

**Author:** Rebecca Byrd, New Center Elementary,  
Sevier County Schools

**Grade:** 8

**Subjects:** American History, Language Arts

**Time Required:** Three 50-minute class periods

### OVERVIEW

Historians are constantly making judgments, not only about the people and events they research, but also about the sources they use. This lesson challenges students to critically examine three sources on Civil War field hospitals to determine their usefulness for historians.

### GOAL

Students will critically examine three sources on Civil War hospitals and medical care and develop criteria for examining additional sources.

### OBJECTIVES

The learner will:

- Identify bias or point of view in text and non-text sources.
- Evaluate the usefulness of a source for different types of projects.
- Work cooperatively to construct a checklist for evaluating additional sources.

### INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION

What kind of medical care did soldiers receive during the Civil War? How do I interpret primary sources about Civil War medical care?



[\[Savage Station, Va. Field hospital after the battle of June 27\]](#) [1862 June 30]

### CURRICULUM STANDARDS *(continued on p. 2)*

#### 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts

- SPI 0801.4.2 Identify levels of reliability among resources (e.g., eyewitness account, newspaper account, supermarket tabloid account, Internet source).
- SPI 0801.4.3 Determine the most appropriate research source for a given research topic.
- SPI 0801.4.4 Distinguish between primary sources (i.e., interviews, letters, diaries, newspapers, autobiographies, personal narratives) and secondary sources (i.e., reference books, periodicals, Internet, biographies, informational texts).
- SPI 0801.5.2 Evaluate text for fact or opinion.
- SPI 0801.7.3 Identify the purpose of a medium (i.e., to inform, to persuade, to entertain, to describe).
- 0801.7.4 Draw an inference from a non-print medium.

## MATERIALS USED

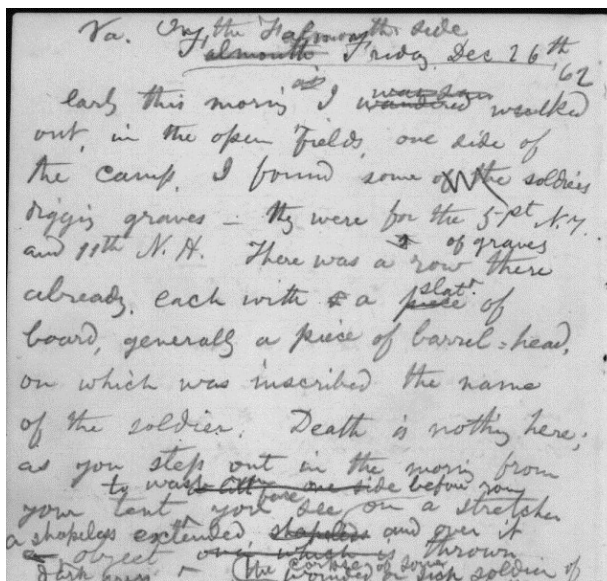
### Library of Congress Resources

- **Manuscript page** from Whitman notebook LC#94 page 122 <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/mss/mssmisc/whitman/094/094122.jpg> (see Other Materials below for transcription)
- **Letter (transcription)** “Letter from Dr. David Ramsey Crawford to Juliana Smith Reynolds, June 14, 1862” <http://www.loc.gov/item/mreynolds000059>
- **Photograph** “Savage Station, Va. Field hospital after the battle of June 27” <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cwpb.01063/>
- **Photograph** “Keedysville, Md., vicinity. Confederate wounded at Smith's Barn, with Dr. Anson Hurd, 14th Indiana Volunteers, in attendance” <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/cwp2003000135/PP/>
- **Background Information** About Whitman’s notebooks <http://www.loc.gov/collection/walt-whitman-papers/about-this-collection>
- **Background Information** Taking Photographs During the Civil War <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/cwp/civilwarphotos.html>
- **Background Information** Does the Camera Ever Lie? <http://www.loc.gov/collections/static/civil-war-glass-negatives/articles-and-essays/does-the-camera-ever-lie/> (This link is to the index, which includes links to the introduction, the Case of Confused Identity, and the Case of the Moved Body.) See also, Solving a Civil War Mystery. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/cwp/mystery.html>

## CURRICULUM STANDARDS *cont.*

### 8<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies

- 8.79 Cite textual evidence analyzing the life of the common soldier in the Civil War, including Sam Watkins and Sam Davis.



