

CIVIL WAR ARCHIVES PROJECT

Display Suggestions

150 Points –

1. Present a famous battle. Present information on commanders, geography of the battle, dramatic moments, and ultimate results. Many museums use diorama (models) to give a visual dimension to the viewer. Small lights on key spots can give a great perspective and give your display great crowd appeal. Even an attached audio tape can give the battle great flavor as Civil War music or dramatic readings: "It was a cold, rainy, April morning..." PLEASE NOTE: Your diorama MUST depict a particular battle and not just random soldiers wandering around a random field or hillside. Be specific and present the battle accurately.
2. Research uniforms of both sides and take pictures or drawings of one or both sides showing the wide variety of fighting attire.
3. Show several examples of soldiers' letters home. Pictures of the writer will stir powerful emotions in the viewer.
4. Compare two generals of the war---one Union and one Confederate (not Lee and Grant). What common threads run through the biographies of both men?
5. Research artists, sketch artists, and painters who worked during the war.
6. Design and display several recruitment posters used by both sides during the war.
7. Research infamous prisons of the Civil War such as Andersonville. Perhaps a diorama would work here.
8. Research the roles of African American soldiers in the war. Focus on one famous regiment (e.g., 54th Massachusetts) and on one personality involved in the war such as Frederick Douglass.
9. Create a display on Civil War villains such as John Wilkes Booth, Heinrich Wirz, or William "Bloody Bill" Quantrill.
10. Research Sherman's March to the Sea. Using maps, props, and pictures present a display showing the route Sherman's troops took and the destruction they caused.
11. Research and present a display on the role of submarines.
12. Research equipment used during the war. Construct a display showing such items as tents, cartridge boxes, knapsacks, bed rolls, canteens, shoes, buckles, etc.
13. Outfit a mannequin or statue with a full uniform of a particular side. Construct facsimiles of his equipment, rifle, etc.
14. Research and display several important documents of the war: Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, the Emancipation Proclamation, Lee's farewell address to his troops, etc.
15. Research the background and origin of Civil War music and its musicians. Have an audio tape available to play several examples while the viewer reads from your display.
16. Research and present a display on the life of both slaves, and free blacks during the War. Give information on African-American's contributions to the war effort.

17. Research the roles of animals during the Civil War. For instance, thousands of horses were killed during the war—making the battlefield even more gruesome.
18. Create a Civil War era newspaper. Designing a newspaper from either a Northern or Southern city, the newspaper will have six pages: a front page, a profile of a real Civil War era person, an interview page, an editorial opinion page, an editorial cartoon page and a review of a Civil War era movie or book. Please see the examples for further information.
19. Find a picture or drawing of a typical camp set up. Build a small diorama of a camp showing tents, campfires, soldiers, rifle stacks.
20. Research hospitals, dressing stations, medical instruments, tools, and supplies. Build a display showing pictures, drawings, or actual instruments used during the war. Or research and display the work by the Red Cross during the Civil War and Clara Barton's contribution to that organization.
21. Using a model or diorama, present a display on the famous naval battles between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac*. Or research ironclads and how they were used in the war.
22. Research and present the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. A diorama or picture display could be very dramatic.
23. Present a display on the Civil War first ladies—Mary Todd Lincoln and Varina Davis.
24. Research the origins of the Medal of Honor during the Civil War. Display pictures of several winners both black and white.
25. Build a display or diorama model of the surrender of General Lee to General Grant in Wilmer McLean's parlor on April 9, 1865.
26. Research and present both Confederate and Union flags showing the development and variety of flags on one or both sides.
27. Read about weapons such as knives, pistols, sabers, rifles, and cannons. Present a display showing the development of weapons and the wide variety of carnage they caused. Or produce a display on different kinds of bullets, cannonballs, ammunition. Show how a cartridge was produced—even make one, substituting salt for black powder!
28. Construct a display of famous Hollywood films of the Civil War. Watch, critique and analyze at least four of the famous films concerning the war.
29. Prepare a display showing a timeline of important events during the war. Use pictures, drawings, and other visuals to enhance your timeline.
30. Create a display on an important figure of the war such as Robert E. Lee, U.S. Grant, Jefferson Davis, Abraham Lincoln, etc.

You can create an original idea for a project. Please follow the guidelines described elsewhere on how to present your idea for teacher approval.