social Studies, Grade 8

EXPERIENCE OVERVIEW

As a class, students will collaboratively create a visual timeline to illustrate the chronological sequence of key political, economic, and social events related to the Civil War era. Working in small groups, students will design posters that represent assigned sections of the timeline, highlighting the central ideas and key details of a specific event or period. Each group will also compose a song that elaborates on these ideas, using music to deepen understanding and reinforce historical connections.

Note: This lesson is designed as a three-day sequence (three class periods), but can be adapted to fit your daily schedule, pacing, and student needs.

Standards

MSDE/BCPSS CONTENT STANDARDS AND INDICATORS

- MSDE Standard 5.0 (History): Students will inquire into significant events and analyze change over time by identifying and sequencing key political, economic, and social developments related to the Civil War and Reconstruction.
 - 8.CW.1a: Contrast the goals, resources, military technology, and strategies of the Union and Confederacy.
- MSDE Standard 6.0 (Skills & Processes): Students will use disciplinary literacy skills to organize information chronologically, construct historical explanations, and communicate ideas through visual (timeline/poster) and auditory (song) formats.
- Analyze causes and consequences of the Civil War.
- Evaluate political, economic, and social aspects of Reconstruction.

C3 STANDARDS – SKILL DEVELOPMENT

- Evaluating sources and using evidence.
- Communicating conclusions and taking informed action.

CCSS:

- RH.6-8.7: Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- RI.8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS

- A2 E:6–8: 3: Apply visual organizational strategies to create works of art and design that clearly communicate the main/central idea.
- E:6–8:1: Working both independently and in collaboration with others, create musical works that clearly communicate personal, cultural, or historical experience, using appropriate technology as available.
- E:6–8:2: Create music with advancing melodic, rhythmic, dynamic, and formal elements, including simple harmony, in response to artistic stimuli, using appropriate technology as available.
- I:6–8:1: Use a variety of media and methods, including available technology, to select, present, explain, and document musical ideas with connections to context and artistic purpose.

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Getting Ready

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

- How effective was the United States in resolving the political, economic, and social issues that led to, and stemmed from, the Civil War?

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will create a visual timeline to organize key political, economic, and social events leading to and following the Civil War by working in groups to design a poster that clearly communicates the central ideas of a specific event or period.
- Students will compose a song using call-and-response and body percussion to elaborate on their section of the timeline.

ASSESSMENT:

- Timeline poster ([Rubric](#))
- Elaboration song

MATERIALS & SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM SETUP:

- [All slides & handouts](#)

KEY SOCIAL STUDIES VOCABULARY:

- Union; Confederacy; Resources; Strategy; Military technology; Military theater; Naval blockade; Anaconda Plan; King Cotton Diplomacy; Conscription; Draft; Regiment; Siege; Emancipation; Emancipation Proclamation; African American troops; Reconstruction; Freedmen's Bureau; Military Reconstruction Act; 13th Amendment; 14th Amendment; 15th Amendment; Black Codes; Ku Klux Klan; Sharecropping; Convict lease system; Peonage; Jim Crow laws; Disenfranchisement; Habeas corpus; Ex parte Merryman (1861); Voting rights; Education; Church (as community institutions); Inflation; Draft riots; Bread riots; Industrialization; Economic opportunity; Economic inequality; Election of 1876; Compromise (Bargain) of 1877; Plessy v. Ferguson (1896); "Separate but equal"; Literacy test; Poll tax; Grandfather clause; Carpetbagger

KEY ARTS INTEGRATION VOCABULARY:

- Illustration; Composition; Beat; Rhythm; Lyrics; Body Percussion; Tempo; Dynamics

TEACHER BACKGROUND:

- Teach in approximately week 3 of Unit 5: This lesson is introduced after 3 weeks of quality instruction inclusive of virtual field trips, instructional videos, whole-group discussions, cooperative group discussions, assignments and presentations, small group instruction, and short-term in-class projects.
- Watch the [Music as a Powerful Tool for Learning](#) video to prepare to use music in the classroom.

