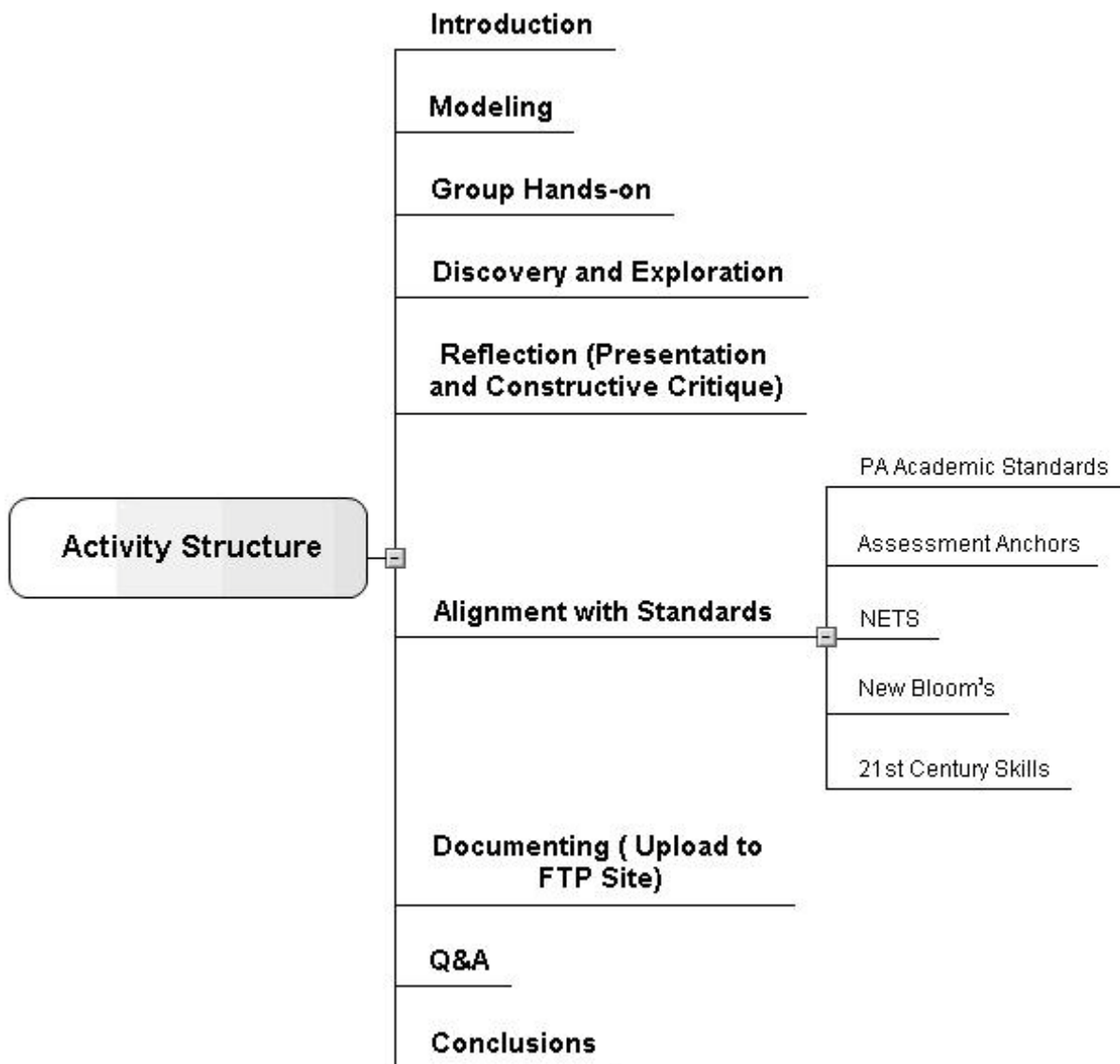


21st Century Activity featuring Learning Essentials



Learning Essentials

Civil War

1. Introduction

Description

How do you think the Civil War would have been different if both the North and the South had access to the communication technology of today? Using the tools available with *Learning Essentials for Microsoft Office*, you will apply current technology to Civil War situations.

Objectives:

- Learners will gain an understanding of *Learning Essentials for Microsoft Office*.
- Learners will research and compile Civil War information using the Internet.
- Learners will compare and contrast current communication technologies to those available during the Civil War.
- Learners will apply current technology to actual Civil War situations and compare the possible outcomes that would have resulted using current technologies to those that were actually played out in the Civil War.
- Learners will use the templates available with Learning Essentials to construct a newsletter informing the citizens of the 1860s as to the developments of the war.
- Learners will engage in either a Skype Public Chat or initiate a Skype conference call with some students representing the North, and the others representing the South.
- Learners will compare notes and share newsletters to gain a better understanding of Civil War history.