[Walt Whitman 1862 Notebook LC#94 p. 122](http://www.loc.gov/item/mreynolds000059)

### Other Materials

- **Poem** “A Sight in Camp in the Daybreak Gray and Dim” by Walt Whitman available at The Walt Whitman Archive <http://www.whitmanarchive.org/published/LG/1891/poems/165>
- **Transcription** of [Manuscript page from Whitman notebook LC#94 page 122](http://www.loc.gov/item/mreynolds000059)
- **Background Information** Civil War Medical Care, Battle Wounds, and Disease <http://www.civilwarhome.com/>
- [Student Response Chart](#)
- [Student Response Chart \(Sample\)](#)

## PROCEDURE

Day One	
Step 1	Prior to class, print at least two copies each of the poem, diary page, photographs, and letter transcription for each group. If you will be using the diary transcription, prepare at least two copies per group as well. Print one copy of the response chart for each group. Read the background information on Whitman's notebooks and Civil War photography. Review the sample student response chart.
Step 2	Review the terms primary source, secondary source, bias and point of view with the students. Explain that they will be examining several different types of sources to determine their usefulness for researching the Civil War. Share the background information on Whitman's notebooks, Civil War photography, and Civil War medical care with the students. Use the Library of Congress feature <a href="#">"Does the Camera Ever Lie?"</a> to explain how photographs can also show bias or point of view, and/or Solving a Civil War Photograph Mystery to show how even historic photographs can be manipulated.
Day Two	
Step 3	Project the blank response chart and explain to students what type of information they should be recording. Divide the students into groups and distribute the materials excluding the two sources listed in step 8. Circulate among the groups to help guide discussion.
Step 4	Have the students share and discuss their small group responses with the class.
Step 5	Ask students what conclusions they have drawn about medical care during the Civil War. Discuss their responses.
Step 6	Ask students "What questions did you have to ask of the sources to complete the chart?" Discuss their responses.
Day Three	
Step 7	Have students work in their small groups to develop a checklist of questions for analyzing sources.
Step 8	Give students two additional sources: <a href="#">"Letter from Dr. David Ramsey Crawford to Juliana Smith Reynolds, June 14, 1862"</a> and <a href="#">transcription</a> , and <a href="#">"Keedysville, Md., vicinity. Confederate wounded at Smith's Barn, with Dr. Anson Hurd, 14th Indiana Volunteers, in attendance"</a> photograph. Have students analyze the sources using their checklist as a guide. They should record their responses on the chart.
Step 9	Students should write a letter describing Civil War hospitals and medical care from the perspective of a wounded soldier, doctor or civilian nurse.

## **EVALUATION**

Use the following rubric to evaluate student work:

90-100 Writing sample has 12 to 15 sentences, uses descriptive language and details from class discussion and correct grammar. \*

80-89 Writing sample has 9 to 12 sentences, uses some descriptive language and some details from class discussion and mostly correct grammar.

70-79 Writing sample has 7 to 9 sentences, uses little descriptive language or few details from class discussion and incorrect grammar.

69 and below Writing sample has 6 sentences or less, uses little descriptive language or few details from class discussion and mostly incorrect grammar.

\*Civil war- era letters and diary entries often exhibit very inventive spelling and grammar. You may want to allow students to create an authentic feel to their writing and therefore not grade based on grammar.

## **EXTENSIONS**

### **Social Studies**

Student should research the role of [Clara Barton](#) or the United States Sanitary Commission played in providing medical care during the Civil War. Students should write a short play based on their research.

### **Language Arts**

Students should write a poem or short story from the perspective of the blanket in “A Sight in the Camp in the Daybreak Gray and Dim.”

Transcription of Whitman Diary LC#94 page 122

Va on the Falmouth side

Friday, Dec 26<sup>th</sup> '62

Early this morning I walked out in the open fields, one side of the camp, I found some soldiers digging graves [dash]. They were for the 51st N. Y. and the 11<sup>th</sup> N.H. There was a row of graves there already. Each with a slat of board, generally a piece of barrel head, on which was inscribed the name of the soldier. Death is nothing here; as you step out in the morning from your tent to wash your face you see on a stretcher a before you a shapeless object extended and over it thrown a dark grey blanket. The corpse of some wounded or sick soldier of the reg't who died in the hospital tent during the night- perhaps there is a row of three or four of these corpses lying covered over. No one makes any adv[ance]. There is a detail of men made to bury them; all useless ceremony is omitted The stern realities of the marches and many battles of a long campaign make the old etiquets a cumber and nuisance.

