Lesson Plan
Transportation: Options and problems during the Civil War

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Overview

In this lesson students will gather, analyze, interpret, and discuss information from maps of the Civil War. Using information from the maps, students will decide how physical land features created natural roadblocks that would have affected the movement of troops, equipment, and supplies. Students will decide best choices for movement between points considering “what if” situations should the preferred transportation method be prevented. Students will then transfer these new skills to create a map of a modern transportation choice (railway, truck, ship, etc.) between two given cities.

National Geography Standards

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information.

15. How physical systems affect human systems.

18. How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

Oregon Geography Content Standards

15. Collect and analyze data to make geographic inferences and predictions.
Oregon Social Studies Core Standards

5. Apply geographic skills, concepts, and technologies (e.g., maps, GIS, Google Earth) to gather, display, and analyze spatial information.

Connections to Common Core

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.5
Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7
Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Use map literacy to determine location and other geographic items on a map
- Accurately identify, interpret, and label geographic features (terrain, waterways, political boundaries) on a map
- Use a map to locate the distance between two points
- Work collaboratively in a small group to analyze and interpret map data
- Read and apply information on transportation during the Civil War
- Measure and record distances between two points
- Calculate total traveling time for each type of transportation
- Organize and report findings
- Present information in the form of an oral report

Grade Levels

6-7-8

Time

Five days, one hour each. Adjust length depending on class length and available time and interest.
Background

Transportation during the Civil War consisted mostly of infantry marches. Large equipment and supplies, such as cannons and cooking gear, were moved using horses and wagons. Some movement was also accomplished via steamship. The steam engine and the steamboat were used to move large numbers of troops and equipment long distances. Also, the Civil War was a period of innovation and new technology. For the first time transportation of supplies and troops over longer distances was accomplished via railway lines.

During the Civil War, movement options were hampered due to natural causes (seasonal climate), and man made causes (destruction from battles). Railway lines were torn up and destroyed in an effort to stop the enemy. Bridges, waterways, and roads were also contested, often blocked by force, and sometimes even destroyed in the wake of an armies advancement.

Materials

Maps: Library of Congress  http://www.loc.gov/item/2005625258/
      Civil War Trust  http://www.civilwar.org/maps/

         String / Measuring Tool

Vocabulary

Cartography
Aerial View
Map Legend

Procedures

Open the lesson by asking some questions to get students to think about what they know about the activities of transportation during the Civil War. Students should have some ideas from prior learning regarding battle logistics, location, and transportation during the Civil War era.

Provide some supplemental reading and materials to build background information as needed.

Discuss the vocabulary words and have students develop a classroom definition of each word. Record and post these definition up in the room to be displayed during the week of this lesson.
Part I
Students will read about the Battle of First Manassas (also known as First Bull Run). Possible website resources include:

- [http://www.nps.gov/mana/historyculture/first-manassas.htm](http://www.nps.gov/mana/historyculture/first-manassas.htm)
- [http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/bullrun.html](http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/bullrun.html)
- [http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/bullrun.htm](http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/bullrun.htm) (primary source)
- [http://siarchives.si.edu/education/education-resource-package#henry](http://siarchives.si.edu/education/education-resource-package#henry) (primary source)

Students can read through material, highlighting or make notes regarding important aspects impacted by transportation.
Students will share in small groups to compare and add to their own personal notes.
Students will share whole class.

Part II
Questions to focus learning. Students can research and record answers in a graphic organizer or notebook.

- How did troops arrive at the Manassas/Bull Run Battlefield?
- How were supplies moved to the area by both armies?
- What transportation challenges occurred?
- How long did it take to transport both troops and supplies to the area by each means?
- During the battle did the responses by either army uniquely rely on transportation?

Part III
Students will further analyze the outcome of battles and campaigns studied to determine the impact to transportation timelines and availability? For example, when Union troops destroyed rail lines used by the Confederates, how did this impact the South in moving troops and supplies? Were other transportation options were used and how did these impact the timing of movement? How did they compensate for the loss of one method of transportation?

- Analyze different transportation options to determine length of transportation for each option (railroad, road (wagon), ship).
- Analyze how loss of one option would change the length of time it took to move troop and supplies where needed and how this impacted the outcome of each battle.

Assessment
Students will be assessed based on their completion of parts 1, 2, and 3.

**Part I** - Notes (research highlighting or note taking)
- Measurements of distances (origin to battlefield)
  - List by each type of transportation when used
    - (Railroad, road (wagon), ship)
  - Share in small group participation, compare notes
  - Whole Class Participation - small groups share whole class

**Part II** - Mural or Mobile -
Use a mural or mobile format to organize, report, and present findings on:

- Modes and means of transportation of troops
  Name at least three
- How supplies were moved
  Name at least three
- Transportation timelines
  For each mode, how long did it take to transport
  How many troops or supplies could be transported
  Impact on battle decisions/outcomes

Part III - Powerpoint presentation
Impact of Battles/Campaigns/War Strategy
Present findings on:
- What transportation options were impacted during the war?
- How did each army seek to reduce / eliminate each other’s means of transportation?
- How did each army adjust to a loss of one option or the other?
Scoring Rubric

A scoring rubric will help guide student work and assist in assessment of completed projects and presentations. Review the rubric with the student ahead of time so they know what to expect. The following rubric is a suggested, simplified version which can be adapted as needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Excellent Work!!</strong></th>
<th><strong>Good Work!</strong></th>
<th><strong>Needs Improvement</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I actively identified and noted several key transportation issues related to at least one assigned Civil War Battle</td>
<td>I identified some transportation issues related to a Civil War Battle or during the Civil War as a whole</td>
<td>I was unable to identify transportation issues related to the Civil War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I accurately identified and located on a map locations and features (roads, railroads, waterways) key to an assigned Civil War Battle</td>
<td>I identified and located on a map some locations and features (roads, railroads, waterways) key to the Civil War</td>
<td>I was unable to identify and locate on a map some locations and features (roads, railroads, waterways) key to the Civil War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I actively measured distances between key locations to an assigned Civil War Battle, recorded measurement, and organized data to discuss and present to group/class</td>
<td>I measured some distances between key locations to an assigned Civil War Battle, recorded measurement, and organized data to discuss and present to group/class</td>
<td>I was unable to measured distances between key locations to an assigned Civil War Battle, record measurement, or organize data to discuss and present to group/class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I actively participated in my individual, group, or class discussion and research. I contributed many ideas and examples</td>
<td>I participated in my individual, group, or class discussion and research</td>
<td>I did not participate in my individual, group, or class discussion and research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I actively contributed to help create a mural, mobile, powerpoint, or other approved create presentation in a small group or whole class format</td>
<td>I contributed to help create a mural, mobile, powerpoint, or other approved create presentation in a small group or whole class format</td>
<td>I did not contribute in creating a mural, mobile, powerpoint, or other approved create presentation in a small group or whole class format</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Extensions and/or Adaptations

Some students may need for materials to be made available, while others can be guided to use primary source websites such as loc.gov. Teachers can create resource folders/guides to help student in their research.

Research and presentation requirements can be adjusted - powered up or powered down - depending on student and teacher needs, time, and desired learning outcomes. Students will research locations, transportation modes, and other information important to the Civil War era. Research can be as narrow or broad as time, resource, and skills allow.

Students can use various methods to present their findings. Powerpoint is one option. For more advanced students, explore creating a video presentation to present findings. Have a “movie theater presentation” day and invite other classes to view.

For students who like to write, have them create a old time newspaper format which presents each armies transportation challenges and how they attempted to solve it.