

**Supplemental Lesson Plan:
A Civilian's Perspective of the Battle of Bentonville**



19th Century Engraving of Mower's Charge, March 21, 1865

In this lesson for grade 8, students will investigate how the Harper family experienced the Battle of Bentonville by examining a reminiscence written by Mary Harper, a daughter who was living at home during the battle. Students will gain a personal understanding of the hardships of war faced on the battlefield by the soldiers and behind the lines by the families who found themselves in harm's way.

Competency Goals

This lesson can be used in partial fulfillment of the following:

NCSCOS Social Studies Grade 8: 4.02; 4.03; 4.04

NCSCOS English/Language Arts Grade 8: 1.01a-e; 1.02c, d, e; 1.03b, d; 2.01a-h; 2.02a-c, e-g; 4.02c; 5.01a-c, f, i, j; 6.01a-i; 6.02b, d

Objectives

After classroom discussion, historical background reading, and examination of the article written by Mary Harper, students will:

- describe the essentials of the Battle of Bentonville.
- describe the Battle of Bentonville as viewed by the Harper family.
- list some of the hardships faced by soldiers and civilians during the battle.
- identify attitudes and emotions held by Union soldiers, Confederate soldiers, and the Harper family.

Teacher Planning

Provide the following materials either through web access to the Educational Unit or through handouts downloaded via the web site.

Site Narratives - The Battle of Bentonville
The Harper Family

Copy of "Reminiscences of the Battle of Bentonville"

Transcript of Official Records - referring to the Harper house used as a hospital

Paper and pencils for letter writing

K-W-L Chart - if desired

Glossary of terms found in the primary source

Time Requirement

45minutes (for block scheduling: add more time to edit and share letters)

Bell Ringer Activity

Have students write on a piece of paper how it might feel to suddenly find your home in the middle of a battlefield and then have it used as a hospital for both sides.

Teacher Input

- A. Describe the Battle of Bentonville to students including: date, commanders, number of combatants per side, significant events of the battle, and outcome of the battle.
- B. Lead students in a class discussion (Socratic Seminar, if applicable) to predict how the Harper family must have felt before, during, and after the battle. Be sure to focus on how the Harpers most likely felt about being subjected to the battle while in their own home.

Classroom Activities: Guided Practice

1. Read the letter from Mary Harper concerning her experiences during the Battle of Bentonville. This can be read out loud or upper level students may read it individually.
2. As a class, discuss how well (or not so well) students predicted how the Harpers felt during and after the battle.
3. Ask students to imagine that they are a Harper child who has just survived the Battle of Bentonville. They will be writing a letter to a friend or family member describing what they felt and experienced before, during, and after the battle.
4. Review with students the components of a good letter and discuss their role, format, and audience. Be sure students refer to their predictions during the class discussion when writing their letters.

Classroom Activities: Independent Practice

1. Students are allowed time to write their letters about surviving the Battle of Bentonville.
2. After students have completed their letters, they should exchange them with a classmate. Each student should read his or her classmate's letter looking for accurate information, expression of personal feelings, and proper letter format.

Closure

- A. Students may share their letters with the class.
- B. Bring the students together as a class to review the events of the Battle of Bentonville and why the Harpers experienced the battle the way they did.
- C. Have each student complete an exit slip on a piece of paper giving two feelings the Harpers had before, during, or after the battle, including a short explanation of why the Harpers would have experienced those emotions

Assessment

Students should be able to write an essay clearly describing the Battle of Bentonville as experienced by the Harper family. The essay should contain some basic understanding of the battle and why it took place, its significance, and why it took place in the small community of Bentonville.

Lesson Plan Glossary

canister - ammunition that was made of a cylindrical (can) container filled with pieces of metal, glass, nails, etc. used primarily as an anti-personnel device.

delirium - an acute mental disturbance characterized by confused thinking and disrupted attention usually accompanied by disordered speech and hallucinations.

dirge - a song or hymn of grief or lamentation, especially one intended to accompany funeral or memorial rites.

emaciated - to be wasted away physically; to become very thin.

furlough - a leave of absence from duty granted especially to a soldier; in this instance in the document, it implies the soldiers were killed?.

grapeshot - an antipersonnel weapon consisting of a cluster of small iron balls shot from a cannon.

reminiscence - a remembered experience.

saber- a cavalry sword with a curved blade used to strike, cut or kill.

veranda - an open gallery or portico, usually roofed, attached to the exterior of a building; porch.

volley - simultaneous discharge of a number of weapons.

K-W-L Chart

Name: _____

Subject: _____

Teacher Name: _____

Date: _____

K <i>What I Know</i>	W <i>What I Want To Learn</i>	L <i>What I Have Learned</i>

HEADQUARTERS FIRST KENTUCKY CAVALRY,
Near Bentonville, March 27, 1865.

Lieutenant-Colonel ANDERSON,
Assistant Adjutant-General:

COLONEL: My scout sent (in charge of Sergeant Ellis of this regiment) to the battle-field near Bentonville has returned. He reports finding none of the wounded of the enemy left. There are forty-five of the wounded of our army at the house of Mr. Harper (exclusive of those left at Bentonville). They are in a suffering condition for the want of proper supplies, and there is no surgeon to attend them. Mr. Harper and family are doing all their limited means will allow for the sufferers. Their wounds have been dressed and six or eight amputations performed skillfully by the surgeons of the enemy. There were no supplies left either with the wounded or in the country. There are no marks left by which the loss of the enemy can be estimated. Citizens report that they employed all their ambulances and 200 wagons constantly and actively, from Sunday afternoon until Thursday night, removing their dead and wounded. They admit a heavy loss in the Fourteenth Army Corps. Sergeant Ellis followed the enemy to the junction of the Bentonville and Goldsborough road with the Wilmington and Goldsborough road, at a point eight miles southwest from the latter place, ten miles from the battle-field, where he found the enemy's pickets. There was no straggling from the enemy's ranks. He ascertained that the enemy was crossing the Neuse River at Cox's Bridge, and at a point three miles above Goldsborough. One corps moved on the left-hand road from the battle-field to Neuse River. He also learned that a division of mounted infantry from Wilmington joined the enemy on Saturday. Captain Taylor, who was sent (in obedience to your order of yesterday) to ascertain the probable loss of the enemy will return this afternoon or to-morrow, and report more minutely.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. W. GRIFFITH,
Lieutenant-Colonel, Commanding Outpost.

HEADQUARTERS, &C.,
Near Smithfield, N. C., March 27, 1865.

Surg. J. H. ERSKINE,
Medical Director:

DOCTOR: General Johnston directs me to inform you that there are forty-five of our wounded at the house of Mr. Harper, in the neighborhood of Bentonville. It is represented that they are in a suffering condition for the want of proper supplies. There is no surgeon to attend them. The general wishes you to take immediate steps to relieve the condition of these men. Such as are able to be moved he wishes brought to the railroad.

I am, doctor, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

KINLOCH FALCONER,
Assistant Adjutant-General.