

Grades: 3-6**Length of Time:**

Reader's Theater: two 50 minute periods
Performing Play: three weeks

Goals:

Students will identify and connect with the real people of the Civil War in a variety of ways.

Objectives:

1. Students will learn and appreciate the fact that the war involved friends fighting against friends.
2. Students will be able to identify three different roles that women played in the Civil War.
3. Students will be able to discern which details of the play are true and which are added for literary purposes.
4. Students will use what they have learned to find appropriate costumes, props, and make scenery appropriate to the time period.

Materials Used:

1. Various primary and secondary sources:
 - a. Photographs of Clara Barton
 - b. Photographs of Sarah Emma Edmonds as Franklin Thompson
 - c. Photographs of Annie Etheridge
 - d. Antietam National Battlefield Maps
 - e. *Then and Now* by Garry Adelman (May, 2005)
2. "Uncommon Bonds" Script
3. CWPT's Gifted and Talented Curriculum

Procedure:

1. Discuss the background on the battle of Antietam/ Sharpsburg using battlefield maps, timelines, photos of the battlefield, etc.
2. Students will read the play.
3. As a class, discuss:
 - a. The conflict of good friends fighting on opposite sides of the war.
 - b. The emerging roles of women as nurses, soldiers, spies, and vivandieres.
 - c. Aspects of the play that are factual as opposed to those that have been added for literary purposes.

-Clara Barton's lines in Washington, D.C. are an actual quote. "I have no right to these easy comfortable days and our poor men suffering and dying thirsting in the hot sun and I, so quiet here, in want of nothing,...My lot is too easy and I am sorry for it. " (CWPT, Gifted and Talented Curriculum)
 - d. The kind of clothing and props the will be necessary to perform the play and how to maintain historical accuracy.
4. After the performance, students should be able to answer questions from the audience about which details are factual.

Activity:

1. Over the course of the three weeks, students will find costumes, bring props, make scenery, practice their lines, and present the play to fellow students and parents.

2. If time is not available for practicing and performing the play, the script can be used as a reader's theater piece.

3. All students can be engaged in this project. Those who are able to learn lines and speak in front of others can be given the acting parts. Those who have artistic talent can lead the scenery development, though all can sponge leaves on trees. Those who need fewer lines can be narrators. Those who like more behind the scenes can do sound effects, scene changes if applicable, organize props, and assist with costume changes.

Closure:

Fact and Fiction-

1. The soldiers were actual people from those units and fought at the battle of Antietam/Sharpsburg. Their names were taken from regimental histories and muster rolls.
2. The 4th Texas was at 2nd Manassas, then South Mountain.
3. The 17th South Carolina was at Boonsboro with General Longstreet.
4. The Battle of Antietam was the first battlefield where Clara Barton was allowed to attend. She brought lifesaving supplies to the medics who had been using cornhusks to tend wounds.
5. Sarah Emma Edmonds enlisted as Franklin Thompson in the 2nd Michigan and later made nine forays into Confederate territory using several different disguises. As Bridget O'Shea, she peddled fruit and soap and gathered information.
6. Annie Etheridge was with the 2nd Michigan though it is not known if Sarah and Annie ever met.
7. I learned after this play, that Annie's division may not have been at Antietam, but was possibly in Washington, D.C. at the time. It is important to corroborate facts with several sources!
8. Clara Barton was hit by a minie ball through her sleeve, killing the soldier whom she was helping at Antietam. She never mended the hole.

Assessment:

1. Students will contribute to their costumes.
2. Students will participate in creating scenery and props.
3. Students will be able to tell about his or her character during an audience question and answer session just after the play.
4. Students will be able to list the roles played by women in the Civil War.