

Civil War Cryptogram Lesson Plan

Objective: Students will learn about the reasons for the Battle of Lynchburg. They will also be able to identify key leaders and their roles during the battle.

Time: 25-35 minutes

Grade Level(s): 6 & up

Overview: Students will be given the cryptogram to decode then, there will be a class discussion on Lynchburg's value during the Civil War.

Related SOL:

History: United States History to 1865

VS.7 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the issues that divided our nation and led to the Civil War by

- a) identifying the events and differences between northern and southern states that divided Virginians and led to secession, war, and the creation of West Virginia;
 - b) describing Virginia's role in the war, including identifying major battles that took place in Virginia;
 - c) describing the roles played by whites, enslaved African Americans, free African Americans, and American Indians.
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Materials:

- Civil War Cryptogram worksheet
- Pen or pencil

Name: _____



During the Civil War, both the Northern and Southern armies had scouts and spies. Their lives were dangerous because they could be hung if they were caught. Messages sent back behind the lines had to be coded to keep the information secret. The following cryptogram, which is a secret coded message, was written from General David Hunter to General Ulysses S. Grant.

Directions: Use the table below to decode the cryptogram. Substitute the letters in the cryptogram with the corresponding letters in the second row of the table. (*Some of the message has been decoded for you already*)

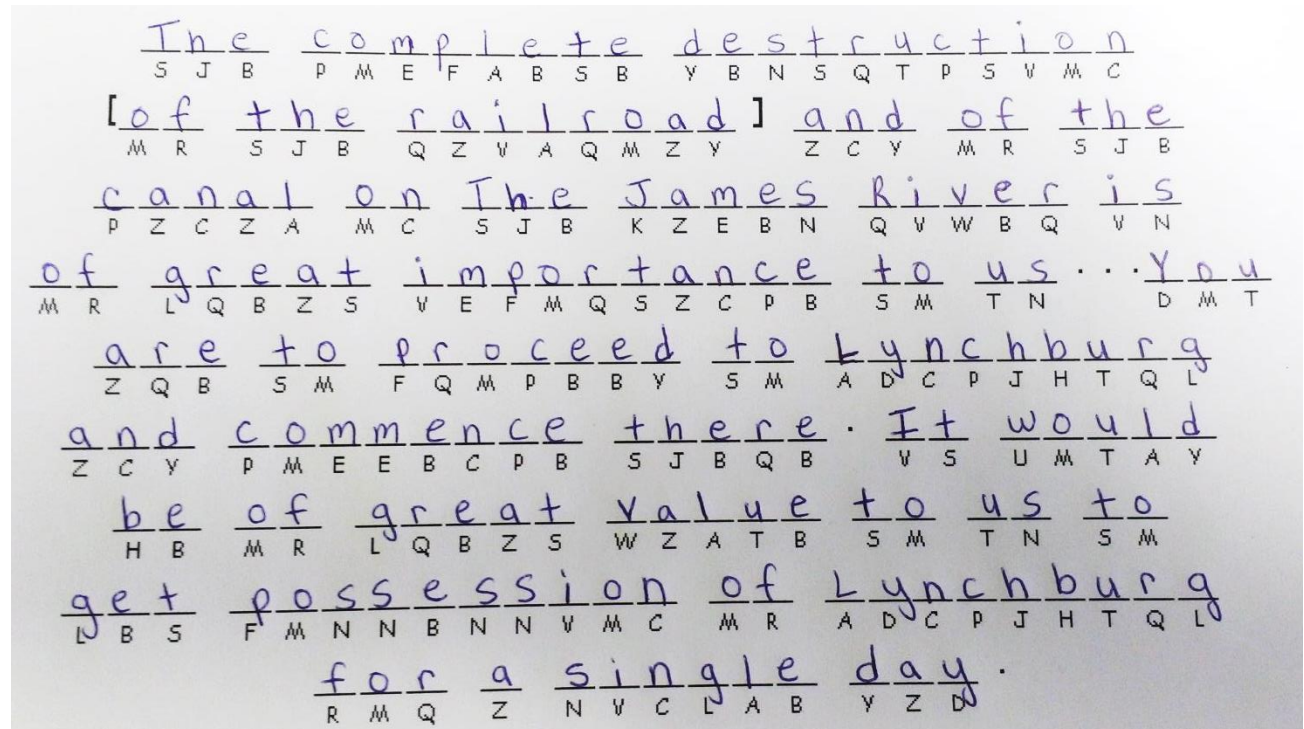
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| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |
| L | E | N | Y | M | P | Z | B | X | H | J | G | O | S | Q | C | R | F | T | U | W | I | V | K | D | A |

The following cryptogram is a message from Union General David Hunter to Ulysses S. Grant:

_____ U I
 W L K G U F O X K W K R K B W Y P G W A U M
 [_____ I] _____
 U I W L K Y J A X Y U J R J M R U I W L K
 _____ I I
 G J M J X U M W L K E J F K B Y A N K Y A B
 _____ I U . . . y U
 U I Z Y K J W A F O U Y W J M G K W U P B Q U P
 _____ y U
 J Y K W U O Y U G K K R W U X Q M G L D P Y Z
 _____ I U
 J M R G U F F K M G K W L K Y K A W T U P X R
 _____ U U
 D K U I Z Y K J W N J X P K W U P B W U
 _____ I y U
 Z K W O U B B K B B A U M U I X Q M G L D P Y Z
 _____ I y .
 I U Y J B A M Z X K R J Q

Cryptogram Answer Key

General Hunter was following orders that General U. S. Grant had issued earlier that month:



"The complete destruction [of the railroad] and of the canal on the James River is of great importance to us... You are to proceed to Lynchburg and commence there. It would be of great value to us to get possession of Lynchburg for a single day."

Discussion Question: Why did General Grant want possession of Lynchburg?

Lynchburg was a key city during the Civil War; it was a connecting point to Richmond, the confederate capital. Lynchburg was a transportation hub with an extensive railway system, a wealthy city with a booming trade market, and it was a city of hospitals. Tools, equipment, food, uniforms, and more were transported from Lynchburg to confederate soldiers in Richmond. By destroying Lynchburg, General Grant was hoping to indirectly affect Richmond.