Grade Range: 9-10

Materials & Templates:

Internet

Microsoft Word

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Microsoft Excel

Microsoft PowerPoint

Learning Essentials for Microsoft Office (free download for academic licenses)

Participants will gain access to *Learning Essentials*.

Skype, downloaded for free at www.skype.com (Version 2.6 or higher required for use with Mac)

Prerequisite Skills:

Saving a file

Text/number entry

Formatting text

Changing backgrounds and page properties

Suggested Time Allotment:

Approximately 4 one-hour class period (The first day will be spent compiling data, the second day will be spent taking and completing a template, the third day will be used to share information with the rest of the class, as well as drafting a newsletter. The fourth day will be used to complete the newsletter and participate in the Skype Public Chat or conference calls.)

Introductory Web Sites:

<http://www.kidport.com/RefLib/UsaHistory/CivilWar/Communication.htm>

<http://scard.buffnet.net>

<http://www.civilwarhome.com/telegraph.htm>

<http://www.civilwarsignal.org/>

<http://www.unitedstatesmilitarytelegraph.org/>

<http://americancivilwar.com/statepic/pennsylvania.html>

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/abpp/battles/PAMap.htm>

<http://www.gettysburgreenactment.com/>

<http://www.pacivilwar.com/>

<http://www.pacivilwar.com/cwpaflags.html>

<http://mciunix.mciu.k12.pa.us/~spjvweb/civilwarwq.html>

Activating Prior Knowledge

- The facilitator will use various pre-reading strategies to activate learners' prior knowledge

- The facilitator will use learner input from the activation strategy to contextualize the lesson.

2. Modeling

1. Facilitator will model brainstorming activities and recording processes using the Promethean Board and *Microsoft Word*.
2. Facilitator will model Boolean search techniques and give the learners the following Web site as a resource (<http://adam.ac.uk/info/boolean.html>)
3. Facilitator will model different roles that will be assumed in each group.
4. Facilitator will demonstrate how students will access the Skype Public Chat and/or Skype conference call.
5. Facilitator will present the assessment criteria and model expected work quality.

3. Group Hands-on

Introduce the lesson with a discussion of how communication within both the North and the South depended upon uncertain, sluggish and often failed means of communication. Communication about the state of the war to the general population was slow and often riddled with inaccuracies. Communications were such that families may not have been notified for months or years that a loved one had been injured or killed in battle. How could family communications have been different during the Civil War if 21st century communications had been available?

1. The facilitator will divide learners into four groups:
 - Group 1 will research types of communication during the Civil War.
 - Group 2 will create a timeline of events that occurred during the Battle of Gettysburg using the timeline template.
 - Group 3 will create a Venn Diagram to organize and display the similarities and differences in culture and resources between the North and the South.
 - Group 4 will research diaries, letters and memoirs of the Civil War.
2. Explain that each group will use its information to help create a southern hometown newsletter that covers the time of the Battle of Gettysburg. The reporting will assume the ubiquitous availability of 21st century communication technologies.
3. Learners will use the Gathering Grid Template to help organize their research for the

assignment.

4. Learners will use the Works Cited Template to assist in referencing their sources for the assignment.
5. Learners will use the Grade Tracker Template to keep track of, not only this assignment but, all assignments for the term.
6. Using *Learning Essentials for Microsoft*, learners will have access to templates for *Microsoft Word*, *Excel* and *PowerPoint* that will allow them to design custom documents for the assignment.
 - *PowerPoint* – [Venn Diagram](#)
 - *Word* – [Timeline](#), [Newsletter](#), [Gathering Grid](#), [Works Cited](#)
 - *Excel* – [Grade Tracker](#)

Learning Essentials provides not only helpful templates and evaluation tools; it also provides short tutorials on how to use Microsoft Office and its associated programs. A learner who is not familiar with how to use *Word*, for example, can complete the *Word* tutorial to refine his skills.

Conclusion

At the end of the lesson, representatives from each group will share their findings with the rest of the class. After all the information has been shared, each group will create a newsletter with varying points of view. Half of the groups will create their newsletter from the perspective of the North, while the other half will design their newsletter from the perspective of the South. When completed, students log into the Skype Public Chat or Skype Conference Call and use their newsletters as a resource as they engage in conversation with their peers playing the roles of Northerners or Southerners.

4. Discovery and Exploration

Learners will use Skype as an example of a current technology that potentially revolutionizes communication and likely would have had a profound impact on the Civil War. In addition, you may have the learners engage in other examples listed below as more opportunities for discovery and exploration.

