



Gettysburg Class Trip prep

The day before the trip, teachers and administrators meet with students to explain the purpose of the trip and what to expect. Past class trips have involved entertainment and activities. This class trip is different and requires introspection and reflection; not entertainment. Students will be reminded that this trip will offer insight into the formation of our country and will help us define what it means to be an American.

Students will also be given a brief overview of a planned re-enactment and an appropriate response to the activity.



Gettysburg Re-Enactment Directions

Teachers: Please keep in mind that some things in the plan may change depending upon the exigencies of the moment. Please do not divulge this information to students until the proper time.

Basic Structure

Buses will be divided into Confederate and Union. On each bus, one teacher will take the lead and the other teachers will provide support.

Orders of the Day

1. As the students depart from the bus at Cemetery Hill, they will be assigned a number, which they are to remember. They may not switch numbers. They will find out what to do with the numbers later in the program.
2. The Union bus students will be assigned numbers 20 through 24.
3. The Confederate bus students will be assigned numbers 1 through 5.
4. Before leaving the bus, teachers will use the PA to explain to parent chaperones that we are doing a re-enactment and that we appreciate their cooperation. They may take part in

the re-enactment. Students will be reminded of behavior expectations and informed of the re-enactment directions.

5. Teachers will emphasize that we need to start on time so that we are not late for the step-on LBG scheduled for later in the day. Bathroom facilities are available and are accessed from outside the Visitor's Center parking lot. (note: check this for next year – new visitor's center) We will begin 10 minutes after arrival.
6. At designated time, all students, teachers and parent chaperones will meet under the trees in the grassy area to the left of the Visitor's Center.
7. Before marching down to Cemetery Ridge, I will describe the 4 flags that I have and I will discuss the significance of flags in battle. I will be looking for two Union and two Confederate flag bearers. (Students with birthdays closest to July 3)
8. After the flag orientation, students will form a line of battle. They will count off, and then they will form a line of march, with color bearers. This is probably going to be chaotic, even though they have done this. It's ok...let them have fun with it. I will be the drill sergeant. Parents will be asked to be file closers and will be given directions. Teachers will supervise as needed.
9. Once we have done this, we can march in formation (or as close to it as possible) down to Cemetery Ridge, at which point we will need to form a single line due to the fact that we will be on a major road and it will probably have tour buses. They can walk safely to the 12th NJ monument. We will stop there to regroup. We will have a brief orientation of the Brian farm and the how the battle affected this family and other black citizens. On the way back from our re-enactment, we will stop again at the 12th NJ monument to explain the events commemorated by that regiment and the destruction of the Bliss barn and the effect the war had on this particular family.
10. We will walk down to the Bloody Angle. Questions asked will be answered; we will probably not be getting off the tour bus to walk this portion of the battlefield.
11. We will continue to walk down the ridge until we come to the end of the stone wall. There is a grassy area here where we will do the re-enactment. If time is short or the field is muddy, we will do the re-enactment in front of General Meade's statue.
12. I will show the students postcards and / or photos of the generals and soldiers who participated in the Picket / Trimble / Pettigrew Charge and give a brief biography. I will explain the procedure and then we will begin. Students with numbers called will be those killed in battle. They may die with dignity or they may die with a great many sound effects and flair.



Re-enactment

1. Students will be reminded that they are on hallowed ground; that soldiers died on this field, and that we are here to both remember and honor their actions. Tell students that soldiers would probably thank you for being here to remember what they did.
2. Explain to students that the soldiers probably would not mind if we had a little fun while at the same time learning about their experiences.
3. I will take the Confederates and their flags to a short distance in front of the line of battle. I will ask for a parent volunteer to be General Pickett, since he stayed behind. Pickett will give a short speech: “Up men and to your posts. Never forget that you are from old Virginia.”
4. We will need a volunteer to be Brig. Gen. Lewis Armstead, who will also give a speech: “Remember your wives, your mothers, your sisters, your sweethearts.” Students will be formed into line of battle and commanded to march. They should check each other to make sure that they are together. They will march shoulder to shoulder and there will be skirmishers.
5. Once students step off, I will randomly call numbers. This will represent the soldiers who died or were injured while crossing the field. Armstead gives his second speech: “Come on boys, give them the cold steel! Who will follow me?”
6. Students whose number isn’t up will cross over the “stone wall” and engage the Union troops. Actually, they should be captured, but we want to make sure that the students don’t get carried away. Safety is paramount. This will be stressed before we begin.
7. While the Confederates are marching, the Union soldiers are waiting for them, aiming and firing when they come closer. The Union lead teacher will call only two numbers as the Confederates come closer, since the casualties for the Confederates were greater.
8. Once they have rushed the line, all students will shake hands, as was done at the last Gettysburg reunion in 1937.
9. Before leaving the area, students will be reminded that they got up after a few minutes and that they are ok, but if it were real life, maybe they wouldn’t get up or maybe they would be severely injured.
10. We will walk back up Cemetery Ridge and if there is time, stop at the 73rd Pa. monument for a brief description of this regiment, before returning to the 12th NJ monument. At this point, we should be ready for the LBG tour.