

The History Blueprint: The Civil War

A publication of the California History-Social Science Project

University of California, Davis

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Cover: Brothers Private Henry Luther and First Sergeant Herbert E. Larrabee of Company B, 17th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, 1861-65. Source: The Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2010650293/>

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The California History-Social Science Project
University of California
1254 Social Sciences and Humanities Building
One Shields Avenue
Davis, California 95616
530.752.0572
chssp@ucdavis.edu

About the History Blueprint



Creating a Blueprint for History Education: Advancing Instruction, Assessment, Student Learning, and Engagement is a state-of-the-art program to address deficiencies in K-12 history education by providing a model for national innovation. Developed by the California History-Social Science Project (CHSSP), this initiative is also supported by the Walter and Elise Haas Fund and History Channel.

The *Blueprint* curriculum uses research-based strategies to develop critical thinking, reading, and writing to engage students, improve their learning, and address the achievement gap. *Blueprint* includes tools for teachers and parents to measure their students' progress and adapt instruction accordingly. These tools also provide discipline-specific and Standards-aligned support for English learners and native speakers with low literacy. In

sum, the *History Blueprint* provides an effective method to improve student understanding of history, reading comprehension, and writing ability.

Curriculum. *Blueprint* curriculum provides comprehensive units of instruction, including background materials, primary sources, detailed lesson plans, and visual resources. All curriculum is aligned with *both* the California Content Standards for History-Social Science and the Literacy in History/Social Studies section of the Common Core State Standards for English / Language Arts. Each unit combines:

- historical investigation - a discipline-specific form of inquiry-based learning
- relevant and carefully selected primary sources
- activities to improve students' reading comprehension and writing ability
- methods to teach students how to discern and evaluate arguments based upon evidence.

Assessments. *Blueprint* units feature assessments to measure student content knowledge, Common Core skills, and critical thinking. In our second development phase, *Blueprint* assessments will be linked to a computerized data system that connects student responses to a diagnostic matrix to provide teachers and parents with suggestions to address specific student needs. The system will also provide rubrics for assessing student work, examples of student products (with commentary from experienced grade-level teachers), and instructions to guide interpretation and formulate next steps.

These formative and summative assessments evaluate students' abilities to:

- read documents critically
- judge claims logically
- draw connections
- compose reasoned arguments
- master content knowledge.

Teacher Professional Development. Utilizing its state-wide network of experienced teacher leaders and university scholars, the CHSSP will provide in-depth and ongoing professional development programming for teachers implementing *Blueprint* curriculum in their classrooms. Through summer programs, after school workshops, and ongoing online support, CHSSP leaders will provide:

- step-by-step instructions to use *Blueprint* resources
- programs to develop teacher content knowledge
- research-based methods to improve student thinking and literacy
- an effective approach to identify student needs quickly and select intervention strategies to meet those needs.

Support for Student Literacy. History is a text-based discipline and proficiency in content-specific academic literacy is crucial to student achievement, especially for English Learners. The CHSSP has an innovative research-based approach to literacy development which differs from both other existing history materials and generic academic literacy activities. Educational evaluation studies show that this literacy approach improves students' writing and achievement on standardized tests. The *Blueprint* curriculum units, assessment tools, and professional development programs incorporate literacy development into each lesson with specific strategies to:

- improve student reading comprehension of abstract expository text
- teach students how to write clearly and coherently
- enable English Learners and those reading below grade level to access primary sources, textbooks, and assessments.

Blueprint Organization. Each *Blueprint* unit begins with a list of the major topics (the Lessons) and an overarching Historical Focus Question that guides the unit's organization. In addition, each unit includes a Standards-alignment matrix and assumptions about student literacy and historical content understanding, in order to pinpoint the content and skills teachers need to cover before beginning. Individual lessons within the unit are organized similarly, but also include modifications for student literacy, step-by-step procedures, student worksheets, assessments, and teacher keys. Each step covers not only the procedures, but also a short, clear list of the ideas all students should walk away with from the lesson. Additional tools to support implementation include disciplinary icons to signify historical inquiry, assessment, focus questions, and literacy support.

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Major Topics:

- ✓ The Road to War
- ✓ Secession
- ✓ Perspectives of Civil War Participants
- ✓ The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln
- ✓ Emancipation and Freedom
- ✓ Major Battles
- ✓ Effects of the War

Was the Civil War a War for Freedom?

The Civil War was a critical watershed in U.S. History, when the meaning of freedom for Americans and the meaning of union for the nation changed forever. This unit of study will focus on the events leading to the war, the perspectives of those who fought in or lived through the war, and the effects of the war on individual citizens and the nation.

More specifically, this unit will address the causes of the Civil War, the perspectives of Northerners, Southerners, and abolitionists, and the critical battles of the war. This unit also provides detailed instructions to support student analysis of a number of relevant primary sources, including five of Abraham Lincoln's speeches, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the South Carolina Ordinance of Secession. The unit concludes as it begins with a focus on an engaging and historically significant question: *Was the Civil War a War for Freedom?*

In addition to teaching students about the Civil War, this unit teaches students how to read, write, and think historically, analyze historical evidence from primary and secondary sources, and make interpretations. Students will practice Common Core reading and writing skills, especially identifying the perspective or point of view of a source, integrating information from visual and written sources, identifying evidence from sources, and using that evidence to support an interpretation.

