



**AMERICAN
BATTLEFIELD
TRUST ★ ★ ★**



**Antietam Battlefield Field Trip
Lesson Plan: Module 6**

American Battlefield Trust, 2022

This is an individual module from the Antietam Battlefield Field Trip Lesson Plan. It has been formatted for ease of use or printing options for stand-alone learning experiences.

We strongly recommend viewing the PDF of the entire Field Trip Lesson Plan to find maps, touring tips, and extra resources. If you want just one file, this PDF is for you. It includes all modules (lesson plans and activities), the maps, and the supplemental historic photos in one easy download.

These lesson plans are listed according to their locations on the National Park Service's Self-Guided Auto Tour route. Please consult the [Antietam National Battlefield's Self-Guided Auto Tour map](#) when planning your visit with these lesson plans and battlefield investigations.



American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Lesson

Antietam: National Cemetery

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

How and why were national cemeteries created during and after the American Civil War? What purpose do these cemeteries serve today and for future generations?

OVERVIEW

In 1864, legislation was passed to create a national cemetery to bury the remains of both Union and Confederate soldiers from the Battle of Antietam. The next step was to purchase a suitable piece of land for the cemetery, for which the state of Maryland donated five thousand dollars. All of this work hit an early roadblock when working with the landowner. To circumvent this road block, the Maryland legislature passed legislation repealing the original act, and in March 1865, additional legislation was passed to provide for the purchase of ten acres of land. This time, Maryland would not work alone, with other state representatives and those from Maryland forming “a body politic in law, under the name, style and title of the Antietam National Cemetery.”¹ An additional seven thousand dollars was appropriated for the project as well.

It was the duty of all involved, including state trustees, to remove the remains of all soldiers from the Battle of Antietam. It was then decided that the remains of Confederate casualties would be buried on a portion of the ground separate from the Union casualties. Eventually eighteen other states, all Union, joined the Antietam National Cemetery corporation. They included Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. When the cemetery was completed, these states had contributed over \$90,000 and changed the purpose and scope of the cemetery. The addition of the Private Soldier Monument in 1880, which is a 44-foot tall stone depiction of a Union soldier, clearly marked the space as a Union cemetery.

A local resident of Sharpsburg, Aaron Good, was employed to help make a list of burial places. He had already devoted his time to identifying the dead and locating their graves before work on the cemetery had even begun. The community of Sharpsburg had been overwhelmed by the Battle of Antietam, so quick burial in shallow trenches had been the rule to prevent the spread of epidemic disease. Although some bodies had been embalmed, and some bodies had been buried in natural conditions that preserved the remains, by 1865 only skeletons remained in most of the trenches. ² Good’s work greatly helped in identifying the dead as their remains were reinterred in the newly-created cemetery.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Knowledge (Describe)



- a. Recall important facts about the mass number of casualties sustained at the battle of Antietam.
- b. List Union states who provided representatives for the Antietam National Cemetery corporation and explain what their ultimate goal was.
2. Comprehension/Application/Analysis (Explain)
 - a. Compare and discuss modern cemeteries to historic national cemeteries.
 - b. Discuss ways soldiers were honored through reburial in the Antietam National Cemetery.
3. Evaluation (Interpret)
 - a. Locate and label key components of the Antietam National Cemetery.

BATTLEFIELD LOCATION

Antietam National Battlefield Auto Tour Stop #11 - Antietam National Cemetery, Boonsboro Pike

NPS Website Virtual Tour:

<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/virtualtour.htm>

ACTIVITIES

Motivational Activity:

1. Gather your group near the Speaker's Rostrum, located within Antietam National Cemetery. This structure is located just to the left of the entrance off of Boonsboro Pike.
2. Share the brief history of the cemetery as provided in the **Overview** section of this lesson.
 - a. You may choose to move your location to best suit your group as you share the cemetery's history.
1. **Procedure:** Remind students that appropriate silence and respect is required while visiting this and other national cemeteries.
2. Provide students with a blank copy of the [Battlefield Investigation - Antietam National Cemetery](#).
3. Allow students time to explore the cemetery and to complete the worksheet.
 - a. You may choose to have students work individually or in small groups.
 - b. Students will need to identify and appropriately label the following:
 - i. State burial plots
 - ii. Monuments
 - iii. Two types of artillery
 - iv. Historic buildings and structures
4. After the allotted time, reconvene your students to discuss their findings.

Summary Activity:

Bring your groups back to the Speaker's Rostrum or original group location. Begin a discussion focusing on the essential questions posed above. Encourage students or groups to discuss and support their answers. Another culminating discussion may include the way cemeteries in the post war years have changed.



Extensions:

Have each student select an identified soldier, buried within the Antietam National Cemetery. This soldier could be from your home state, have the same name as one of your students, or be from a distant state. Encourage students to research that soldier and compile their findings.

1. Students could create a powerpoint or a poster.
2. Students could write a tribute to be published in the local newspaper honoring them during Memorial Day or on the anniversary of the battle.

