

# Civil War Photography Lesson Plan

## TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL IMPACT

*BY THE CIVIL WAR TRUST AND THE CENTER FOR CIVIL WAR PHOTOGRAPHY*

**Grades:** 8-12

**Approximate Length of Time:** One 45-50 min. class period

### Goals:

1. Students will understand the technological progression of photography in the years leading up to the American Civil War.
2. Students will investigate the impact of war-time imagery upon Americans during the Civil War.

### Objectives:

1. Students will be able to list the developments of photographic technology in the years leading up to the American Civil War.
2. Students will be able to discuss orally and in writing their reaction to images of war from various historical moments.
3. Students will be able to explain in writing what they believe the individual response was to Civil War images at the time of the war.

### Materials:

- History of Photography Overview Sheet
- Civil War Photography Interactive Worksheet (Including Assessment)
- Civil War Photography Interactive Worksheet Answer Key (Including Assessment)
- Civil War Photography Assessment Rubric
- Civil War Photography MS PowerPoint Slide Show
- Wet Plate Photography Demonstration (Courtesy of Pamplin Park and Rob Gibson)

### Vocabulary:

1. **ambrotype** [am-bruh-tahyp] : a photograph made on glass using the wet plate or collodion process.

2. **collodion/ wet plate process** [*kuh-loh-dee-uh n*] : a photographic process for which the surface of glass or iron is coated with iodized collodion in order create an image.
3. **daguerreotype** [*duh-gair-uh-tahyp, -ee-uh-tahyp*] : an early photograph produced on a silver or a silver-covered copper plate.
4. **stereo view** [*ster-ee-oh vyoo*] : an image produced when a twin-lens camera captures the same image from two slightly different angles, creating a three-dimensional image.
5. **stereo viewer/stereoscope** [*ster-ee-uh-skohp*] : an optical instrument with two eyepieces used to display a three-dimensional image.
6. **tintype** [*tin-tahyp*] : photograph made on a thin sheet of metal. Popular during the civil war because it was cheap and easy to make.

## **Procedure:**

**\*For the activity in this lesson, the students will write their responses on the Civil War Photography Interactive Worksheet. You also may want to make use of the History of Photography Overview (PDF).**

## **Anticipatory Set/Hook:**

Use page one on the MS PowerPoint Slide Show to introduce the objectives: pre-Civil War photographic technology and the social impact of photography.

## **Introduction-**

-In order to help students comprehend the second objective and think in terms of social impact, compare slides two and three using questions 1 & 2 on the Civil War Photography Interactive Worksheet (PDF).

-Use the corresponding Civil War Photography Interactive Worksheet Answer Key (PDF) as a guide.

\*\*Show the Wet Plate Photography Video Demonstration with slide #10.

## **Activity-**

-Go through the remaining slides in the slide show using the Interactive Worksheet and Answer Key as a guide.

\*The students will fill in the Civil War Photography Interactive Worksheet as you go through the slides together.

### **Closure:**

-Use slide #24 to discuss the use and impact of photography in future conflicts. Spend as much or as little time on this question as you deem necessary.

Say: While photographs of Civil War dead are numerous, such images from later wars are not as prevalent within the public domain. Since the Civil War photographs of the dead on battlefields are not normally available to the public. Why do you think that is? Do you think society's reaction during the Civil War had anything to do with the absence of similar images in later wars?

-Review pre-Civil War photographic processes on slide #4 and on the History of Photography Overview sheet.

### **Assessment:**

- Administer the assessment questions, located at the bottom of the Interactive Worksheet. You may want to review slide #4 and #21-24 before administering.

- See the Civil War Photography Assessment Answer Key and Rubric (PDF). (Please note that points have not been assigned on the rubric so that some or all of the components of question #2 may be counted for credit.)

### **Modification Ideas:**

-Write your own newspaper article about "The Dead at Antietam."

-Alexander Gardner said of his Civil War photography: "It is designed to speak for itself." Do these images speak for themselves? How? Why?