

Civil War Journalism

Objective:

The student will analyze period reporting about the Civil War.

Materials:

- “Civil War Extra: Original News Coverage from the *New York Times*”
- Six copies of a current *New York Times*

Lesson:

- Students will read “Amid the Killing, ‘Only Bread and the Newspaper’ Really Mattered” by James McPherson
- Break students up into six groups, and give each group one section of “Civil War Extra” as well as a copy of a current *New York Times*
- Ask students to leaf through both their section of “Civil War Extra” and the *New York Times* and look for comparisons
- Find an article from each newspaper on a similar topic and write a one page comparison between both the actual event and also the reporting on the event. For example, a student may choose to compare the reporting of a Civil War battle to that of an incident from the War on Terror. The student would want to compare the actual battles, the number of men involved, the weapons, the purpose of the battle, and the outcome, and also the reporting on the battle, considering the language used, information given, illustrations and maps utilized, and perspective of the writer.