

West Virginia Studies Resource Development

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| Title of Lesson: Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in the Civil War |
| Grade level: 8th Grade |
| Summary: Railroads played a vital role in the Civil War. Both armies relied on this method of transportation for moving troops and supplies quickly and effectively. As a result, railroads became a target for attacks from both sides. Arguably the most important rail line during the Civil War was the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad. A large portion of the line traversed through West Virginia. The Union army devoted a great deal of men and resources to protect the railroad, while the Confederates targeted the line for raids and destruction. In this lesson, students will learn the importance of the B&O Railroad, as well as the role the railroad played in bringing the Civil War to West Virginia. |
| WV CCR Social Studies Standards: SS.8.22: Demonstrate an understanding of the American Civil War including its causes, effects and the major events that led to West Virginia statehood. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain the effect of key events leading to western Virginia’s separation from Virginia after secession (e.g., First and Second Wheeling Conventions and John Brown’s Raid).• Describe the moral, ethical and legal tensions that led to the creation of the new state of West Virginia and how these tensions were resolved (e.g., Virginia vs. West Virginia 1871).• Compare and contrast the military strategies of the North and South with regard to specific events and geographic locations in West Virginia (e.g., the Battle of Philippi, Rich Mountain, Droop Mountain, Battle of Scary Creek and Battle of Carnifex Ferry).• Identify significant contributions of men and women of West Virginia during the Civil War and identify the roles of ethnic and racial minorities. |
| Essential Question (content): <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Why was the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad so important during the Civil War?- What notable events/actions occurred along the rail line or because of the rail line?- What was the impact of the B&O’s role in the Civil War on West Virginia? |
| Students will be able to do (skills): At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to explain the tactical and logistical importance of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad during the Civil War. Students will be able to identify key actions and events which occurred along its line in West Virginia. Students will also understand the significance of the railroad in the creation of the state of West Virginia. |
| Materials & Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- “Jackson Commandeers the Railroad” By Mort Kunstler https://www.mortkunstler.com/product_images/408_2.jpg- Civil War in 4 Video on Railroads in the Civil War https://www.battlefields.org/learn/videos/railroads-civil-war- “How the Railroad Won the War” http://americanexperience.si.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/How-the-Railroad-Won-the-War.pdf |

- "B&O in the American Civil War" from the B&O Railroad Museum
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nz-9Y733248&list=PLGgTy3BXb7sbrsFBdODo2QxPcFa8uCcAm&index=21>
- Laptop Computers/Computer Lab
- Microsoft Publisher

Learning Plan:

1. Students will begin the lesson by viewing a digital copy of the art print "Jackson Commandeers the Railroad" by Mort Kunstler. Students will discuss what they see in the image and draw conclusions on the role of railroads in the Civil War.
2. Students will then view and discuss the Civil War in 4 video on railroads, as well as the video "B&O in the American Civil War" to further their comprehension of the role railroads played in the Civil War.
3. After this is complete, students will also read and discuss the article "How the Railroad Won the War" to expand their knowledge of the logistical and tactical role of railroads in the Civil War.
4. Students will then use their computers to research notable events/conflicts which occurred along the line of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in West Virginia. Students will identify 5 of these events and complete further research.
5. Students will use Microsoft Publisher to create tourism brochures advertising the locations of the events they decided to research. Students will view examples of tourism brochures from West Virginia related to the Civil War, if possible, to give them ideas.
6. Students will create a brochure which will include the following: a brief description of the five events they chose to research, a map of West Virginia identifying the locations of the events, and three pictures depicting the event or location.
7. If time permits, students may share their brochures with the class and explain the importance of the events they chose to include in their publication.

Checking for Understanding:

At the culmination of the lesson, students will produce a tourism brochure utilizing Microsoft Publisher. This brochure will demonstrate student comprehension in researching events related to the role of the railroad in the Civil War. It will also show student knowledge of the connection between West Virginia and the B&O Railroad during the conflict. The student presentation of their brochures will also allow for further analysis of student understanding.

Accommodations:

Accommodations for this lesson may include providing students with a list of events along the line of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to research, rather than asking students to identify the events through their own research. Students could also work in pairs to complete the brochure instead of doing it individually. Higher achieving students could be asked to create a brochure with more events, or provide a written analysis of the events they included in the brochures.