



## **Session 1: Preparing for your Civil War Quest Project**

**Overview:** This document provides suggestions for how the teacher might prepare for the project as well as introductory activities for students.

### **Teacher Preparation:**

1. Go on a Civil War Quest, to get a feel for the program.

- The Fearless Fighters Quest, Woodstock, VT
- Hartford in the Civil War: A Driving Tour Quest, Hartford, VT
- The West Cemetery Civil War Quest, Keene, NH

You may download these Quests, or download a virtual Power Point Quest at:

<http://www.vitalcommunities.org/ValleyQuest/cwquest>

2. Choose your Cemetery and Visit

Most towns in our region have six to a dozen cemeteries—or more. Many of them are quite small. A few things to keep in mind when choosing a cemetery for your project:

- How close is it to your school?
- Will it be difficult to find transportation to & from this site?
- How large is it? Is there too much ground to cover? Is there enough material for your class? (1 veteran for every 2 students works well)

Your local historical society, sexton or cemetery commissioner can be a good resource when determining which cemetery may be appropriate.

3. Secure permission from your Cemetery Commission or sexton to use the site.
4. Try looking up the veterans you find on the *Vermont in the Civil War* (<http://vermontcivilwar.org>), New Hampshire Heritage (<http://nh-heritage.com/>), Civil War Soldiers & Sailors (<http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/>)
5. Bring your list of soldiers to your local historical society, and see what primary and secondary resources they have.

The project can be completed by using the cemetery and general online sources, however it can be deepened with additional primary sources. Consider creating a classroom library and list of additional online sources. For instance, your students could search for their soldiers in the census at the free site: [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) or students might search for their soldier on a historical map at [www.historicmapworks.com](http://www.historicmapworks.com). You might also borrow copies of your town history so students could look up their soldiers in the index. Civil War books focused on your state would also provide material for your students.

6. Pick one soldier, and using this soldier, run through all of the lessons to familiarize yourself with the process of the unit.

### **Student Preparation:**

Students need to have adequate background knowledge on the Civil War and need to understand what a Quest is so they know the end-product they are working toward.

#### **1. Take Your Students on a Quest**

Ideally, before you initiate making a Quest, you should take students on a Quest to give them a sense of: (a) what a Quest is; and (b) the two fundamental types of clues, "clues that teach" and "clues that move" visitors from one site to another.

In the best case, you'd take a field trip and embark on one of the following 3 Quests.

- The Fearless Fighters Quest, Woodstock, VT
- Hartford Civil War Quest, Hartford Village, VT

- The West Cemetery Civil War Quest, Keene, NH

If that is not possible, go through the VIRTUAL QUEST available at: <http://www.vitalcommunities.org/ValleyQuest/cwquest>

As you move through the Quest, ask students to consider which clues are “moving” and which clues are “teaching.” Also, at the teaching clues invite them to consider “**How do they know this?**” and discuss the kinds of resources that might help one learn about life 150 years ago.