In the summer of 2013, Gettysburg joined the country to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg, the battle that shaped the future of the American experiment in democracy in profound and permanent ways. Gettysburg College was at the forefront of efforts to remember the battle and the sacrifices that occurred here, sponsoring a number of events and participating in other activities designed to raise the public’s awareness of Gettysburg’s unique place in American history. One example of the College’s efforts involved teaming up with History Associates Inc. to create a short movie and a mobile app, for the public.

This brief instructional plan provides a better idea of how the town of Gettysburg and Gettysburg College were impacted by the battle and have been shaped by its legacy. When you teach about Gettysburg, we encourage you to consider using this plan to help deepen your students’ understanding of the battle and its legacy. Please feel free to share it with any colleagues who may be interested as well.

This plan was prepared by Meg McCabe, class of 2014 at Gettysburg College, under the direction of Prof. Dave Powell. Meg is the 2013-14 Hudson Associate in Education, a special honor reserved for students who have demonstrated extraordinary aptitude for teaching.

INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

Relevant Pennsylvania Standards

8.2.12.B: Evaluate the impact of historical documents, artifacts, and places in Pennsylvania which are critical to U.S. history and the world.

8.3.12.A: Evaluate the role groups and individuals from the U.S. played in the social, political, cultural, and economic development of the world.

Relevant Common Core Standards

CC.8.5.11-12.G: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CC.8.5.11-12.I: Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Procedures

1) Open the class by asking students what they already know about Gettysburg (either the battle or the college), and ask students what they would like to know about Gettysburg
before showing the 15-minute video Addressing Gettysburg
(http://www.gettysburg.edu/news_events/press_release_detail.dot?id=3427587.)

Questions to consider may include:

a. How did the Battle of Gettysburg affect the outcome of the Civil War? How did President Lincoln’s visit to Gettysburg help cement the battle’s legacy?

b. What do you know about how the Battle has been commemorated in the past?

c. Have you visited Gettysburg, or do you know someone who has? If you have visited, what were your impressions after visiting, and how did they compare to the impressions you had before you visited?

2) Divide students into groups of 2 or 3 students (approximately 10 groups, depending on how many are in the class). Assign each group a number from 1-10. Each number will correlate to the stop on the tour that each group will explore on the app. Give each group a large sheet of poster paper and various markers. Have each group open the Gettysburg College: Witness to History historical app then click on the “Tour” link. Each group should select the number that they were assigned and look through that section of the tour (for example if they were assigned “3” students should click on “Shot and Shell: The Battle Arrives”).

3) Groups will read the content of the page together. At the bottom of the page, students will choose one of the “GettMore” links to explore. On the poster page, the group will write the following: title of the tour stop, three facts from the main content of the article, the location of the building/what the building is used for, and a fact/brief summary from the “GettMore” link they chose.

4) Once all groups are finished, have the students put up their posters in order of number/tour stop around the room. Students will start from the beginning and make their way around the room to read the summary of each stop and it will be as though they are taking the real tour, but in their own classroom.

5) If there is time, have each individual student look up another feature on the app under the “More” section from the homepage. They can explore sections such as fun facts, historical timeline, Civil War Era Studies, Gettysburg College, etc. Then have them take note of at least two facts and share with a partner or with the whole class.

6) Direct students to the College’s website if they have further questions about the College.

Assessment

After spending some time with the app and after viewing the film, students should have a better understanding of the role the College, its students, and its faculty played in the Battle of Gettysburg, as well as a better sense of how residents of the town of Gettysburg were affected by the battle. To conclude the lesson, we would encourage you to engage students in a
discussion of the battle’s multi-faceted legacy. Questions to shape that discussion might include:

- How have your perceptions of the battle and its legacy been reinforced or reshaped by studying the battle?
- Why do you think it is important to remember or commemorate important events like the Battle of Gettysburg? How should something like this battle be remembered?
- How does studying the context of the battle—not just the military exploits that occurred here and the tactics employed by both sides, but the experiences of local townspeople—affect your understanding of the importance of what happened here? In what ways does it augment your understanding of what happened at Gettysburg?

For additional information about Gettysburg College and its instructional programs, please feel free to visit our website (http://www.gettysburg.edu); additional information on the College’s commemoration of the Civil War is available at http://www.gettysburg.edu/cw2013, and more information about the College’s programs in teacher education can be found by visiting http://www.gettysburg.edu/academics/education; information about the College’s unique and highly-regarded Civil War programs can be found at http://www.gettysburg.edu/civilwar/.

We are also pleased to announce that Gettysburg College was recently awarded a grant by the National Endowment for the Humanities as part of its “Landmarks of American History and Culture” program. The grant will allow the College to invite a total of eighty teachers to Gettysburg in the summer of 2014 to learn more about what happened here and how we have come to remember it. More information about the program, including application procedures, can be found at our program website: http://www.gettysburg.edu/hallowedground. Teachers at any public or private elementary or secondary school in the United States or its territories are welcome to apply; though preference may be given to teachers of history and social studies, teachers of any subject are invited to consider joining us. Please feel free to share this information with your colleagues.