



Session 3: Researching Local Civil War Veterans

Focusing Question: How did soldiers from our community serve in the Civil War?

Overview: Beginning with the partially completed data collection sheets from Session 1, students continue their soldier inquiry, using 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/>) and other websites. After completing their research, students organize their evidence by creating a timeline of their soldier's life and make a claim about how their soldier contributed to the Civil War.

Topical Understandings: Historians use evidence from a variety of sources to reconstruct the past.

Materials:

- computers
- data collection forms from Lesson I
- worksheet: My Soldier at War
- worksheet: My Soldier's Timeline

Length: One or two 30 - 40 minute periods

Procedures:

- A. Using a Smart Board or LCD projector demonstrate how students can navigate the *Vermont in the Civil War* site or other state website and search for the soldier under study.
- B. Review Civil War terms.
For example here is *Vermont in the Civil War* listing:

Mason, Freeman, age 18, cred. to Charlotte, VT Service: enl 9/14/64, m/i 9/14/64, Pvt, Co. K, 17th VT INF, d/accident, 3/12/65 (shot near Petersburg born: 1848, Unknown; died

03/12/1865; buried: Orange Center Cemetery, Orange, VT

Translation: Mason Freeman enlisted in Charlotte, VT, on September 14, 1864 at the age of 18. He mustered into Company K of the 17th Vermont Infantry on that same day as a Private. He was shot near Petersburg on March 12, 1865 and died that day. He is buried in the Orange Center Cemetery in Orange, Vermont.

- cred = credited to
- enl = Date of enlisting
- m/I = when the unit was mustered in
- Pvt = rank, in this case a private
- Co. = company, in this case K
- Regiment = 17th Vermont Infantry
- d = died
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Note: A full list of abbreviations on the Vermont site can be found by scrolling to the bottom of the roster / page.

- C. Hand out My Soldier at War worksheet. Once students have recorded basic biographical data, they can broaden their research by searching for a history of the soldier's regiment or unit. They can skim through a unit or regiment history to dates that range between the mustering in and mustering out dates; they will learn where their soldier served and what battles he fought.

While not always the preferred research tool, *Wikipedia* is a reliable source for Civil War information. The organization of entries is particularly easy to navigate.

- D. Once students have completed their research, they should organize their evidence using the My Soldier's Timeline worksheet.
- E. Students synthesize their research. Prompt: After researching your soldier, write a paragraph in which you explain how your soldier contributed to the Civil War. Support your discussion with evidence from your research.

Name: _____

My Soldier at War: Conducting Research & Gathering Information

Name of Soldier: _____

Age when enlisted:	Was he injured?
Unit and Company:	When and where did he die?
Date mustered in:	Date mustered out:

Research the Regiment, Unit, and Company your soldier was in and find a battle he would have been involved in. Compare the dates your soldier mustered in and out to the battle dates to be sure he was actually there.

Battle Name and Location:	Battle Date and Facts:
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Find an illustration that connects to your research. This could be a photograph of the regiment, a map of a battle, or a photograph of his widow's home.

Name: _____

My Soldier's Timeline

Name of Soldier: _____

Create a timeline with the information that you gathered from the cemetery and online.

DATE	EVENT