RESOURCES**Teacher:**

- [Battlefield Investigation Worksheet - Answer Key](#)
- Snyder, Keith. *Antietam National Cemetery: Not For Themselves but for Their Country*. Maryland Interpretive Association.
- National Park Service Website
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/historyculture/antietam-national-cemetery.htm>
- Stotelmyer, Steven R. *The Bivouacs of the Dead: The Story of Those Who Died at Antietam and South Mountain*. Baltimore: Toomey Press, 1997.
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: National Cemeteries
<https://vimeo.com/443088022>
- American Battlefield Trust: “Antietam National Cemetery: The Final Resting Place”

<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/antietam-national-cemetery>

Students:

- [Battlefield Investigation Worksheet](#)
- National Park Service Website
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/historyculture/antietam-national-cemetery.htm>
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STANDARDS**Social Studies - National Council for the Social Studies**

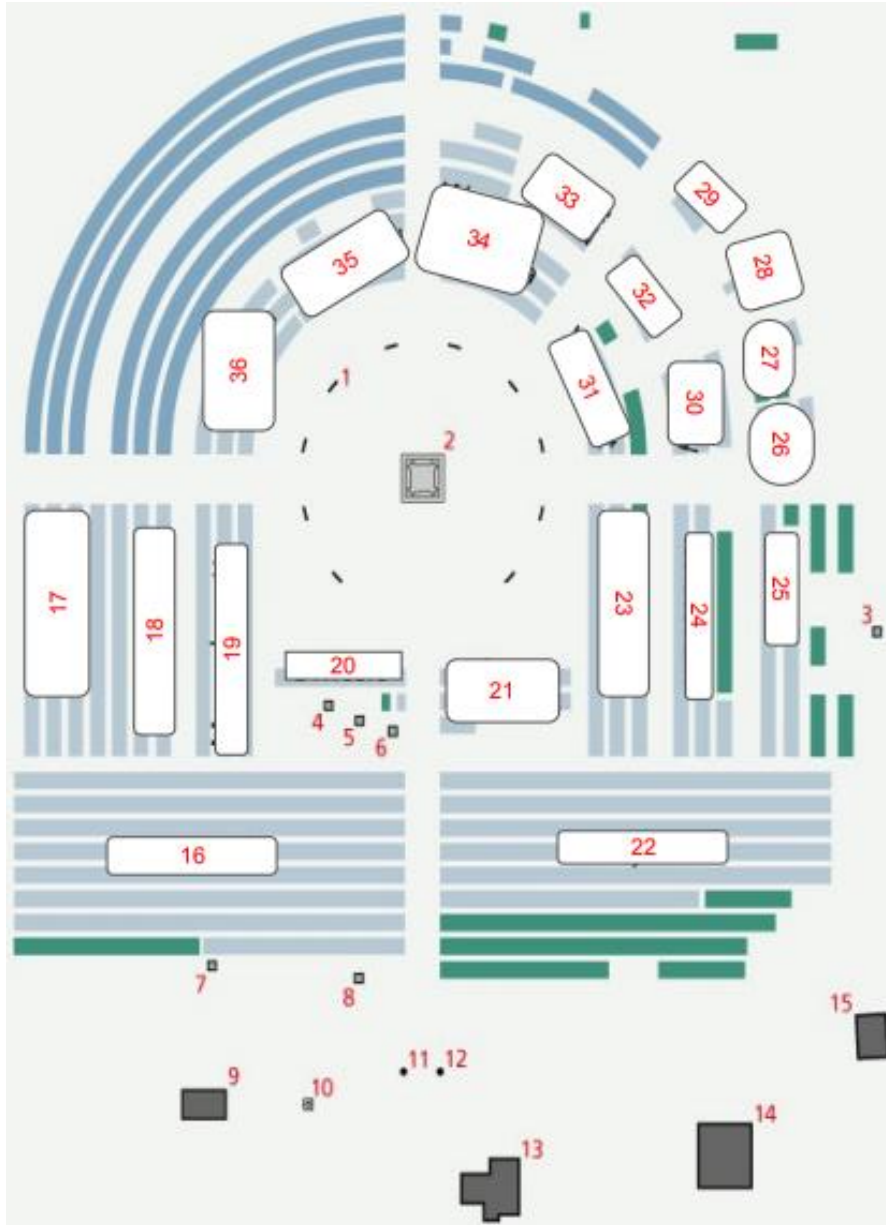
- Theme 2: Time, Continuity, and Change
- Theme 3: People, Places, or Environments
- Theme 4: Individual, Development and Identity
- Theme 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Theme 6: Power, Authority, and Governance



**American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation
Antietam: National Cemetery**

Name: _____

Use the map to help you identify key points throughout the Antietam National Cemetery. Use the numbered form to record your answers. Please remember that silence and respect is appropriate in this final place of rest.



