

Civil War Animal Mascots Lesson Plans

Lesson Plans made by Zemen Marrugi

Lesson Plan Title: Civil War Animal Mascots

Grades: 4-7

Length of Time: Approximately 2 periods (50-70 minutes)

Goal: Students will be able to understand the important roles animals had in the Civil War by gaining the affection of the soldiers on the battlefields and reminding them of their lives back home.

NCSS Strands:

4H3.0.4 Draw upon stories, photos, artifacts, and other primary sources to compare the life of people in towns and cities during a variety of time periods from 1837 to the present (e.g., 1837-1900, 1900-1950, 1950-2000).

5-P4.2.2 Participate in projects to help or inform others.

7-H1.4.2 Describe and use themes of history to study patterns of change and continuity.

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to compare and contrast the benefits and disadvantages of having different animal pets.
2. Students will be able to identify how having a pet would have made the soldiers feel more at home on the battlefield.

Materials:

Civil War Animal Mascots Handout (KWL)

Civil War Animal Mascots Handout (Dogs vs. Horses)

Civil War Animal Mascots Handout (Mad as a Wet Hen)

Civil War Animal Mascots Handout (Frank Leslie Illustrations)

Civil War Animal Mascots Transparency (Frank Leslie Illustrations)

Civil War Animal Mascots Handout (Assessment)

Civil War Animal Mascots Handout (Tri-Fold Board Rubric)

Anticipatory Set/Hook: Who has a pet? What makes a pet so special? Have there been times when your pet made you feel better about a situation or made you forgot about something that wasn't so pleasant? Why do pets make people feel good?

Procedures:

1. Ask students the importance of having a pet to some people. Ask them why some people chose to have a pet in their lives.

Possible Answers: Pets make people feel good and they give people unconditional support from an affectionate being. People and pets gain each other's loyalty and affection.

2. Have students create a list of pets they have at home.

Possible Answers:

Dogs

Cats

Birds

Fish

Frogs

Turtles

Snakes

If time permits, you can have students create bar/line graphs with the numbers provided.

3. Watch the Civil War video on the History.com. The Civil War part of 'America: the Story of Us' will give the student a good perception of the war and its impact on the nation. After watching the video, ask the students about how they think the soldiers felt being part of the war. Have them give examples of what would have made the soldiers feel a little better about the situations they were in during the war.

Possible Answers: Soldiers wrote letters to their family members. Soldiers had pets with them at the camp.

4. Have a discussion with the students about why a soldier would have enjoyed the company of a pet during a war. Have the students complete the KWL of animal mascots and evaluate their previous knowledge on the content. Use the provided KWL Handout. The KWL handout can remain with the students because they will need to complete the L section at the end of the entire unit to demonstrate what they have learned about animal mascots.
5. Students Read: http://www.reillysbattery.org/Newsletter/Jul00/deborah_grace.htm The Horse In the Civil War by Deborah Grace

6. After students read the selection, they can then compare the benefits of having either a dog or horse in the war. Give students write specific examples on what benefits or disadvantages came with having either animal.
7. Have a discussion about how much loyalty the animals would have built towards the general and soldiers and discuss what would have happened had one of the animals come up missing. Have students complete the 'Mad as a Wet Hen' handout.
8. Discuss the illustrations by Frank Leslie and how animals would have reacted towards wounded soldiers.

Closure: Why were animal mascots important to the soldiers during the civil war? How did having an animal around the company make the soldiers feel? What animals were most common to appear to be part of the different regiments?

Assessment: Teacher can assess the students with the provided assessments.

Kinesthetic Leader: This lesson can be enhanced by having the students participate in a real life Civil War reenactment. Students can be divided into two separate groups. The reenactment can be of one of the battles, topped off with one student dressed as Abraham Lincoln and making the Gettysburg Address.

Rigorous Assessment: Students that demonstrate a higher understanding of the Civil War can be challenged with a more rigorous assignment of creating a bulletin board that demonstrates what the two sides were fighting for during the war. See Rigorous Assessment Rubric for more detail on grading and assignment expectation.