

## **CIVIL WAR POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES**

### **Classroom Activities**

1. Hold a town meeting in the classroom. Have the students (town citizens) debate the merits of secession from the point of view of unionists, cooperationists, and secessionists. At the end of the debate, have the students (town citizens) vote for secession or not. You may have the students debate the merits of secession at the time of the Civil War, OR you may choose to have the students debate whether or not they want their class to secede from the school, based on school-related issues.
2. Hold a Civil War recruitment rally. Have each student decide whether he or she wants to support the Union or the Confederacy based on their views concerning nullification, the Missouri Compromise, the Dred Scott Decision, states' rights, and abolition. Before each student signs the enlistment papers, have each student state his or her reason for supporting whichever side he or she decides to join.

After the students have sworn allegiance to the appropriate side, you may have them complete these additional activities:

- A. Elect their officers, taking into account leadership abilities.
  - B. Have each army decide what items they want to have allocated to them in their haversacks. Remind the students that they will have to carry their haversacks for long distances and they will have no electricity during their tour of duty. What do they see as essential items and what can students/soldiers do without?
  - C. Have each army compose and perform its own battle or camp song (such as *Bonnie Blue Flag* or *Goober Peas*).
3. Carry on a classroom discussion comparing and contrasting the Civil War to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. How has time and technology changed war? Are the results just as devastating? How do the causes and justifications compare?

### **Individual Activities**

1. Based upon their visit to Drayton Hall and information students learned in class, have the students compose diary excerpts for a Civil War soldier fighting for either the North or the South. Have them discuss camp life, what it was like to march long distances, and even the experience of battle.
2. Have the students write letters, either as a soldier writing a letter home to his family on a plantation, a small farm or in town, or as a family member, left behind

- on a plantation, a small farm, or in town, writing a letter to a soldier. How did the war affect them all? Remind the students that soldiers from the same town often were in the same unit together. Do you think the letters would always include the horrors of war, or the bad things that were happening at home? Do you think soldiers and families might want to protect their loved ones from terrible news?
3. Have the students imagine that they were slaves living at Drayton Hall before the war. Have the students write about how his or her life changed during and after the war. Did he or she try to escape to the North on the Underground Railroad? How was the decision to stay or leave Drayton Hall made? Was the decision easy to make? What difference did the Emancipation Proclamation make? Did it affect his or her decision?
  4. Have the students imagine that they were Caesar Bowens. Have the students write a story about why they think he chose to remain at Drayton Hall as the caretaker. What were his feelings about the condition of Drayton Hall after the war? Do they think he was saddened by all the destruction along the Ashley River? Do they think he was concerned about his welfare and the welfare of his family? Do they think he was concerned about the welfare of the Drayton family?
  5. After the students have visited the online exhibit regarding how and why Drayton Hall Plantation on the Ashley River was spared during the war at [http://www.draytonhall.org/research/history/civil\\_war.html](http://www.draytonhall.org/research/history/civil_war.html), have the students compose diary excerpts for Dr. John Drayton of Drayton Hall, discussing his work as a medical officer and doctor during the war. Also include his feelings regarding the state of Drayton Hall when he returned to his ancestral home after the war.
  6. Have the students imagine that they are Union soldiers in either the 35<sup>th</sup> United State Colored Troops or the 56<sup>th</sup> New York Volunteers who visited Drayton Hall after Middleton Place was burned. Have the students compose either diary excerpts or letters describing Drayton Hall and their impressions of it. Remind the students that many of the 35<sup>th</sup> USCT were former slaves and that the 56<sup>th</sup> NYV were northerners that had never experienced life on a plantation. Would the soldiers' backgrounds influence their view of Drayton Hall?
  7. During the Civil War, Drayton Hall was essentially abandoned by the family. With Northern troops destroying most of the plantations along Ashley River, it was not safe for the family to stay at Drayton Hall. At the end of the war the Draytons returned to find their family home still standing but in horrible condition. Go to [http://draytonhall.org/news/press\\_room/press\\_gallery.html](http://draytonhall.org/news/press_room/press_gallery.html) and scroll to the bottom of the page to view pictures of Drayton Hall after the Civil War. If you were a Drayton, how might you feel to see your home in such condition? What would your plan be to repair your home? Remember, you have no slaves and your family lost its fortune during the war.