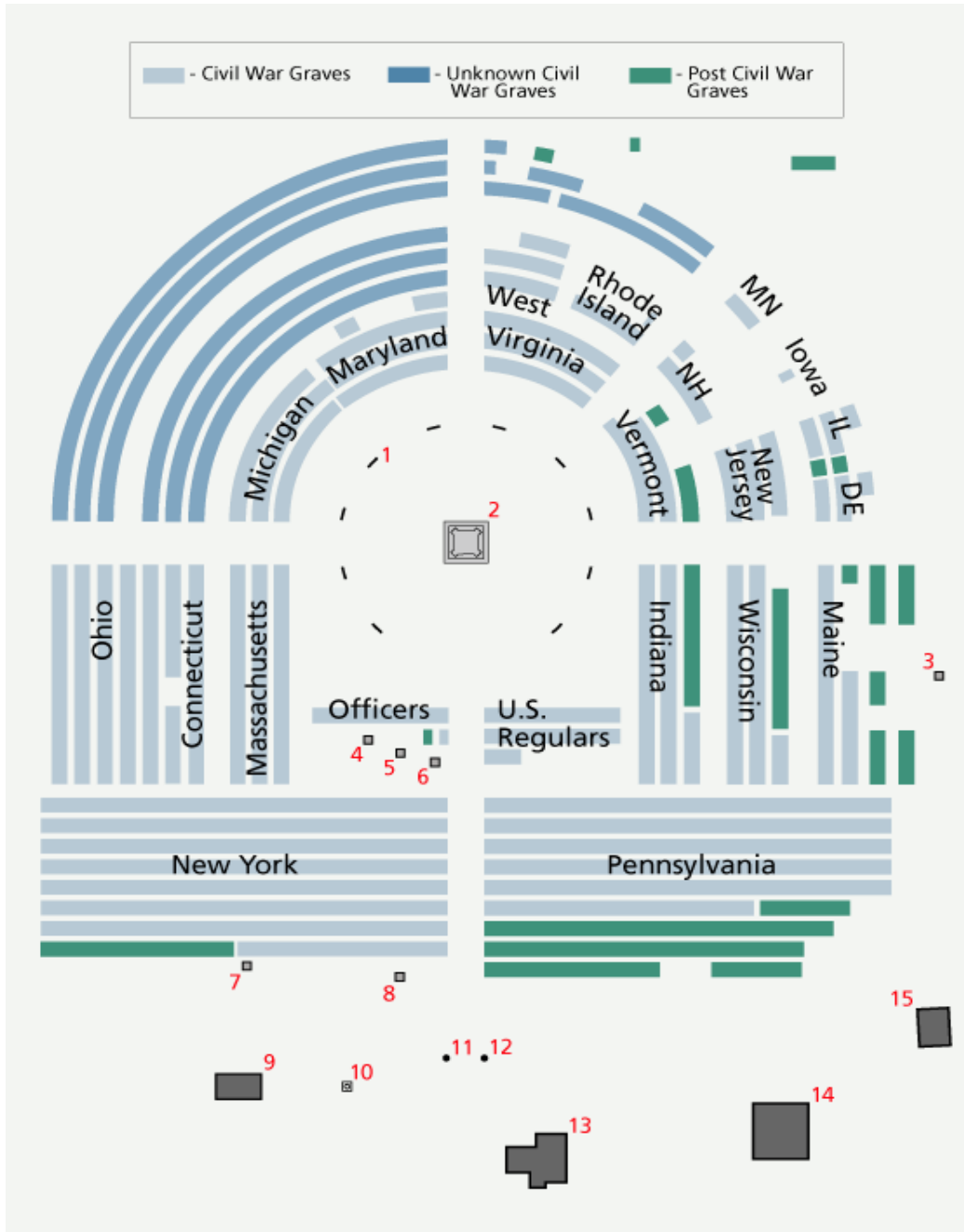
**American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation
Antietam: National Cemetery**

Name: _____

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 20. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 21. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 22. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 23. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 24. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 25. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 26. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 27. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 28. _____ |
| 11. _____ | 29. _____ |
| 12. _____ | 30. _____ |
| 13. _____ | 31. _____ |
| 14. _____ | 32. _____ |
| 15. _____ | 33. _____ |
| 16. _____ | 34. _____ |
| 17. _____ | 35. _____ |
| 18. _____ | 36. _____ |



American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation Antietam: National Cemetery Answer Key



American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation
Antietam: National Cemetery
Answer Key

1. Iron Tablets with poem "Bivouacs of the Dead"
2. Private Soldier Monument
3. Monument to Company F, 1st Regiment U.S. Sharpshooters
4. Grave of MD Congressman Goodloe Byron
5. Monument to 20th N.Y. Infantry
6. Grave of Civil War Brigadier General Jacob Duryee
7. Monument to four Union soldiers found in 1988
8. Monument to 4th N.Y. Infantry
9. Rostrum
10. Flag Pole
11. Smoothbore 24-pounder Naval cannon barrel captured at Harpers Ferry
12. Rifled 20-pounder cannon barrel found at the base of Elk Ridge
13. Lodge Building
14. Cemetery Superintendent's Quarters, now Park Headquarters
15. Mule Barn
16. New York
17. Ohio
18. Connecticut
19. Massachusetts
20. Officers
21. U.S. Regulars
22. Pennsylvania
23. Indiana
24. Wisconsin
25. Maine
26. Delaware
27. Illinois
28. Iowa
29. Minnesota
30. New Jersey
31. Vermont
32. New Hampshire
33. Rhode Island
34. West Virginia
35. Maryland
36. Michigan





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