## Transcription of "Letter from Dr. David Ramsey Crawford to Juliana Smith Reynolds, June 14, 1862"

[?] hole Hospital June 14th 1862

Dear Aunt, I received your kind letter some days ago and was very glad to hear from you and I would like very much to hear from you now as I suppose you have heard of the recent Battle and casualties. It pains me to think of the distress this will cause the friends and relatives of those who have laid down their lives on the battle field to sustain the government on which it has been there lot to be cast. I sympathize from my very soul with those who have been made widows and fatherless and those parents who are berieved of their children. I suppose you have had a full account of the battle for those who have written to you and from the papers and I need not give you a rehearsal of it. I suppose you have heard that H.P. Sprague, Rutter, Peter Sharp and Howlett were killed and Stan Burrows, Ben Johnson, Dickey, Wensel were wounded all slightly but Burrows and that Sergt Killgore, [Kilgore] Tilton, Jon Osborn and [??] are among the missing. I searched the field over and over again to find Tilton and I was with the first that went on the field and the last time I heard from Tilton he was lying behind a log. Joe Dickey was wounded and was making his way of[f] the field and saw him and told him had better retreat as the rebels were surrounding us. He told him he could not move as the balls were coming from front and both side on him then. This is the last was heard of him and all the Regt knows him and I had every one look to find him. There was four men of the Regt taken prisoner. I know this will be a hard shock on you and Uncle Thomas and his brothers and sisters and you have my heart felt sympathy and I think he will turn up all right yet. The Rebels had possession of more than the half of the Battle field to Monday morning and they were very kind to our wounded. They carried them into shade or placed Branches to keep the sun of[f] them and gave them lemonade to drink and told them they knew we treated their wounded well at Williamsburgh [Williamsburg]. This I know to be for J. Smith and I were first in the City (as they call it).

Adjut O. Gray is sick and is quartered in a [?] house a mile or so down the R.R. I was in camp this evening and took supper with Lieut Conser. He is unwell he has the ague. They say Gray will be appointed Capt of Company B. That sleek tongued K.L. Bland has been down to see us and [gone home?] to day. There is no Capt in Co H yet. W.H. McLoughlin who came with Conser from Pittsburg [Pittsburgh] and was Segt Major is now Sec Lieut. I see our [wounded?] 105th [??] from Boston to Norfolk. We have been Reenforced to a considerable extent here and I tell you I needed it as our Brigade and in fact the division was [word missing] when we count out the sick and wounded. We have a new Regt in the Brigade the 20 Indiana and it [?] [word missing] all the old Regt and is placed on the Right wing and 63 has the left and we have the back end of the right. Gen Jamison [Jameson] is sick and gone a way and the Col of the 20 Ind is acting Brig Gen.

About half of the Surgeon of the Brigade are sick some of them a way. Dr. Smith is at a hospital on the Chickahominy, Dr. Heichhold is in camp and [?] Surgeons call for 3 Regt and I have the exclusive charge of the sick of this Regt here which numbers 50 men. Since three of them has the Tyfoid and 15 Billious

and 10 or 15 ague and the rest Dysentary and [Diarrhea?]. And all our Regular Nurses are back at hospital. Between this and Fort Monroe and I have 4 men out of the Brass Band and their is only two of them has done any thing yet. But this is the last day I am going [he was?] in this way. This Band by the way has been the greatest nusance belonging to the 105th Regt.

So [?] you could that when I read the news paper as we get it two days behind time and pay the "boy" 10 cts for it. I have not much time to write and when I do write I am interrupted so much I can not write any thing. I got a letter from [?] the same day yours came. She stated she had heard out at Salem that we had had a fight and that the 105th was annihilated. Their was in reality not more than 400 rank and file in the fight as Co G was guarding the Bridge and Co C and I were out making Corduroy Road and did not get to the battle ground til just dark and then only fired a few rounds. Peter Cox got suddenly sick when he saw he was going to have a fight and O. Smith the boys says [stopped?] of[f] a safe distance and that he had some Cartridges the next morning. Cox went clear back to our old camp that night and told he had been in the fight. But I saw him leave his Bunk and did not see him come in a gain and the Boys knew he was lying because his gun was not dirty and when he was questioned about the place they fought he could not tell them. We had 43 killed 42 on the field and there was 1 died [?] one of them before we got him off the field. 120 wounded and 8 missing making a total of 171 out of about 400. We are now in a very unhealthy place nearly as bad as Yorktown. The water is very bad and if it was not that it rains every other day or so it would be very scarce. Well aunt I will close this as it is late and I am sleepy. Do not forget the poor soldier in your pettitions at a time of grace from your affectionate nephew.

D.R.C.

## Examining Sources Response Chart

Source	Bias/Point of View	Benefits of using source	Drawbacks of using source



## Examining Sources Response Chart (Sample)

Source	Bias/Point of View	Benefits of using source	Drawbacks of using source
Whitman Diary page	Whitman was a Union supporter and only visited Union camps. Whitman was not a soldier himself and did not receive treatment at a Civil War hospital. Whitman was also more educated and worldly than most soldiers.	Whitman was a first-hand observer; diary was presumably written on a daily basis.	Whitman was not a soldier; Whitman kept the diary for the purpose of recording ideas and observations for poetry; edited by the author
Whitman poem	Poem, while based on first-hand observation, was written later using the notes. The poem was not intended to convey facts, but rather emotions. Also see above	Gives insight into the emotional costs of war	Written after the events; very personal perspective
Photograph Savage Station	Photographers were limited by the equipment available to them. They could not take action shots. Most considered the commercial appeal of the photos. Photos could be staged or taken from multiple angles to achieve a desired effect. Most photographers traveled with the Union.	Allows the researcher to visualize aspects described in print sources; researcher may observe details not mentioned in print sources.	Photos do not convey action; many were staged.