Assumptions

This unit is designed for middle school students at all ability levels. Each activity includes instructions for teachers on how to develop students' historical thinking skills, expository reading skills, and writing skills, as well as their understanding of the Civil War. However, students will benefit the most from this unit if they have met the following conditions. (Please note: In many states, including California, the Civil War is included as part of the 8th grade U.S. History curriculum).

Student Historical Knowledge

Prior to beginning this unit, students should have a basic understanding of the regional differences in geography, climate, and economy among the North, South and Western United States, from the colonial period until 1850. In addition, students should be familiar with the controversies surrounding the extension of slavery to the new western states and the compromises reached to avoid war prior to 1861. They should have a basic understanding of both the political philosophy and specific provisions of the Declaration of Independence.

Student Disciplinary Skills

This unit of study assumes that students can differentiate between a primary and secondary source and have had experience analyzing primary sources in the past. In addition, students should have some experience analyzing maps, graphs, and charts. They have some practice in organizing events chronologically, and some idea of the differences between historical evidence and interpretation or inference.



Soldiers' Cemetery, Alexandria, Va., Russell J. Andrew, Photographer. 1861-65. The Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2005689617/>

Student Literacy

To benefit from this unit, students do not have to read at grade level, nor do they have to have an advanced vocabulary. Students should know how to annotate text by circling key phrases and terms. They should also be able to synthesize basic information (such as who, what, when, where, etc.) from their text. They should have some practice in writing logical thesis statements.

Standards

California History-Social Science Content Standards 8.9: Students analyze the early and steady attempts to abolish slavery and to realize the ideals of the Declaration of Independence; **and 8.10:** Students analyze the multiple causes, key events, and complex consequences of the Civil War.



*Frederick Douglass, 1865-1880.
Source: Library of Congress
(<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/brh2003002435/PP/>)*

8.10.1. Compare the conflicting interpretations of state and federal authority as emphasized in the speeches and writings of statesmen such as Daniel Webster and John C. Calhoun.

8.10.2. Trace the boundaries constituting the North and the South, the geographical differences between the two regions, and the differences between agrarians and industrialists.

8.10.3. Identify the constitutional issues posed by the doctrine of nullification and secession and the earliest origins of that doctrine.

8.10.4. Discuss Abraham Lincoln's presidency and his significant writings and speeches and their relationship to the Declaration of Independence, such as his "House Divided" speech (1858), Gettysburg Address (1863), Emancipation Proclamation (1863), and inaugural addresses (1861 and 1865).

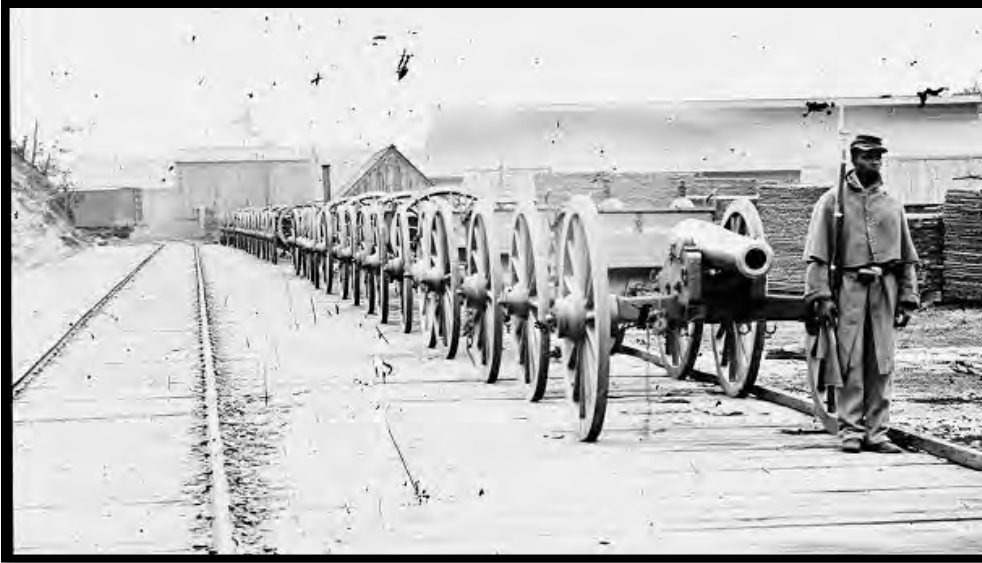
8.10.5. Study the views and lives of leaders (e.g., Ulysses S. Grant, Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee) and soldiers on both sides of the war, including those of black soldiers and regiments.

8.10.6. Describe critical developments and events in the war, including the major battles, geographical advantages and obstacles, technological advances, and General Lee's surrender at Appomattox.

