

The Civil War

Fun Projects for U.S. History

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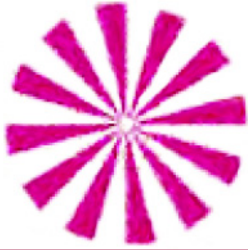
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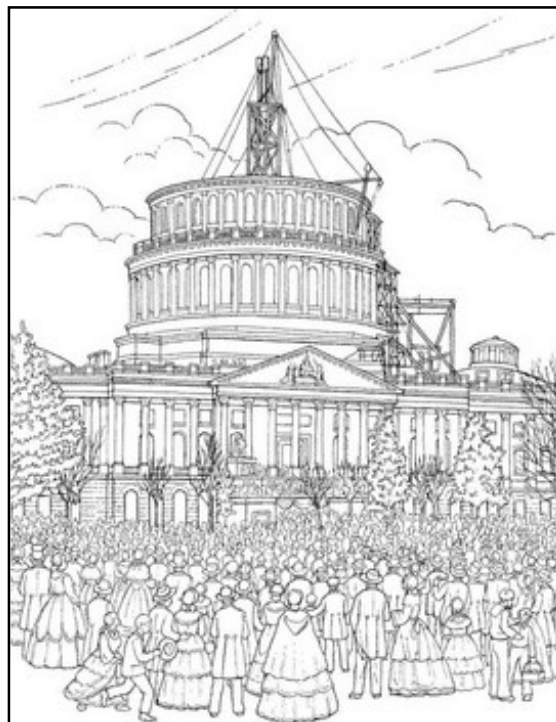


Welcome to an extensive collection of hands-on activities that focus on the American Civil War. This book also comes with a CD-ROM featuring full-color presentations of each activity.

THE CIVIL WAR

TABLE OF CONTENTS

General Overview	1
Patriotic Stationery	2–18
Faux-Leather Sewing Kit	19–26
Southern Cockades	27–31
Slave Badges	32–38
Southern Plantation Diorama	39–51
Rifle Bullets and Cartridge Wrapping	52–62
Union and Confederate Ironclads	63–71
Saltpeter Mine	72–77
Quilt Blocks	78–86
Extension Activities for Graphics	87–90



THE CIVIL WAR

GENERAL OVERVIEW

This collection of enrichment activities was designed to complement existing curricula and expand one's understanding of what it was like to live during the past. Studies have confirmed that using one's hands helps students retain information. If you are looking for creative and simple—yet stimulating and exciting—projects to spark learning, take the next step toward a highly engaging encounter.

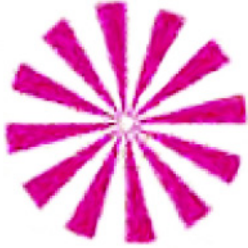
Regardless of a student's age, learning by doing will help maintain their interest, improve retention of information, and foster a desire to learn now and in the future.

As an educator with 18-plus years of teaching and product development experience, it is my personal goal to encourage young people to be creative. Each of the activities included in this collection is based on actual artifacts and is representative of the era. A conscious effort was made to develop projects constructed from readily available materials that result in a stunning end product.

It is my heartfelt desire that both teacher and student will find the activities in this book a wonderful journey of creativity.

Jean Henrich

THE CIVIL WAR



Patriotic Stationery



THE CIVIL WAR

Make Patriotic Stationery

Both Union and Confederate soldiers wrote and received letters. Correspondence written on decorated stationery featuring patriotic slogans and designs was common. The paper and the envelopes featured such designs as eagles, flags, cannons, stars, and women. Prior to the Civil War, most letters were simply folded, addressed, and tied with twine. Envelopes were still rather new at the time, having first been introduced sometime around 1840. Most were small, averaging 5½" x 3", and were sold either individually or with matching printed stationery.

For soldiers, actual stationery was a rare item. Most of the time, they would use just about any type of paper they could to write a letter, including accounting paper and sheets torn from lined record books or catalogs. Soldiers would frequently read their letters from home over and over. Those waiting at home would request in heartfelt words, "For Godsake Rite!"

In this activity, you will learn how to "antique" paper and envelopes, add your own Civil War-themed designs, and compose a letter either written by a soldier back home to his family or by a family member to a soldier.



MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Transparency film
- Laser printer
- Scissors
- **Acetone (ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED)**
- **Antiquing supplies: instant coffee, tea bags, candle (ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED)**
- Popsicle sticks
- Paintbrush
- Plaid FolkArt® acrylic paint (black and burnt umber)
- Glue stick
- Legal-size envelope
- Water
- Pen (optional)
- Paper
- Small envelope
- Container (for holding water and legal-size envelope)
- Cotton balls
- Cooking oil
- Meat tray

THE CIVIL WAR

1. CREATE YOUR CHARACTER

Fill out the questionnaire on the next two pages as if you were a Union soldier. You will use your answers to help you compose a letter home.