There are two suggested models for integrating Skype into this lesson. The first is Public Chat, which, despite its name, can be made private to your classroom. Public Chat is basically a chat room created

and managed by the facilitator. There is no audio and therefore no need for headsets or microphones. The second approach is to use Skype Conference Call. This free service supports 10 individual connections. Note that this does not necessarily limit the participants to 10 learners. If the computer has external speakers and a table microphone, many students could be in the same location using the same connection.

Whichever model the facilitator uses with the students, the following procedure and key questions should be implemented:

1. Divide the learners into groups of Northerners and Southerners and make sure everyone has their newsletters to refer to as a resource.
2. Ask the learners what sort of challenges they anticipate when so many people, impassioned by the topic at hand, are involved in the same instantaneous communication. It may be suggested that the North and South try to take turns in the discussion, or even that the discussion be broken down into smaller groups.
3. Ask the students how they think not being able to see a person's face and body language might improve or detract from the conversation. During the Civil War, much of the communication took place via letter which would be similar to the Public Chat.
4. Propose a difficult topic where both sides have extreme differences of opinion. Explain to the students that, before they use Skype to try to reach some kind of resolution or compromise, they will first write their position and demands on a piece of paper. (One paper and position statement per group.) Take their papers and seal them away.
5. Initiate the Skype Public Chat or Conference Call. Moderate the discussion. Note that as the moderator you have a great deal of control such as muting people, deleting comments and setting people to read-only mode. Learn about managing Public Chats here: http://www.skype.com/help/guides/publicchat_manage.html.
6. After the facilitator ends the conversation, pull the class together for a short discussion to assess the effectiveness of their Skype communication. Was progress made in understanding the others' position? Did groups change their position on any issues?
7. Remove the position statements written by each side before the Skype communication. Re-emphasize that this correspondence would have taken days or weeks to reach the other side (if it got there at all) during the Civil War. Read the statements to the class. How does modern communication technology change the face of war?

Other Opportunities for Discovery and Exploration

1. Learners will create a newsletter from a hometown in upstate Pennsylvania for the same time period using the same assumptions as for the first newsletter.
2. After researching Pickett's Charge and the Battle of the Wheatfield, learners will create a script for and produce a video of a *60 Minutes*-type newscast that reports on the battles.
3. After researching and reading *A Soldier's Diary*, learners will create 21st century correspondences between the soldier and his family.
4. Learners will create a *PowerPoint* presentation discussing how the social, religious and cultural morals of the Civil War era may have changed the manner in which individuals of that time would have utilized 21st century technology.
5. Digital Storytelling is a fantastic way to engage learners. It revolves around the idea of telling a story with any of a variety of available multimedia tools, including graphics, audio, video animation and Web publishing. For extra credit, learners will create a Digital Story of the war journey of a Civil War soldier as a means of capturing the emotions and feelings he must have experienced. The tools and templates in *Learning Essentials* could be utilized to support the multimedia skills needed to create the learner's digital storytelling project.
6. After determining a set of criteria for the trustworthiness of blogs, learners could conduct an online search for blogs related to the Civil War and read/participate in a blog. Learners can blog with their classmates as if they were living during the war and communicate their feelings and emotions of the time.
7. Learners can use the current communication tool of podcasting to narrate the war as it is going on with video and audio similar to a newscast today. They can also podcast as a historian or interview people who may have stories from the Civil War era. The entire class can combine the group's efforts by creating a podcast to summarize what they learned and use the podcast as a review for a test or share among fellow learners throughout the state.
8. Learners can create a Wiki site including all the documents, audio, video assignments, etc... Making the site public or private allows the learners to collaborate on and share the Civil War with their classmates or other learners across the state.

5. Reflection (Presentation and Constructive Critique)

1. Why do you think the facilitator did not specify roles within the group?
2. How did the learners organize and distribute work responsibilities?
3. What does imposing a hypothetical situation, such as placing 21st century communication technologies in the hands of denizens of the Civil War era, require the learner to do?
4. Was the learner focus on the content or the technology?
5. What did learners do when they had questions about the technology?

6. Alignment with Standards

6.1. PA Academic Standards

8.2.9 B - Identify and analyze primary documents, material artifacts and historic sites important in Pennsylvania history from 1787 to 1914.

8.2.9 D - Identify and analyze conflict and cooperation among social groups and organizations in Pennsylvania history from 1787 to 1914.

8.3.9 A - Identify and analyze the political and cultural contributions of individuals and groups to United States history from 1787 to 1914.

8.3.9 D Identify and analyze conflict and cooperation among social groups and organizations in United States history from 1787 to 1914.

