

Lesson Plans

Title: John Brown, Then and Now

Creator: Beth Shaw McGuire

Subject: Causes of the Civil War Course: United States History

Grade Level: 11

Unit Plan: The Civil War

Standards:

Competency Goal 3 Crisis, Civil War, and Reconstruction (1848-1877) - The learner will analyze the issues that led to the Civil War, the effects of the war, and the impact of Reconstruction on the nation.

Objectives:

3.01 Trace the economic, social, and political events from the Mexican War to the outbreak of the Civil War.

3.02 Analyze and assess the causes of the Civil War.

Lesson Goals:

- Students will identify some of the ways that the raid at Harper's Ferry influenced the Civil War.
- Students will articulate the different ways that people thought about John Brown in the 1800s and how his persona may or may not have changed over time.

Differentiation:

Ask students to share their ideas with a partner before sharing with the class. Provide thesauruses to students to find alternative one-word descriptors; offer alternatives verbally after the list is made to offer more alternatives that relate to student offerings.

Duration: one 90 minute period

Teacher Materials:

Post-it notes

Whiteboard, chalkboard, or flip chart

Timeline beginning with John Brown's birth and ending with today, in increments of 10

John Brown, Abolitionist: The Man Who Killed Slavery, Sparked the Civil War, and Seeded Civil Rights by David S. Reynolds

John Brown (Modern Library Classics) by W.E.B. Du Bois, David R. Roediger

Student Materials:
Reproductions of the following:



Curry, John S.
American, 1897-1946
John Brown
1939
lithograph
Print
37.5 x 27.8 cm (14-3/4 x 10-15/16 in.)
Gift of W. P. Jacocks
58.2.267



Lawrence, Jacob
American, 1917-2000
color screenprint
Print
sheet: 50.8 x 65.4 cm (20 x 25-3/4 in.)
Ackland Fund

Title: *John Brown, a man who had a fanatical belief that he was chosen by God to overthrow black slavery in America., no. 1* from *The Legend of Jacob Lawrence*, 1977
Accession No.: 2005.11.1



Title: *For forty years John Brown reflected on the hopeless and miserable condition of the slaves., no. 2* from *The Legend of John Brown*, 1977
Accession No.: 2005.11.2



Title: *For twelve years John Brown engaged in land speculations and wool merchandising. All this to make some money for his greater work which was the abolishment of slavery., no. 3* from *The Legend of John Brown*, 1977
Accession No.: 2005.11.3



Title: *His ventures failing him, he accepted poverty.*, no. 4 from The Legend of John Brown, 1977

Accession No.: 2005.11.4



Title: *John Brown, while tending his flock in Ohio, first communicated with his sons and daughters his plans of attacking slavery by force.*, no. 5 from The Legend of John Brown, 1977

Accession No.: 2005.11.5



Title: *John Brown formed an organization among the colored people of the Adirondack woods to resist the capture of any fugitive slaves.*, no. 6 from The Legend of John Brown, 1977

Accession No.: 2005.11.6



Title: *To the people he found worthy of trust, he communicated his plans.*, no. 7 from The Legend of John Brown, 1977

Accession No.: 2005.11.7



Title: *John Brown first thought of the place where he would make his attack came to him while surveying land for Oberlin College in West Virginia, 1840.*, no. 8 from The Legend of John Brown, 1977

Accession No.: 2005.11.8



Title: *Kansas was now the skirmish ground of the Civil War.*, no. 9 from The Legend of John Brown, 1977

Accession No.: 2005.11.9

Title: *Those pro-slavery were murdered by those anti-slavery.*, no. 10 from The Legend of John Brown, 1977

Accession No.: 2005.11.10



Title of Work: *John Brown took to guerilla warfare.*, no. 11 from The Legend of John Brown, 1977
Accession No.: 2005.11.11



Title: *John Brown's victory attack at Black Jack drove those pro-slavery to new fury, and those who were anti-slavery to new efforts.*, no. 12 from The Legend of John Brown, 1977
Accession No.: 2005.11.12



Title: *John Brown, after long meditation, planned to fortify himself somewhere in the mountains of Virginia or Tennessee and there make raids on surrounding plantations, freeing slaves.*, no. 13 from The legend of John Brown, 1977
Accession No.: 2005.11.13



Title: *John Brown collected money from sympathizers and friends to carry out his plans.*, no. 14 from The Legend of John Brown, 1977
Category: Print
Accession No.: 2005.11.14



Title: *John Brown made many trips to Canada organizing for his assault on Harper's Ferry.*, no. 15 from The Legend of John Brown, 1977
Category: Print
Accession No.: 2005.11.15