STUDENT BACKGROUND UNDERSTANDING:

- Conflicts existed between the Northern and Southern United States surrounding the differing views on the institution of slavery and its abolishment in the South.



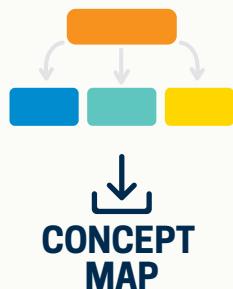
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ARTS INTEGRATION MATERIALS



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TEACH

Day 1: Topic Selection and Research Organizer

1. Introduce the Assignment

- Explain that students will work in groups to create sections of a timeline depicting the major events between 1860 and 1896. Each section of the timeline will be represented in a visual poster, as well as in a song that elaborates on the key events and details depicted.
- Divide students into 10 small groups. Display the [Major Events & Eras Chart](#) (these key events and eras span from the lead up to the Civil War to the Jim Crow era). Explain that each group will pick one number, and that number will determine the event they will research and present on.



2. Research Timeline Topics

- Students will use the [Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How handout](#) to conduct their research.
 - An annotation guide is included on page 2 of the handout.
- Decide the best research format options for your class depending on student needs and resource access. This could look like general internet searches, a curated list of links, or gathered print materials. This is a great time to review primary and secondary sources with students.
- Model how to start research using the 5Ws + How method with one section of the timeline.
- Students use remaining class time to complete research.

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TEACH

Day 2: Design Visual Timeline Posters

- Note: Decide poster criteria before class time.



1. Poster Creation

- Explain that today, students will work in their teams and use their collected research to design a timeline poster for their chosen section.
- Name Poster Criteria:
 - Clearly identify the era/time period
 - Number (selected by teacher) of key elements and details that should be displayed on the poster.
 - Use of images & labeling (either drawn by students or created via collage: students can print, cut, and paste images onto a poster or use magazines. Or, students can create a digital poster using an application like Canva or Google Slides.)
 - [Additional modeling video: How to Design, Create, and Layout a Poster Project](#)
 - Feel welcome to use, adapt, or edit this [Poster Rubric](#). Share grading criteria with students before they begin.
- Provide students will needed poster-making supplies and ample time to create posters with their groups.
- If possible, timeline posters should be visibly displayed in the classroom in chronological order.

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TEACH

Day 3: Create an Elaboration Song

1. Song Creation

- Explain that today, students will create a song elaborating on the key details represented in their poster/section of the timeline.
- Name the key song elements:
 - The song should teach the audience about your event/era
 - It should include important facts from your research, including Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How.
 - For structure, songs can use:
 - A. Call-and-response
 - B. Body percussion to create a simple rhythm
- Prepare:
 - Share this [songwriting prep video](#) with students to introduce them to key musical terms and the elements of body percussion (clap, stomp, pat, and snap).
 - Share this [call-and-response video](#) (starting at 37 seconds) for students interested in using this simple song structure.
 - [This video](#) (starting at 33 seconds) models an example of a call-and-response song. Make sure students notice how, although the call line changes, the response line is the same every time.
 - Lastly, share [this example of an elaboration song](#) using body percussion.
- Allow students time to write and rehearse their songs.

2. Present Posters & Songs (could be moved to 4th class session)

- Explain that now, students will present their visual timelines and songs to the class. Peers will give positive feedback about what they learned from each group.
 - After each presentation, peers will be prompted to share (aloud or on sticky notes/feedback sheets) at least one thing they learned, and one positive “glow” about the presenting group’s song or poster. This can be used as an exit ticket.
- Review good presentation habits:
 - Speak clearly and confidently.
 - Hold your poster up for everyone to see.
 - Work together – everyone should say or do something.
- Each Group takes turns presenting their visual timeline posters and performing their group songs.
 - Peers provide feedback (see above) for each presentation they watch as an exit ticket.



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