

# Character and Leadership in the Civil War

## Advanced Placement Curriculum by the Civil War Preservation Trust

### September 2008

#### Introduction

Most students learn that Clara Barton brought medical supplies to Antietam. But how many students know or appreciate how long and how hard she had to fight to get to Antietam?

Clara Barton was very human and very *interesting*. She was much more than one or two sentences in a textbook can ever reveal. And her life stretched from the antebellum period, through the Civil War, through Reconstruction and beyond, so we can watch America change – or not change – through her life. Looking closely at her life helps students learn valuable lessons about character, leadership, and almost every aspect of life. Young people gain important insights about their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as what character and leadership traits they admire.

#### Goals of the “Character and Leadership in the Civil War” Curriculum:

- Provide an opportunity for an in-depth study of one of several Civil War figures through the “lenses” of character, leadership, the National Council for the Social Studies Ten Thematic Strands, a timeline of events, words by and about the figure, and / or primary resources.
  - No, students do not use all of the lenses. Filters are selected either 1) by the teacher, or 2) by the teacher and the student using a contract-based Civil War unit of study.
- Provide quality materials to support this in-depth study. Most school textbooks have one chapter which stretches from the antebellum period through Reconstruction. Our biographies are meant to supplement existing textbooks. Students (and their parents) will never appreciate the value of Civil War battlefields and their preservation if they are not given the opportunity to learn about real-life people who lived during the Civil War.
- Promote character and leadership studies. Students study the character and leadership strengths of a Civil War figure, but they also gain insights into their own lives.
- Provide a curriculum which can challenge gifted students as well as the rest of the class. Since students and teachers choose the lenses to be used as well as the type of final project, students with a variety of learning styles and skill levels may be accommodated, depending on the skill of the teacher. This program lends itself best to high school and advanced junior high school students.
- Provide biographies of people from a variety of backgrounds: Union and Confederate, male and female, different occupations and several ethnic groups. This is necessary in order to pique student interest and to match the demographics of today’s classrooms.
- Subtly tie in preservation and national memory where, ordinarily, these topics would be cut from the curriculum.

#### Components of the Curriculum:

- Teacher guidelines
- Pre- and Post-Unit reflection for students
- Sample Student – Teacher Contract, including evaluation
- 9 biographies, involving the following “lenses”:
  - Quotes by and about each figure
  - Timeline of events
  - Character (CHARACTER COUNTS!<sup>sm</sup>: “The Six Pillars of Character”)
  - Leadership (Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership: “Nine Characteristics of Effective, Caring Leaders”)
  - National Council for the Social Studies: Ten Thematic Strands (history, sociology, psychology, economics and the impact of science – encompassing a variety of social studies disciplines)
  - Interesting facts
- Suggested resources to assist in studies
- Primary Sources connected to the Civil War figure
- Suggested end of unit projects

#### Final Notes:

- Portions of the curriculum have been field tested in the classroom with success.
- The curriculum has been reviewed by a panel of active teachers.
- The “final draft” you see is still open to comments.
- Soon, the curriculum will be placed online as part of the new Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) web site ([www.civilwar.org](http://www.civilwar.org)).

## Biographies Included in the Curriculum:

◆ <b>Col. Santos Benavides</b> (Highest Ranking Hispanic Confederate Officer)	(Completed)
◆ <b>US Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock</b>	(Completed)
◆ <b>CS Lt. George Dixon</b> (Commanded <i>HL Hunley</i> , which sank the USS <i>Housatonic</i> )	(In Development)
◆ <b>US Gen. George H. Thomas</b>	(Completed)
◆ <b>CS Lt. Gen. James Longstreet</b>	(Completed)
◆ <b>Sarah Emma Edmundson</b> (Canadian Woman Who Fought for Union)	(Future)
◆ <b>CS Gen. Patrick Cleburne</b>	(Completed)
◆ <b>Robert Smalls</b> (Former Slave Who Abducted the <i>Planter</i> ; Reconstruction Legislator)	(Completed)
◆ <b>Susie King Taylor</b> (African-American Teacher)	(Future)
◆ <b>Clara Barton</b>	(Completed)
◆ <b>Chief John Ross</b> (Cherokee chief from the Trail of Tears through the Civil War)	(Completed)
◆ <b>[Teacher Choice]</b>	(Teacher project)

## Feedback:

- Jim Alberston (Virginia)
  - ◆ I am very impressed with what you have created for Longstreet! As before, your intro, famous words, loyalties, pre/during/post-war, timeline, pictures, works cited are very good. Even though in public schools we do not really teach the strands to average students, AP & gifted students will have fun and could debate forever! Everything with Nine Character issues & Six Pillars of Character is very good ... You really are to be congratulated for your efforts... I like the Uncle Gus aspects of Longstreet. Did not know that his wife died my senior year in high school. If you ever think about going on the lecture tour with what you created let me know. Lots of great stories for you to share!
- Barb Kay (Illinois):
  - ◆ WOW! The James Longstreet "package" is amazing! I really liked the quotes, the time line and the leadership qualities. I could use quite a bit of this in class - you are right - picking and choosing what would work best. The organization is great. The project idea section is wonderful ... Is it OK if I make a copy of this and share it with another history teacher??
- Beckie Lacey (Pennsylvania):
  - ◆ I've read and reviewed your attachments. I am incredibly impressed with several "things:"
    1. The scholarship which is deeply integrated into these modules
    2. The depth of sophisticated analysis
    3. Support of primary source documents
    4. Clear and direct alliance with national standards
    5. inquiry-style questions, rather than rote objectives
    6. Historical illustrations/photographs mixed with text
    7. "Big picture" concepts amid "the details"
    8. Blended easily with the latest in PA public Education - Max Thompson's Learning Focused Schools
    9. Strong alignment with Costa's "Habits of the Mind"

You can truly be proud of this effort. Last month I actually "test run" portions of this curriculum (hope that was okay). My kids just loved it- both gifted and high ability 8th graders. They each chose two Civil War individuals, one military related and one non-military to become resident experts upon. We followed the activities prescribed on how to chose a character and used a slightly modified student-teacher contract (we added specially designed goals/ objectives from their official PA Gifted IEP). The results were posters, DVDs, mock Civil War journals, paper quilts and incredible essays on this individual's greater impact on history. Basically, a rip-roaring success!

Again, I am thoroughly impressed with this effort. ... There's a definite market for differentiated curricula for the gifted learner.