6.2. Assessment Anchors

There are currently no assessment anchors for History/Social Studies.

6.3. NETS for Learners 2007:

1. Creativity and Innovation

Learners demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Learners:

- a. apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.
- b. create original works as a means of personal or group expression.
- c. use models and simulations to explore complex systems and issues.

2. Communication and Collaboration

Learners use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.

Learners:

- a. interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts or others employing a variety of digital environments and media.
- b. communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.
- d. contribute to project teams to produce original works or solve problems.

3. Research and Information Fluency

Learners apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information. Learners:

- a. plan strategies to guide inquiry.
- b. locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.
- c. evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness to specific tasks.
- d. process data and report results.

4. Critical Thinking, Problem-Solving & Decision-Making

Learners use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources. Learners:

- a. identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.
- b. plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.
- c. collect and analyze data to identify solutions and/or make informed decisions.
- d. use multiple processes and diverse perspectives to explore alternative solutions.

5. Digital Citizenship

Learners understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior. Learners:

- a. advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology.
- b. exhibit a positive attitude toward using technology that supports collaboration, learning, and productivity.

- c. demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning.
- d. exhibit leadership for digital citizenship.

6. Technology Operations and Concepts

Learners demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems and operations.

Learners:

- a. understand and use technology systems.
- b. select and use applications effectively and productively.
- c. troubleshoot systems and applications.
- d. transfer current knowledge to learning of new technologies.

6.4. New Bloom's

Alignment with Bloom's Revised (2001)

- How does this lesson align with Bloom's revised (2001)?
- Does the lesson provide a structure for logical sequential movement through Bloom's revised?
- How does the lesson accommodate for differentiation of learners so that movement through Bloom's revised is experienced appropriately for all learners?
- Did you keep in mind the various levels of Bloom's revised at which different learners could be expected to progress? Did you use this information when forming your groups?

This Lesson Articulated with Bloom's Revised (2001)

Bloom's Revised level	Actions/Products
Creating	planning & produce newsletter, video, video script, hypothetical correspondences
Evaluating	hypothesize, judge, evaluate, critique, investigate, report, draw conclusions, speech
Analyzing	outline, organize, deconstruct, structure, integrate, survey, report
Applying	interpret, summarize, inferring, paraphrase, explaining, illustration, demonstration, presentation, journal
Understanding	summary, collection, explanation, show and tell, example, share information, label, list

Remembering	recognizing, describing, identifying, locating
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6.5. 21st Century Skills

The North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL, 2003) developed a working model that delineates 21st century skills. The model is featured below. Use the model to help you answer the following questions:

- What are the key 21st century skills evident in this lesson?
- Do these skills fit into the lesson transparently, or do they feel “artificial?”
- Is there synergy between 21st century learning skills in this lesson and Bloom’s revised? Can you see a connection between the two?
- How does the adoption of 21st century learning skills require a change the learning environment?



(NCREL, 2005)

Alignment with 21st Century Learning Skills

1. Digital-Age Literacy [basic, economic and technologic literacies; visual and information literacies; multicultural literacy]

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2. Effective Communication [teaming, collaboration and interpersonal skills; personal, social and civic responsibility; interactive communication]
3. Inventive Thinking [adaptability and managing complexities; curiosity, creativity; higher-order thinking and sound reasoning]
4. High Productivity [prioritizing, planning and managing for results; effective use of real-world tools; ability to produce relevant, high-quality products]

21st Century Teaching Skills

Teaching and learning are inextricably intertwined. Thus, delivering instruction that promotes 21st century learning requires the recognition and the application of 21st century teaching skills in a way that changes the teaching/learning environment. Below is a table that represents ISTE's (2007) conditions for new learning environments. This lesson met all of the ISTE criteria.

- Go through the chart to see where these criteria are evident in the lesson.
- How does this environment differ from the traditional facilitator-centric classroom?
- What issues does the new learning environment present for the classroom facilitator?
- How do you feel these issues can be best addressed?
- What does this model insinuate for facilitators as a learning community?

