



# The Red Badge of Courage

## Lesson Plan Grades 6–8

### Language Arts, Social Studies Focus

Students will explore the states involved in fighting the Civil War, battlefields, and troop movements to add context to Stephen Crane's novel, *The Red Badge of Courage*.

### ISTE NETS S Standards

- II. Social, ethical, and human issues
- III. Technology productivity tools
- IV. Technology communications tools
- V. Technology research tool

### Content Standards

- Explain the effectiveness of stylistic elements in a text that communicate an author's purpose.
- Describe how common and universal experiences serve as the source of literary themes.
- Recognize distinguishing features of genres, such as historical fiction.

### Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate an understanding of *The Red Badge of Courage* on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical, and personal.
- Discuss the internal conflicts that arise within Henry Fleming about the Civil War and his participation in it.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the geography and psychology of the Civil War and its representation in the novel.

### Technology Components

- Discovery Education *unitedstreaming* account (<http://www.unitedstreaming.com>)
- Google Earth software (free download from <http://earth.google.com>)
- Computer with LCD projector and Internet connection
- Access to the Internet for teacher- and student-based research
- Presentation software such as PowerPoint
- Graphic organizing software such as Inspiration and TimeLiner 5.0

### Lesson Starter

- Ask students: "What do you know about war?" Record their answers on the board or with Inspiration.
- Show the video segments, "Introduction: The Red Badge of Courage" and the "Realities of War" from *The Red Badge of Courage*, available on Discovery Education *unitedstreaming*, <http://www.unitedstreaming.com>.
- After students have read *The Red Badge of Courage*, ask them to discuss the Civil War's effect on soldiers, focusing on fear and courage.



# Discovery Education *unitedstreaming*

## Prior Knowledge

- Continue brainstorming what students know about the Civil War, how it began, who was involved, and the final outcome.

## Present New Content

- Use Google Earth to present America in the 1800s, focusing on the different states that fought during the Civil War and the reasons some seceded. The following digital content from *unitedstreaming* will help provide context:
  - Suggested *unitedstreaming* content:
    - “War Strategy for the North,” *The American Civil War*, 1996
    - “War Strategy for the South,” *The American Civil War*, 1996
    - “The Northern Home Front,” *The American Civil War*, 1996
    - “The Southern Home Front,” *The American Civil War*, 1996
    - Image: Field hospital in Virginia
    - Image: African-American infantry band
- Ask students to review assigned chapters from *The Red Badge of Courage*. Throughout your discussions of the book, interject questions about how Henry Fleming evolves as a person and a soldier.
  - Suggested *unitedstreaming* video: *Great Books: The Red Badge of Courage*, 1999
    - “A Soldier’s Doubt: Do I Have What It Takes to Fight?”
    - “The Ambiguity of the Real Henry Fleming: Farm Boy or Hero?”
- Ask students to create an ongoing journal, using Google Earth Pushpins to map major battles and locations of events from the book.

## Independent Learning Experience

- Have students review the Google Earth pushpins, then use TimeLiner 5.0 to create a timeline of major events from the war.
- Students can research one major event. Ask them to describe the event and its impact on the war. Have them create a multimedia essay comparing and contrasting the author’s portrayal of Henry Fleming’s pre-war expectations at home to his experiences on the battlefield.
- Ask students to work in groups to plan an itinerary for a field trip to sites mentioned in *The Red Badge of Courage*, including a paragraph explaining the purpose for visiting each site and its relationship to the novel.

## Additional Web Sites

- The National Park Service Web site has information on historic battlefield sites around the country. (<http://www.nps.gov/parks.html>)
- The Civil War Web site includes information, timelines, and images about the Civil War. (<http://www.civilwar.com>)





# Discovery Education *unitedstreaming*

- Students can also search for primary sources through Google using the following keywords: “American Civil War.”

## **Cross-Curricular Lesson Extension**

- Select some Civil War images from *unitedstreaming*. Have each student study an image and imagine being one of the people in the image. Have each student write a letter home from the soldier’s point of view, discussing friends, life in camp, and the hardships of war.

## **Feedback**

- Circulate around the room, providing feedback to students and small groups.
- Ask students to submit a rough draft of their field trip itinerary with key ideas for each location halfway through the project. Provide comments and guidance on next steps for each pair or group.

## **Assessment**

- Use a scoring rubric, provided to students in advance, to evaluate each itinerary, timeline, and multimedia presentation.

## **Transfer**

- Students may experience self-doubt when confronted with events that test their courage. Have students discuss and write about their own courage in standing up to peer pressure.

## **Citations**

Discovery Channel School. *Great Books: The Red Badge of Courage*. 1999, *unitedstreaming*, <http://www.unitedstreaming.com/>

Library of Congress. African-American Infantry Band. 2006, *unitedstreaming*, <http://www.unitedstreaming.com/>

Library of Congress. Doctor Letterman and Staff, USA. 2006, *unitedstreaming*, <http://www.unitedstreaming.com/>

Library of Congress. Field Hospital in Virginia. 2006, *unitedstreaming*, <http://www.unitedstreaming.com/>

Library of Congress. Union Gun Crew in Virginia. 2006, *unitedstreaming*, <http://www.unitedstreaming.com/>

United Learning. *American Civil War, The: The War Years: Part 1: 1861-1862 and Part 2: 1863-1865*. 1996, *unitedstreaming*, <http://www.unitedstreaming.com/>

