

CIVIL WAR EDUCATION



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ANTIETAM 360 | HIGH SCHOOL

Educator's Guide

THE CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM: Goals 3 and 9

NCSS GOALS: I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, X

GRADES: High School/Advanced Placement

The Antietam 360 application is a great way to have students independently discover the American Civil War. Use the Antietam 360 application to wander the battlefield digitally. Explore clickable details, photographs, and videos with this interactive panoramic display of the Antietam Battlefield.

Below are ideas for how you and your students can use the application.

History where it Happened

The Antietam 360 application is meant to give the user a sense of being on the historic battlefield. By studying the history of the battle and the land where it took place, one can get a better sense of what happened and why it happened.

GOAL:

Students will use Antietam 360 to study certain moments of the battle and analyze how the natural and built environment effected the maneuvers, strategies, and tactics used as well as the outcome.

1. Have students tour the Antietam Battlefield using Antietam 360
2. Students should focus on certain points in the battle where the natural and built environments effect what takes place. Two suggestions are Burnside's Bridge and the Sunken Lane.
3. Have students create an original piece of work related to their research.

Ideas include:

Create an illustration of how these natural and built features were used in the battle.

Write an account, as if you are a soldier describing your experience either at Burnside's Bridge or the Sunken Road.

Honoring Those who Fought: Monuments and Memorials

From the day after the battle to the present, monuments have been placed on battlefields as reminders of the deeds of those who were there. As the bloodiest day in American history, Antietam has numerous monuments. Students can use the Antietam 360 application to see the monuments on the actual battlefield while gathering additional data.

GOAL:

Students will use Antietam 360 to study the many monuments and memorials on the battlefield; noting such features as the symbolism and artwork on the monument, those being honored, placement, and timing of dedication.

1. Have students tour Antietam Battlefield using Antietam 360.
2. Students should take notes about the monuments identified throughout.
3. Have students create an original piece of work related to their research.

Ideas include:

Designing their own monument for Antietam

Creating a guide for visitors to tour the monuments of Antietam

Writing a letter to a soldier who is being honored by a monument; telling them about the monument and how it is viewed today.

RESOURCES:

Antietam Monument Guide from the National Park Service

» <http://www.nps.gov/anti/historyculture/monuments.htm>

Then and Now: The Battle, the Interim, and the Present

Throughout the Antietam 360 application, one can see how the battlefield changed over time, making Antietam one of the most well preserved Civil War battlefields in the country. Many historic sites go through a process when being preserved. This is an opportunity to see how a historic site goes through the process as well as a way to open the conversation on the benefits of historic preservation and their value in the study of our past.

GOAL:

Students will use Antietam 360 to study the way a historic place, such as the Antietam Battlefield, goes through changes over time on its way to being preserved.

1. Have students tour Antietam Battlefield using Antietam 360.
2. Students should take notes about the ways the battlefield has changed from the end of the battle in 1862 to the present day.
3. Have students create original work.

Ideas include:

Research another historic site that is either being preserved or needs to be preserved, and then have them develop a preservation plan for that site

Research the ideology behind preservation of historic places and write an article arguing the benefits of historic preservation

RESOURCES:

Saving Our History (Attached)

Books on Battlefield Preservation »

http://astore.amazon.com/civiwarprestr-20?_encoding=UTF8&node=52

Land Preservation at the Civil War Trust »

<http://www.civilwar.org/land-preservation/>

Preserving America's Heritage (PDF) »

<http://www.achp.gov/docs/Section106Primer2010.pdf>

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Saving Our History

Why Battlefield Preservation Matters

“I didn’t understand, until I was actually there.”

“Being here makes things so much clearer.”

The above comments or ones similar to these have been uttered many times by visitors to America’s Civil War battlefields. Reading books, studying accounts, viewing images, and listening to lectures are excellent ways to learn about Civil War battles, however, it is difficult to fully understand these historic events without actually visiting the ground where they took place. This is why battlefields are our greatest resource and preservation of these battlefields is integral to providing everyone with the best education.



Cedar Creek Battlefield

Why didn’t they just cross the river on foot or swim? Why didn’t they jump over the ditch? Why didn’t they shoot the guys in front of them with cannons and cross the bridge? These are all understandable questions to ask when one has not seen the actual ground where the battle took place. Upon seeing these ditches, creeks, the rise of the land, and the undulating subtleties of the “open” fields a whole new perspective is acquired.

Even with a detailed description it can be difficult to appreciate the irrigation ditch that gave so many soldiers trouble at the Slaughter Pen Farm in Fredericksburg. However, upon visiting the battlefield, it is easy to see the perils associated with this ditch and how truly terrifying it would have been to the soldiers on that December day. And, while one could watch a video of a historian running up the hill in front of Burnside’s infamous bridge, the steep incline and view from the top is something one cannot

really appreciate until they themselves stand at the top of it. From these perspectives, a better understanding is acquired of how and why the battles unfolded as they did, along with a new point of view with which to evaluate the actions of those involved.



Antietam Battlefield

In addition to the understanding gained by experiencing the physical qualities of a battlefield, the battlefield provides an emotional connection for many visitors. At these battlefields men and women served, many laying down their lives.



Stones River Battlefield

It is an incredible experience to stand on Little Round Top at Gettysburg on a summer evening and look out onto the same view the soldiers would have had, imagining their fear, exhaustion, and excitement. It is an equally amazing experience to drive through Antietam each December to view the lit luminaries, one for every casualty of the battle. A moment of reflection among the flat rocks at Stones River, or a chance to touch a cannon ball still embedded in the side of Fort Sumter – these are

moments that cannot be found, except in these places.

Civil War battlefields provide us a place to study, reflect, and connect with the past. We are a better society if we study the past; understanding the point of view of our ancestors, and seeing a bigger picture when we are put into similar situations.