This lesson supports the following 21st Century Teaching Skills:

New Learning Environments (ISTE, 2007)	
Learner-centered learning	X
Multi-sensory stimulation	X
Multi-path progression	X
Multimedia	X
Collaborative work	X
Information exchange	X
Active/exploratory/inquiry-based learning	X
Critical thinking and informed decision-making	X

Proactive/planned action	X
Authentic, real-world context	X

7. Documenting (Upload to FTP Site)

8. Q&A

9. Conclusion

Unrelenting change in technology and movement from a mass production economy to an economy of innovation (Freidman, 1990; 2000, 2006; Godbey, 2006; Goldman, Nagel, Preiss, 1995; Preiss, Goldman, & Nagel, 1996) has caused education to re-examine learning environments and processes, and grapple with synthesizing new technologies into the learning environment (e.g., Chickering & Gamson, 1999; Magolda, 1992; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1998). Social constructivist and socio-cultural theories and perspectives (i.e., Vygotsky and Brunner), social cognitive theory (i.e., Bandura) as well as theories of situated cognition have all contributed to reshaping and enhancing the learning environment supported by the use of technology (Koschmann, 1996). These approaches involve movement from traditional facilitator-centered pedagogies to a social-constructivist paradigm where learners are encouraged to work both individually and collaboratively to solve relevant problems or produce viable solutions through authentic learning activities (Huang, 2002) in both face-to-face classrooms and online environments (American Psychological Association, 2002; ISTE, 2007; NCREL, 2005). These theories are based on the assumption that knowledge is situated in the activity, context, and culture in which it is developed and used (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989).

Project-based learning is an approach that is consonant with the socio-cultural theory and situated cognition (Kozulin, Gindis, Ageyev & Miller, 2003). A project-based learning approach provides opportunities for learners to work with authentic tasks that they address in a natural social context. The creation of relatively small working groups of learners provides an arena in which they pool knowledge and theories to achieve the group's goals by thinking aloud, offering perspectives, changing perspectives, and collaboratively building knowledge through opportunities for experimentation, self-

correction and reflection (Pooell, Van der Krogt, & Wildemeersch, 1998). Seidel et al. (2002) noted that project-based learning is characterized by learner involvement in a series of activities or procedures that require sustained focus over time and that are ultimately linked to a creation of significance such as a performance-based outcome, a product, or a service that is highly valued by the learner and/or broader community. This type of effort generally requires that the learners become involved in activities that involve the community for research, internships, presentations or other relevant activities.

Underlying components of project-based learning include: a) engagement, b) authenticity, c) knowledge generation, d) collaboration, d) academic reinforcement and e) ongoing assessment (Seidel, Aryeh, & Steinberg, 2002). Project-based learning is consistent with ISTE's (2007) guidelines for 21st century teaching skills, NCREL's (2005) delineation of 21st century skills to be taught, and with the National Education Technology Standards (NETS) for learner learning.

This project clearly focuses on all of the relevant aspects of the current standard sets as well as on *The Bridge to the 21st Century Learning* as established in the *Learning for the 21st Century* report and *MILE Guide for 21st Century Skills* which is based on six key elements of 21st century learning:

1. Emphasize core subjects
2. Emphasize learning skills
3. Use 21st century tools to develop learning skills
4. Teach and learn in a 21st century context
5. Teach and learn 21st century content
6. Use 21st century assessments that measure 21st century skills.

This lesson presents an exemplary model for 21st century teaching and learning. The framework of this lesson provides a working template with criteria for formulating, planning and implementing lessons consonant with a 21st century model of teaching and learning.

NETS states:

The most effective learning environments meld traditional approaches and new approaches to facilitate learning of relevant content while addressing individual needs. The resulting learning environments should prepare students to:

- Communicate using a variety of media and formats
- Access and exchange information in a variety of ways
- Compile, organize, analyze, and synthesize information
- Draw conclusions and make generalizations based on information gathered
- Know content and be able to locate additional information as needed
- Become self-directed learners
- Collaborate and cooperate in team efforts
- Interact with others in ethical and appropriate ways