Title: *In spite of a price on his head, John Brown in 1859 liberated twelve negroes from a Missouri plantation.*, no. 16 from The Legend of John Brown, 1977
Accession No.: 2005.11.16



Title: *John Brown remained a full winter in Canada, drilling negroes for his coming raid on Harper's Ferry., no. 17* from *The Legend of John Brown*, 1977
Accession No.: 2005.11.17



Title: *July 3, 1859. John Brown stocked an old barn with guns and ammunition. He was ready to strike his first blow at slavery., no. 18* from *The Legend of John Brown*, 1977
Accession No.: 2005.11.18



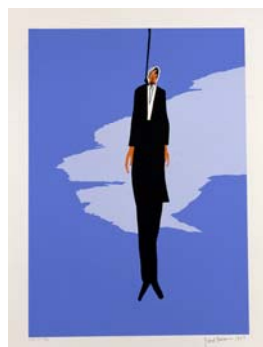
Title: *Sunday, October 16, 1859. John Brown with a company of 21 men, white and black, marched on Harper's Ferry., no. 19* from *The Legend of John Brown*, 1977
Accession No.: 2005.11.19



Title: *John Brown held Harper's Ferry for twelve hours. His defeat was a few hours off., no. 20* from *The Legend of John Brown*, 1977
Accession No.: 2005.11.20



Title: *John Brown was found "guilty of treason and murder in the first degree" and was hanged in Charles Town, Virginia, on December 2, 1859., no. 22* from *The Legend of John Brown*, 1977
Accession No.: 2005.11.22



Title: Title page from *The Legend of John Brown*
Accession No.: 2005.11.23

Title: Poem by Robert Hayden, from *The Legend of John Brown*
Accession No.: 2005.11.24

Preparation:

Students will have already studied some other causes of the Civil War.

Students will have already studied some individual actions related to one or more causes of the Civil War.

Procedures:

1. Ask students to generate a list of what they already know about John Brown. Record on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or flip chart.
2. Ask students to select one of the many images of John Brown that are available and to look at it carefully for information that might help them understand John Brown better. Tell students that not everyone is going to get the same image.
3. Tell students to write what they now understand about John Brown in their own words on the whiteboard, chalkboard or flip chart, adding their ideas to what is already on the board.
4. Ask students to identify one-word descriptors of John Brown based on the list in front of them. Create a list of those as well.
5. Ask students to read excerpts on line that describe John Brown and his role in the Civil War, and to pay attention to how others described him. Students should also note information about John Brown that they think is significant.
6. On a time line, ask students to place those descriptors under the time line, so students may see how people in the 1800s may have described John Brown, and how John Stuart Curry and Jacob Lawrence may have described him, based on the information provided.
7. Ask each student to identify three bits of information about John Brown that they think are significant, and to be prepared to share one of them with the class.
8. Listen to each student, noting what kind of information builds up, and asking students if they think that they have a well rounded description of John Brown. Ask questions as needed to get students to address important issues related to John Brown and his efforts.
9. Give each student a post-it note, and place it next to the descriptor that they think best relates to how we understand John Brown today. Talk about the end results with students, and ask them how they think this might apply to the events of current history.

Culminating Activities:

Ask students to write a paragraph or two comparing John Brown's efforts to an event(s) in recent history. How are they alike? How are they different? How do they think these events will be perceived one hundred years from now?

Assessment:

Students participated in every aspect of the class.

Students contributed positively to the class environment.

Students identified information about John Brown that they thought was significant, and shared it effectively with the class.

Technology Integration:

Students will use web-based resources and hard texts to learn about John Brown.

Relevant Websites:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4p1550.html>

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h2943t.html>

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USASbrown.htm>

(select smaller parts for students to read of this lengthier site)

<http://www.nps.gov/hafe/jbfort.htm>

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4633323>

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4608338>

http://www.transcendentalists.com/thoreau_plea_john_brown.htm

(select smaller parts for students to read of this lengthier site)

Or

<http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext01/apcjb10.txt>

(select smaller parts for students to read of this lengthier site)

Key Focusing Questions:

How did society view John Brown in the 1800s, particularly upon his death?

Did this perception change over time, and, if so, how?

How do you think people today describe someone like John Brown, and why?

What parallels do you find with John Brown's story in recent history? How are the events similar? How are they different?

File Attachments:

none

This lesson plan and its distribution were made possible by a grant from the Wyeth Foundation, the William Hayes Ackland Trust, and the Ackland Art Museum at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

ACKLAND

Ackland Art Museum

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill