

Title: Civil War Slang

Submitted by: Julie Bero, Abe Lincoln Elementary School

Approximate Grade Level: 5th Grade-7th Grade

Approximate Length of Time: Approximately two class periods

[State Standards](#)

[NCSS Standards](#)

Goals: The students will understand some of the terminology used by soldiers during the Civil War; therefore, further understanding writing during the Civil War era.

Objectives: Given a list of “Civil War Slang,” students will be able to write a letter using the slang.

Materials Used:

1. Soldier Talk & Civil War Slang Handout (this can be found at: <http://score.rims.k12.ca.us/activity/manswar/pages/slang.html>)
2. Loose-leaf paper
3. Pictures of Union and Confederate soldiers (these can be found at www.civil-war.net, or within the History Section of the Civil War Preservation Trust website)
4. Crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Anticipatory Set/Hook: What do you think it was like to be a soldier during the Civil War? How do you think Civil War soldiers spoke? Do you know what “slang” means? Do you use any “slang” words or terms?

Procedure:

Period 1: For the first class period, the soldier slang handout is distributed, and pictures of soldiers are shown (these can be shown on a computer, or they can be printed out if no computer is available).

Period 2: For the second class period, students are encouraged to imagine that they are either a Union or Confederate soldier who has to write a letter back to their families. They can then proceed to write a letter using the soldier slang from the handout.

Closure: What do you think of the slang used by Civil War soldiers? Do you think it was confusing? Do you think it was amusing?

Assessment: Once the letters are finished, students can use coloring materials to make them look old and antiquated. One way to assess them on this written letter is to grade them using the 5 parts of a friendly letter. Another way to assess the students is to give a fill in the blank quiz of Soldier Talk and Civil War Slang.

Modification Ideas:

- Consider having one student dictate their letter to another student or yourself.
- Use images along with the slang terms.