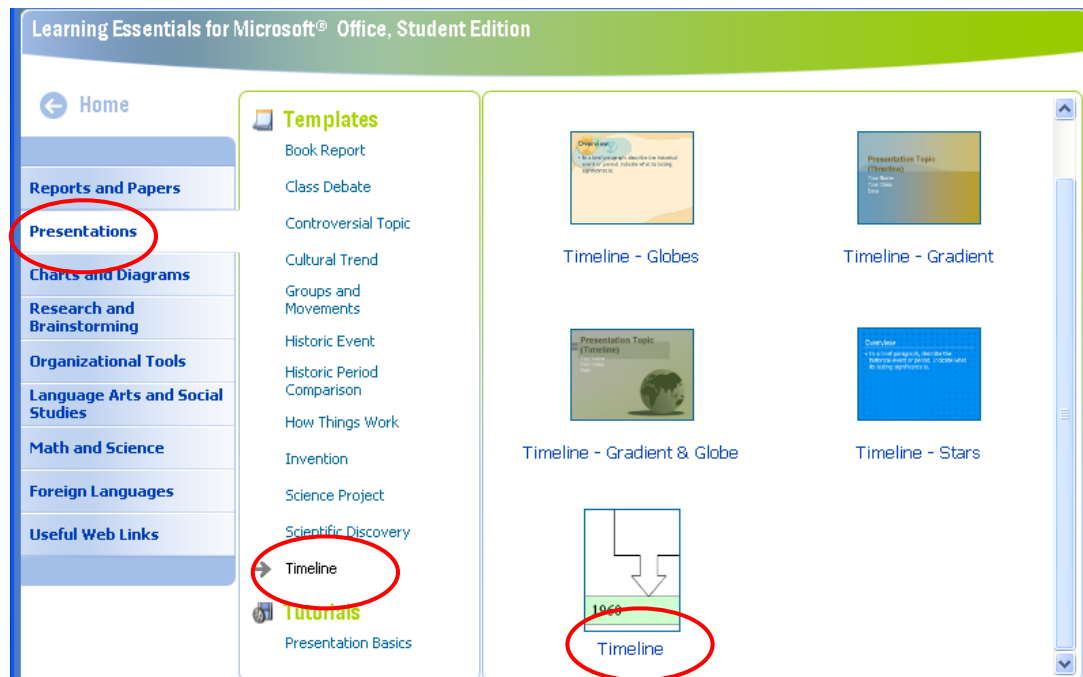
Meeting all of the above criteria, this lesson presents an exemplary model for 21st century teaching and learning. The framework of this lesson provides a working template with criteria for formulating, planning, and implementing lessons consonant with a 21st century model of teaching and learning.

Step-by-Step Instructions for Accessing Templates

All Learning Essentials templates open to documents that already have step-by-step instructions for entering/changing data.

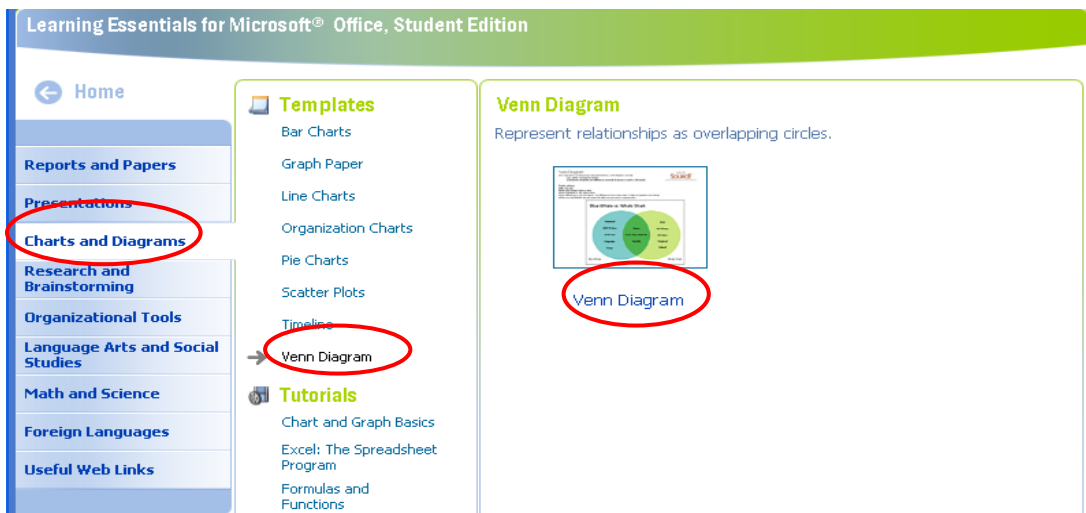
Timeline:

1. Learners will first open *Learning Essentials for Learners*.
2. Click on PRESENTATIONS in the left pane.
3. Click on TIMELINE in the menu that pops up.
4. Choose a timeline option from a list of available templates.



