

West Virginia Studies Resource Development

Title of Lesson: McNeill's Rangers in the Civil War
Grade level: 8th Grade
Summary: Partisan ranger groups, sometimes referred to as guerrillas, were a controversial presence in the Civil War. In areas such as Missouri, partisans ran wild and terrorized the population. However, in Virginia and West Virginia, these groups were used by the Confederate Army in a number of effective manners. The only two partisan groups officially sanctioned by the Confederate Army operated in the region. These groups were Mosby's Raiders and McNeill's Rangers. This lesson will focus on the exploits of McNeill's Rangers in the Potomac Highlands region of West Virginia during the Civil War.
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">- What were partisan rangers or guerrillas?- How did partisan rangers impact the war in West Virginia?- Who were McNeill's Rangers and what were some of their accomplishments?
Students will be able to do (skills): At the conclusion of the lesson, students will have an understanding of the role of partisan ranger groups such as McNeill's Rangers in the Confederate war effort. Students will also become familiar with what factors made West Virginia an important region for both sides during the conflict. Students will also continue to develop the abilities in reading and analyzing primary source documents.
Materials & Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- "The Raid on Piedmont and Crippling of Franze Sigel in the Shenandoah Valley" http://archive.wvculture.org/history/journal_wvh/wvh55-2.html- McNeill's Rangers article from West Virginia e-Encyclopedia https://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/1664- McNeill's Rangers Print and Explanation – John Paul Strain, artist

<http://www.johnpaulstrain.com/art/mcneills-rangers.htm>

- The Capture of Generals Crook and Kelley

<http://www.mountaindiscoveries.com/stories/pdf/fw2005/civilwar.pdf>

- Computer lab/Laptop Computers
- Paper
- Colored Pencils/Markers

Learning Plan:

1. Students will begin the lesson by viewing the painting by John Paul Strain of McNeill's Rangers in Romney, West Virginia. Students will define the term "partisan ranger" and "guerrilla." Students will discuss the importance of these groups for the Confederate war effort.
2. Students will read and discuss the various articles related to McNeill's Rangers and their exploits during the Civil War. As they read the articles, students will identify the notable events and accomplishments of the group .
3. Students will choose one action of McNeill's Rangers during the Civil War and complete further research in groups of 3-4 .
4. After completing the research, students will create Wanted posters for McNeill's Rangers for the action or exploit they chose to research. The Wanted poster will need to include a description of the event, as well as a reward and picture of the event/participants.
5. Once students complete their Wanted posters, they will present them to the class. In the class presentation, students will describe the elements of their poster, as well as summarize the event depicted.
6. As students are presenting, the instructor will grade the student presentations on research, presentation technique, etc.
7. Students will conclude the lesson by participating in a brief discussion as a class on the effectiveness of partisan rangers during the Civil War. Students will offer their opinion on how important groups such as McNeill's Rangers were to the Confederate war effort.

Checking for Understanding:

Students will demonstrate their comprehension of the actions of partisan groups such as McNeill's Rangers through the completion of the Wanted posters and subsequent class presentations. Students will provide information derived from their research to complete the assignment and form their opinions on the effectiveness of groups such as McNeill's Rangers in West Virginia.

Accommodations:

Accommodations for this lesson may include providing students with additional resources related to McNeill's Rangers as opposed to asking students to identify the resources themselves. Students may also be assigned events to research and complete posters on, rather than choosing their own. Advanced students could also explore the subject of partisan rangers further by completing research on other notable groups such as Mosby's Raiders and comparing and contrasting the accomplishments of the groups.