Please go to one or more of the following Web sites and read a few actual letters written by Civil War soldiers to help you fill in the questionnaire. These will give you great insight into the actual events and emotions experienced by real Civil War soldiers.

<http://www.cwc.lsu.edu/cwc/links/links6.htm#Letters>

<http://spec.lib.vt.edu/civwar>

What is your full name?

How old are you?

What regiment are you serving with?

Where are you stationed?

THE CIVIL WAR

1. CREATE YOUR CHARACTER (continued)

What is your rank?

How long have you been serving?

What did you do prior to joining the Union Army?

What is your date of birth?

Where were you born?

What is your marital status?

Do you have any children? What are their names and ages?

THE CIVIL WAR

1. CREATE YOUR CHARACTER (continued)

Do you own a horse? What is its name?

What is your favorite activity to do in camp?

What do you think about President Lincoln?

What was it like to fight in a battle?

How did the battle affect you?

What are your feelings towards the Confederates?

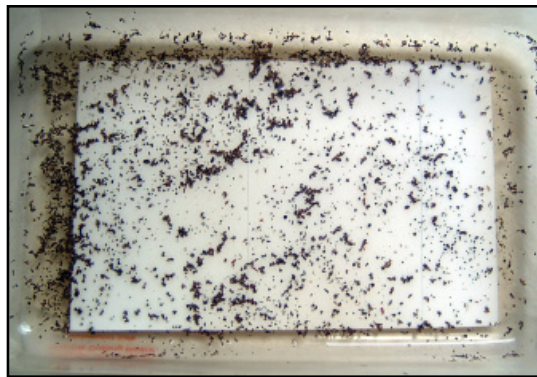
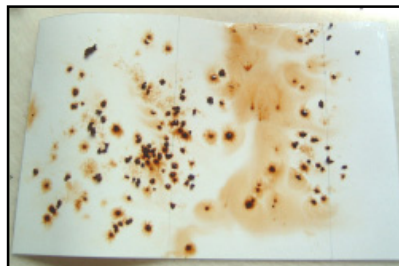
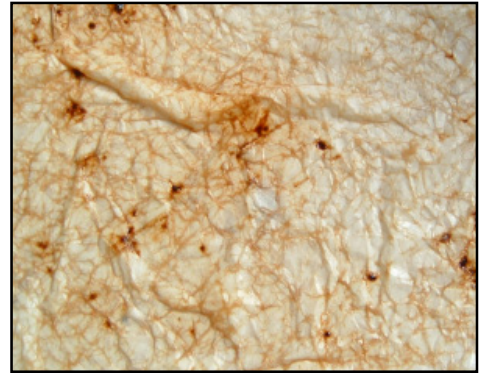
What do you plan to do after the war?

THE CIVIL WAR

2. ANTIQUE THE STATIONERY AND ENVELOPES

There are a couple of effective techniques for antiquing the stationery and envelope. You can use one or more of the following ideas:

- Dampen the stationery and a legal-size envelope with water and sprinkle instant coffee over the surface.



- Place the stationery and envelope into a container filled with water and sprinkle them with tea leaves. Let the paper remain in the water until it achieves an aged appearance.

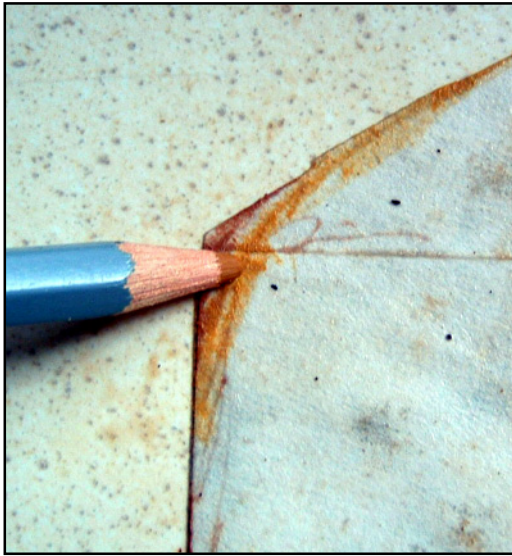
- Tear the edges of the paper and rub some burnt umber and black acrylic paint along the torn edge.



THE CIVIL WAR

2. ANTIQUE THE STATIONERY AND ENVELOPES (continued)

• **WITH ADULT SUPERVISION**, carefully burn portions of the paper. Do not overdo this step.



• Use watercolor pencils to antique the edges.



• Rub the surface of the stationery and envelope with a cotton ball coated with cooking oil. Use this technique after you have applied all previous techniques (including adding graphics), since the oil could cause the ink to smear.

To view a wonderful collection of Civil War envelopes, visit the following Web sites:

- <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlcoop/nhihtml/cwnyhsarcpp.html>
- <http://history.alliancelibrarysystem.com/illinoisalive/files/mc/html1/mc000002.cfm>