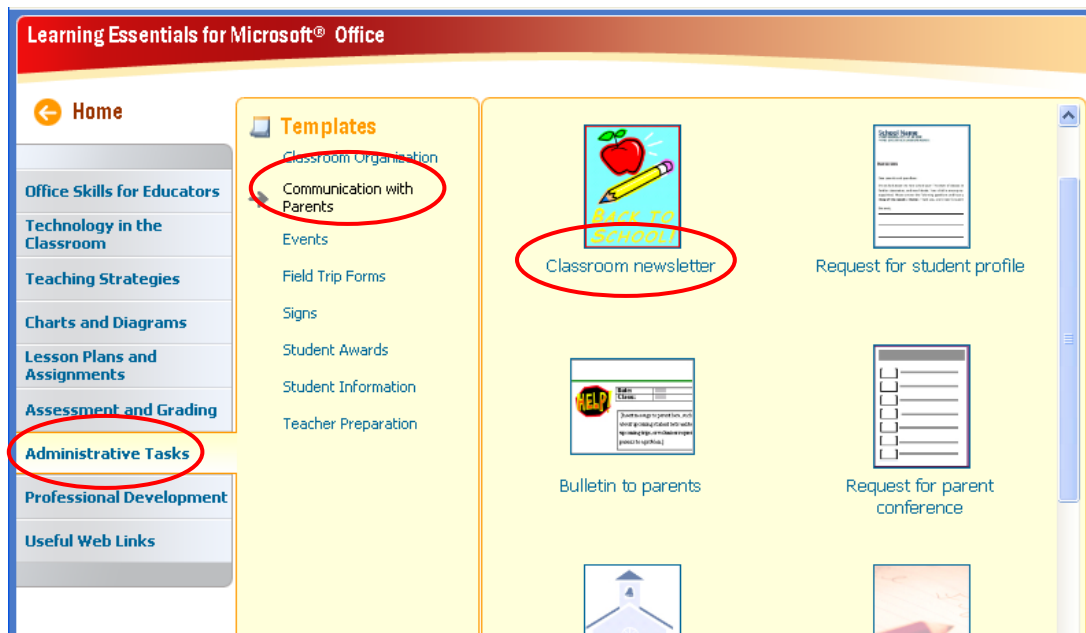
Venn Diagram:

1. Learners will first pull up *Learning Essentials for Learners*.
2. Click on CHARTS AND DIAGRAMS in the left pane.
3. Click on VENN DIAGRAM in the menu that comes up.
4. Click on the VENN DIAGRAM template.



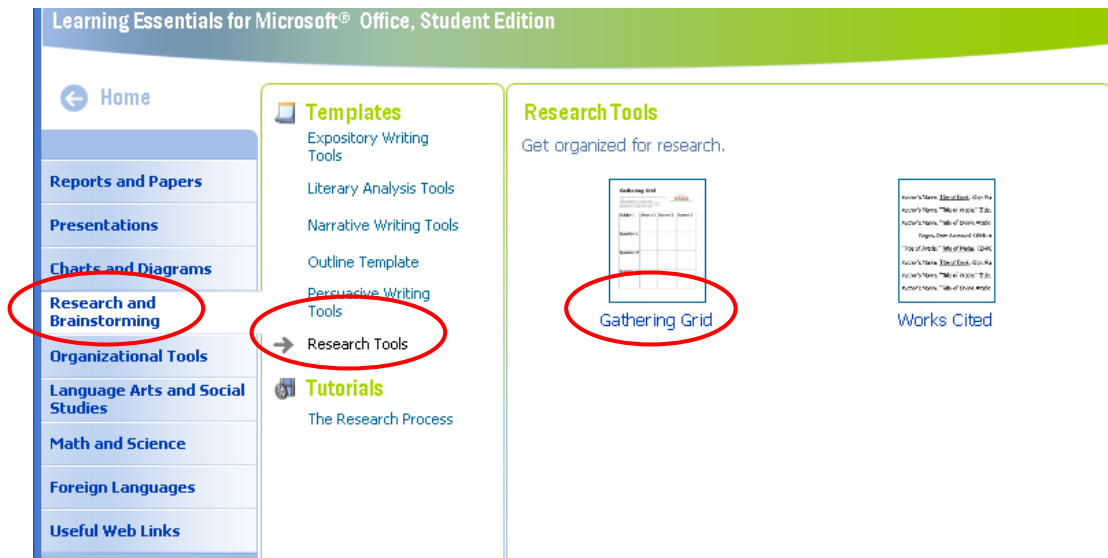
Newsletter:

1. Learners will first pull up *Learning Essentials for Educators*.
2. Click on ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS in the left pane.
3. Click on COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS in the menu that opens.
4. Choose the CLASSROOM NEWSLETTER template.
5. *For learners that do not have access to Learning Essentials for Educators, the facilitator can provide you with that file.*



