



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2008 Volume IV: Representations of Democracy in Literature, History and Film

Whitman, Lincoln, and Brady: Three Perspectives on a Nation Divided

Guide for Curriculum Unit 08.04.04
by Sean Griffin

In this language arts unit designed to complement an eighth-grade American history study of the Civil War, students will be asked to explore three separate perspectives of the War Between the States through the eyes of three contemporaries with three distinct views. Examining the Civil War poetry of Walt Whitman, three rhetorical masterpieces by Abraham Lincoln, and the photography of Civil War photographer Matthew Brady and others, will give students a unique look at the war, deepening their understandings of the enormity of the conflict. Students will be asked to respond to the text and images through persuasive writing, journal writing, discussion, creation of artwork and in a culminating activity that utilizes the use of primary source documents, through use of technology in creation of power point presentations.

(Recommended for English and U.S. History, grade 8)

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