

Civil War

Analyzing Visual Primary Sources

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Printed in the United States of America

ISBN 1-56004-258-3

Product Code: ZP293

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Introduction

Primary sources are the building blocks of history. Using these sources to introduce students to historical periods offers students the opportunity to become historians themselves—to analyze the evidence, form hypotheses, and learn how to support arguments based on evidence. They learn what it means to interpret the past in ways that provide meaning for the present. Textual primary sources can often be difficult for students to engage with because they are often couched in unfamiliar language from a different historical era. Visual primary sources can prove more appealing and accessible to students, and they also involve different types of “reading” skills.

How to Use This Product

This PowerPoint® presentation is designed to walk students through the process of primary source interpretation. Slides help to focus students’ attention and train them how to “read” visual primary sources. Targeted questions and enlarged insets from images help to train students to see deeper into the historical record, to uncover evidence that, though plainly before their eyes, is not always obvious at first glance.

The posters provide visual reinforcement for the images analyzed in the presentation. Use them before or after the PowerPoint® analysis for either pre- or post-reading activities. In addition, we have provided extra images on each disc so that once the students are trained in the skills of analyzing visual primary sources they can further hone their skills. You can print them out and distribute as handouts for in-class or independent study, or you can import the images into PowerPoint® for students to analyze individually or with the class as a whole.

Let Us Know What You Think

At Social Studies School Service, we always strive to provide the best supplemental curriculum materials at a superior value. If you have feedback that could help us improve this product, requests for other titles in this series, or stories of how it has helped your students, please let us know. You can e-mail us at access@socialstudies.com.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Dr. Aaron Willis
Chief Education Officer
Social Studies School Service

Analyzing Visual Primary Sources



The Civil War

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Many historians consider the Civil War as *the* seminal event in American history. While the issue of slavery strained relations between the North and South to the breaking point, the issues of nationalism and states' rights also contributed to the war. Compromises designed to preserve the Union were unable to stop the inevitable conflict.

The election of Abraham Lincoln as president in 1860 was the last straw for the South. Within weeks of Lincoln's election, several Southern states seceded from the Union, and within a few weeks of Lincoln's inaugural, the first shots of the war rang out at Fort Sumter, beginning four years of bloody conflict.

While the Union held most of the advantages in the war, the Confederacy's superior military leadership (from generals such as Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson and Robert E. Lee) led Southern troops to early victories. Failed attempts to invade the North at Antietam and Gettysburg, however, severely hurt the Confederates. The war ended with Lee surrendering to General U.S. Grant at Appomattox Court House, Virginia. Combined deaths in the war were approximately 650,000.

While the war proved to be the bloodiest in American history, it did serve to once and for all eliminate the possibility of the dissolution of the Union. While issues of race still served to divide North and South, the Union stayed intact and there was never another serious secessionist movement in the United States.

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- Gettysburg



- Emancipation Proclamation



- Election of 1864

Recruitment of Soldiers

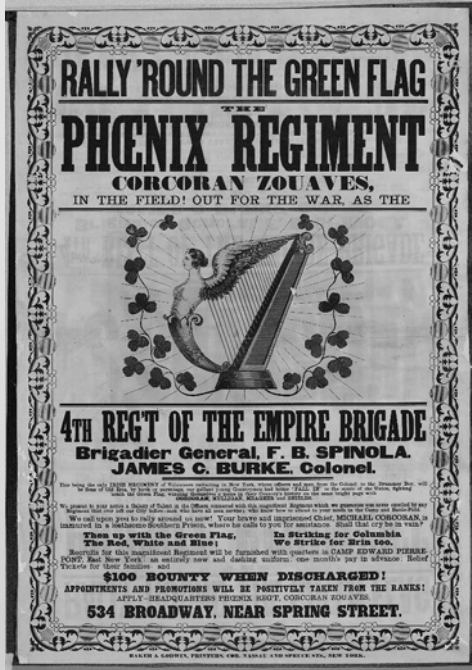
- Incentives and bounties offered
- Appeals to patriotism
- Focus on ethnic or national heritage
- Both sides encouraged recruitment
- Both sides used a military draft

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During the Civil War, as in other wars, various recruitment tactics were used to encourage enlistment. In order to entice prospective soldiers to join the Union Army, many states offered cash payments called “bounties.” In many instances, however, prospective recruits took the bounty then deserted; they would often then rejoin under an assumed name and collect another bounty.

Recruitment posters sought to appeal to a sense of patriotism in men as well as their ethnic or racial backgrounds.



Recruitment of Soldiers

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Give students approximately one minute to view the poster, then proceed to the following slides.

Analyzing Visual Primary Sources



What did the phrase “Rally ‘Round The Green Flag” most likely mean?

RALLY 'ROUND THE GREEN FLAG

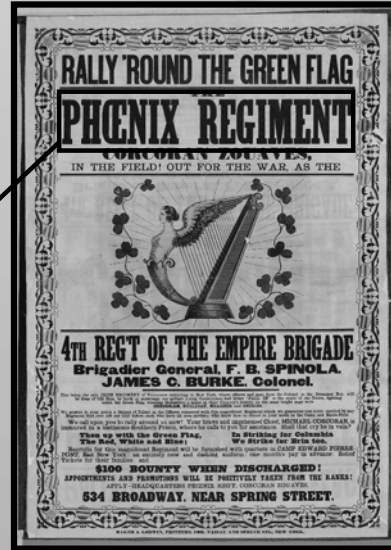
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This was a plea for Irish Americans to join a New York regiment. Since green is the traditional color of Ireland (popularly known as the “Emerald Isle”), the phrase probably was used to immediately draw Irish Americans’ eyes to the purpose of the poster.

Why might this regiment have been nicknamed the “Phoenix Regiment”?

PHOENIX REGIMENT



In Egyptian mythology, the phoenix was a bird consumed by fire, only to rise again from its ashes. Traditionally the Irish found themselves discriminated against by the British, so the symbolism of the word “phoenix” in this case might have meant that Irish Americans who joined this regiment could rise above past discrimination.