

History 1101

Step-by-step instructions for Civil War Project

Overall team objective: Prepare brief, individual analyses of a series of related primary sources and then as a team link the sources together to provide an answer to our historical question, “How did slavery end in the United States?”

As an individual, you will:

- ❖ Select one primary source from Freedmen & Southern Society Project (see Course Materials folder labeled “Civil War Project”) based upon your team’s geographical and theme choices.
 - If there are any limitations to your sources based on the theme or geographical choice, please feel free to adjust and select a source that connects in some meaningful way to the issues/areas your team has decided to work on. I will be flexible here. We may not get perfect coherence among the sources, but that is fine, and is very much a realistic condition of historical analysis. Go with what makes sense to you, and what interests you.
- ❖ Read the source.
- ❖ Annotate the source. To annotate, you will:
 - Underline the most powerful language in the source
 - Underline unusual word associations
 - Are there unfamiliar words in the source?
 - Look them up. No excuses.
 - Make sure you understand what is happening in the source, as best you can, given the limited information you have.
- ❖ Begin to write your paragraph by answering some of these basic **context** questions:
 - Who wrote the source?
 - Who is the audience for the source?
 - What was the author’s intended purpose?
 - Where and when did the author write the source?
 - What action is happening in the source?
- ❖ Now seek a deeper analysis that you will also include in your paragraph:
 - Develop a **tentative thesis** in answer to your big question, “How did slavery end in the United States?”
 - *Example:* A tentative answer might look like this: “This source demonstrates that formerly enslaved men who joined the Union Army helped to persuade fellow soldiers and commanders that the Union should attack slavery militarily.”

- *In your paragraph of analysis, you must use the specific details found in your specific primary source.* Please do not give a boilerplate, general answer that only reiterates what we likely already know in some basic way. *Stay with your source and argue from your primary source, even if it seems to tell only a very small part of the story.* That's what we want here.
- If you have difficulty developing a tentative thesis, consider analyzing your source along *one* of the following lines of inquiry:
 - First possibility: Can you detect a “cause and effect” in your source?
 - ◆ What caused the events or changes you are reading about?
 - Who or what made change happen?
 - Who supported change?
 - Who did not support change?
 - ◆ What were the effects of this change?
 - Which effects were intended?
 - Which effects were accidental?
 - How did events affect people's lives?
 - Second possibility: Can you identify a “turning point” in your source?
 - ◆ Are there any dramatic changes or new experiences?
 - ◆ How did decisions or actions affect people's choices?
 - How did decisions or actions narrow or eliminate choices for people?
 - How did decision or actions significantly transform people's lives?
 - Third possibility: Can you see change or continuity in people's experiences?
 - ◆ What has changed?
 - ◆ What has remained the same?
 - ◆ Who has benefitted from this change? And why?
 - ◆ Who has not benefitted from this change? And why?
- ❖ Edit your paragraph for clarity.
- ❖ Bring it to class on Wednesday, May 30, in hard copy, and make sure it is available in a digital format for posting to Blackboard.
 - Your paragraph will be 150-200 words in total. Please have a digital version of this ready to go on Wednesday for your team to see and discuss, but you don't need to post to Blackboard yet. **Final submissions will be due on Wednesday, June 6, on Blackboard in a discussion forum I create for your team.** If at all possible, I would like these to be submitted in chronological order, with the student treating the earliest primary source placing it first. I believe with the edit function on discussion forums, such chronological ordering may be adjusted.

- On Blackboard, by June 6, you will post your analysis (final draft of paragraph).

As a team, you will:

- ❖ Select a theme (feel free to be flexible in selecting sources, if you feel that your theme is not well represented for a particular year):
 - Southern home front (SH)
 - Military strategy (MS)
 - High command and policy/politics (HCP)
- ❖ Select a wartime theater (feel free to be flexible in selecting sources, if you feel that your geographical area is not well represented for a particular year):
 - Eastern theater (Virginia and Carolinas)
 - Border state (Maryland)
 - Western theater (Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee)
 - Lower South theater (Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, Arkansas)
- ❖ Develop an answer to the question, “How did slavery end in the United States?”
 - Must be included in your Blackboard discussion forum as part of an introduction and/or a conclusion.
 - **You will develop the answer during class time and post to Blackboard during class time, by Wednesday, June 6. *This answer will be two-three sentences in length.***
 - You will only address the specific sources discussed and analyzed by each member of your team. Again, stay with your sources and argue from your primary sources, even if they seem to tell only a very small part of the story. You are indeed building towards a more significant analysis with a wider range of primary sources once you have all eight primary source analyses in front of you.