**Interpreting Statistics about the Civil War**

***Introduction***

Often, students in Social Studies classes in middle and secondary schools learn about big developments in the history of the nation without being able to make any connections between those developments and their local communities. The teaching activities listed in this lesson plan are meant as an introduction to a unit on the Civil War. They provide students with opportunities to interpret data, draw comparisons, and make connections between the local and the national in the History classroom. In addition, the classroom teacher can also use the material to guide student inquiry into the contributions of the state and the local community to the Civil War.

This series of lessons can also be used in an English class focused on interpreting data and synthesizing material for a research topic.

***Grades:*** 9-12

***Connection to NCSS Standards***

NCSS 2: Time, Continuity, and Change

NCSS 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

NCSS 8: Production, Distribution, and Consumption

***Connections to Pennsylvania Standards***

History:

PA 8.1A-C: Historical Analysis and Skills Development

PA 8.2: Pennsylvania History (Identifying and explaining contributions of Pennsylvanians; Impact of Continuity and Change, Conflict and Cooperation)

PA 8:3: U.S. History (Identifying and explaining contributions of individuals and groups; Impact of Continuity and Change, Conflict and Cooperation)

Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening:

**1.2.10.C:** Distinguish between essential and nonessential information across a variety of texts and sources from all academic content areas, identifying bias or propaganda where present.

**1.2.11.E:** Examine and respond to essential content of text and documents in all academic areas.

1.6.12.A: Listen critically and respond to others in small and large group situations.

1.4.10.C: Write persuasive pieces.

1.4.11.B: Write complex informational pieces (e.g. research papers, literary analytical essays, evaluations)

***Learning Objectives:***

Students will be able to:

1. Analyze historical data and draw conclusions about the period.
2. Compare and contrast the relative strengths of the Union and the Confederacy.
3. Compare and contrast the impact of the Civil War (in terms of casualties) for Indiana, Pennsylvania, the Union and the Confederacy.
4. Analyze the impact of the civil war on the price of goods in Indiana County.
5. Using Indiana county as an example, deduce the impact of the Civil War on the home-front in the north.
6. Synthesize material drawn from different sources.

***Duration of Lesson***

2 – 3 class periods. Classroom teachers can, of course, select the activities they want to implement depending on the age and developmental needs of their students as well as the amount of time they have for these learning activities. If they are used in a History class, they can be part of an introductory overview to the Civil War.

***Teacher Preparation and Resources***

For more information about the Pennsylvania and the Civil War, see [www.pacivilwar150.com](http://www.pacivilwar150.com).

Statistics about Indiana county are drawn from W. Wayne Smith, *The Price of Patriotism: Impact of War: Indiana County, Pennsylvania and the Civil War* Shippensburg, PA: Burd Street Press, 1998, pp. 2, 84, 192.

Handouts 1-6.

***Teaching Activities, Procedures and Assessments***

Introduction

The purpose here is to guide students to draw conclusions about aspects of the Civil War by using the historical data provided.

Day One

Group Work (30 minutes)

1. Organize the class into groups of three.
2. Print Handout 1 and distribute it to the class. Ideally, makes sufficient copies so that each student has a copy.
3. Each group will then assume the role of a foreign journalist. The group’s task is to produce a short feature story about the relative strengths of the North and South at the beginning of the Civil War. Directions for the writing activity are in Handout 2.

Class Discussion (10 minutes)

Teacher should facilitate a class discussion based on the groups’ conclusions.

The point of this is to contrast resources of the Union and the Confederacy at the outset and speculate on what this meant for each side in the Civil War.

Collect Handout 1 from the class.

Day Two

Group Work (15 minutes)

1. Students will gather in the same groups.
2. Print Handouts 3 - 5. Distribute Handouts 1, 3, 4, and 5 to the students. Make sufficient copies so that each student has one.
3. In their groups, students should discuss how the war had an impact on Indiana county.

Class Discussion (20 minutes)

Teacher will facilitate a class discussion on the impact of the war on Pennsylvania and on Indiana county. Attention should be paid to life on the home-front. Students should be invited to speculate on the impact on those left behind.

Day Three (Optional)

Individual Writing Assignment

1. Distribute Handout 6.
2. Students should work individually on their writing assignment.