8.10.7. Explain how the war affected combatants, civilians, the physical environment, and future warfare.

Standards

Common Core Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies and/or Writing Standards (Grades 6-8 Students) taught in this unit:



City Point, Virginia. Negro soldier guarding 12-pdr. Napoleon. (Model 1857?). Source: Library of Congress (<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/cwp2003004911/PP/>)

RH 1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

RH 2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

RH 4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

RH 5. Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

RH 6. Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts.)

RH 7. Integrate visual information (e.g. in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

RH 9. Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

WHST 1. Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.

WHST 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Standards Alignment by Lesson

California History-Social Science Content Standard	Lesson 1: Road to War	Lesson 2: Secession	Lesson 3: Strategies & Battles	Lesson 4: Perspective	Lesson 5: Lincoln's Speeches	Lesson 6: Emancipation	Lesson 7: Effects of Civil War	Lesson 8: Final Assessment
8.9: Students analyze the early and steady attempts to abolish slavery and to realize the ideals of the Declaration of Independence.	X			X		X		
8.10: Students analyze the multiple causes, key events, and complex consequences of the Civil War.								X
8.10.1: Compare the conflicting interpretations of state and federal authority as emphasized in the speeches and writings of statesmen such as Daniel Webster and John C. Calhoun.	X	X						
8.10.2: Trace the boundaries constituting the North and South, the geographical differences between the two regions, and the differences between agrarians and industrialists.	X							
8.10.3: Identify the constitutional issues posed by the doctrine of nullification and secession and the earliest origins of that doctrine.	X	X						
8.10.4: Discuss Abraham Lincoln's presidency and his significant writings and speeches and their relationship to the Declaration of Independence, such as his "House Divided" speech (1858), Gettysburg Address (1863), Emancipation Proclamation (1863), and inaugural addresses (1861 and 1865).					X	X		
8.10.5: Study the views and lives of leaders (e.g. Ulysses S. Grant, Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee) and soldiers on both sides of the war, including those of black soldiers and regiments.			X	X		X	X	

Standards Alignment by Lesson

California History-Social Science Content Standard	Lesson 1: Road to War	Lesson 2: Secession	Lesson 3: Strategies & Battles	Lesson 4: Perspective	Lesson 5: Lincoln's Speeches	Lesson 6: Emancipation	Lesson 7: Effects of Civil War	Lesson 8: Final Assessment
8.10.6: Describe the critical developments and events in the war, including the major battles, geographical advantages and obstacles, technological advances, and General Lee's surrender at Appomattox.			X					
8.10.7: Explain how the war affected combatants, civilians, the physical environment, and future warfare.							X	
Common Core Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6-8 Students)								
RH1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.		X		X	X	X		X
RH2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
RH4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.	X	X	X	X	X			
RH5: Describe how a text presents information (e.g. sequentially, comparatively, causally)						X		

Standards Alignment by Lesson

Common Core Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6-8 Students)	Lesson 1: Road to War	Lesson 2: Secession	Lesson 3: Strategies & Battles	Lesson 4: Perspective	Lesson 5: Lincoln's Speeches	Lesson 6: Emancipation	Lesson 7: Effects of Civil War	Lesson 8: Final Assessment
RH6: Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g. loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).				X	X	X	X	X
RH7: Integrate visual information (e.g. in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.	X		X	X		X	X	
RH9: Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.				X		X		
Common Core Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects (Grades 6-8)								
WHST1: Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.		X			X			X
WHST1a: Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.		X	X		X			X
WHST1b: Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.		X			X			X
WHST1c: Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.								X
WHST1d: Establish and maintain a formal style.								X

Standards Alignment by Lesson

Common Core Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects (Grades 6-8)	Lesson 1: Road to War	Lesson 2: Secession	Lesson 3: Strategies & Battles	Lesson 4: Perspective	Lesson 5: Lincoln's Speeches	Lesson 6: Emancipation	Lesson 7: Effects of Civil War	Lesson 8: Final Assessment
WHST1e: Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.								X
WHST4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.		X			X			X

Authors & Contributors



This unit was co-authored by a large and diverse group of history educators, working under the leadership of the **California History-Social Science Project (CHSSP)** statewide office at the **University of California, Davis**. This effort was led by CHSSP Coordinators **Shennan Hutton** and **Beth Slutsky**, and **Lisa Hutton**, Co-Director of the CSU Long Beach & Dominguez Hills site and Professor of Education at CSU Dominguez Hills.

Six 8th-grade public school teachers from across California served as the original writers for this unit:

Jasmin Brown (Lynwood Unified), **Angela La Torre** (Mount Diablo Unified), **Mark Ennen** (Long Beach Unified), **Amy Hale** and **Kristi Peckham** (Orange Unified), and **Jah Yee Woo** (Oakland Unified).

In addition to CHSSP leaders and our team of teacher-authors, scholars **Alice Fahs** (UC Irvine) and **Karen Halttunen** (USC) provided content support. The **History Blueprint Advisory Council** and K-12 school partners provided multiple edits to improve the draft.

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- **Karen Halttunen**, University of Southern California
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- **Ralph Lewin**, Cal Humanities
- **Betsy Marchand**, Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation
- **Mary Schleppegrell**, University of Michigan
- **Sam Wineburg**, Stanford University