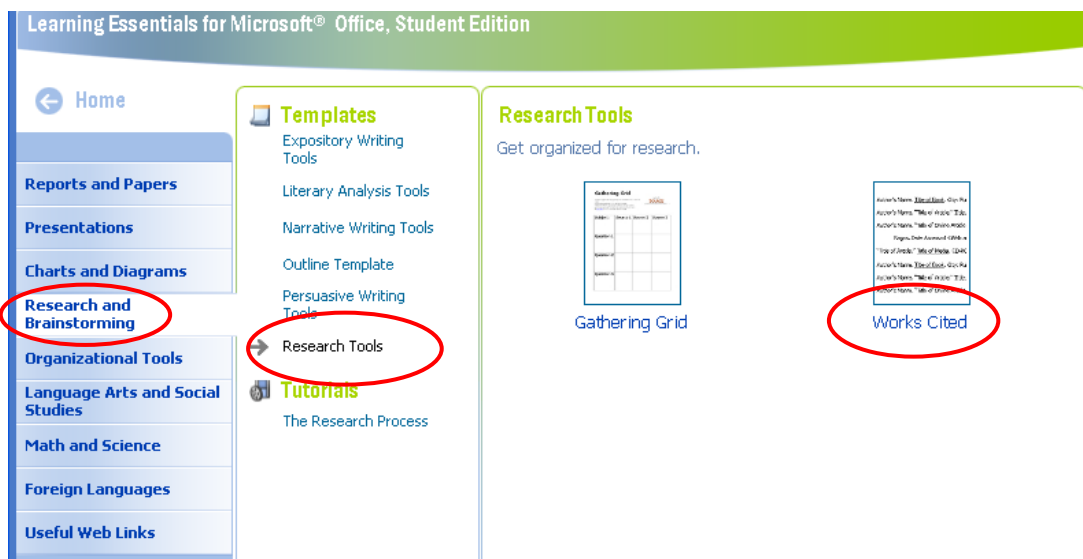
Gathering Grid:

1. Pull up *Learning Essentials for Learners*.
2. Click on RESEARCHING AND BRAINSTORMING in the left pane.
3. Click on RESEARCH TOOLS in the menu that comes up.
4. Choose the GATHERING GRID template



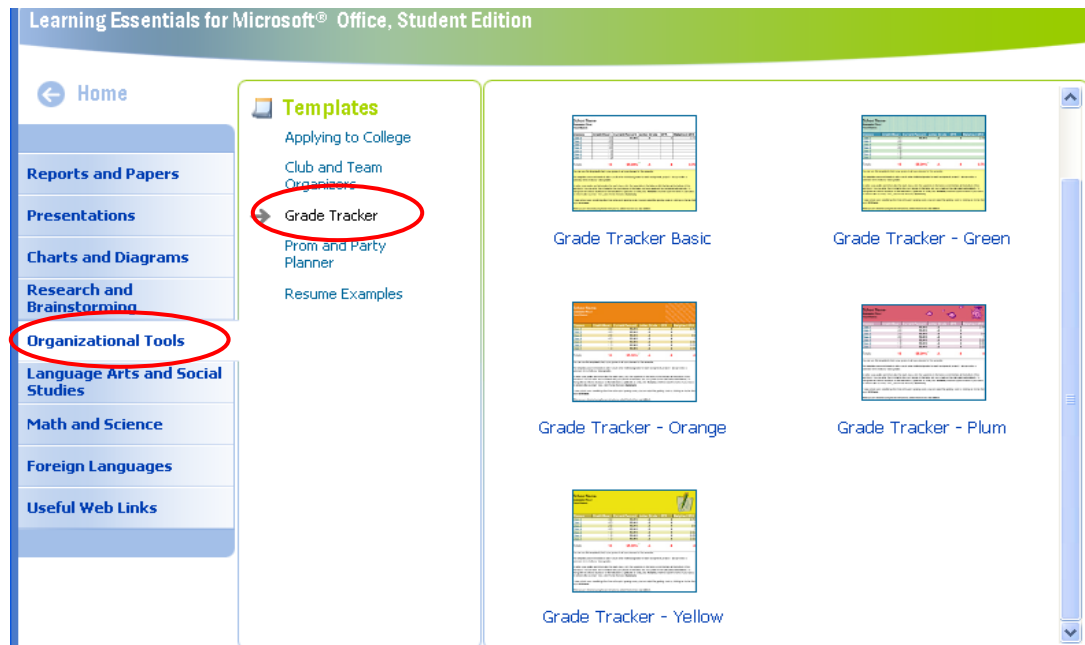
Works Cited:

1. Pull up *Learning Essentials for Learners*.
2. Click on RESEARCHING AND BRAINSTORMING in the left pane.
3. Click on RESEARCH TOOLS in the menu that comes up.
4. Choose the WORKS CITED template.



Grade Tracker:

1. Pull up *Learning Essentials for Learners*.
2. Click on ORGANIZATIONAL TOOLS in the left pane.
3. Click on GRADE TRACKER in the menu that comes up.
4. Choose from the list of available GRADE TRACKER templates.



Civil War

Learner Handout - Creating an Effective Newsletter

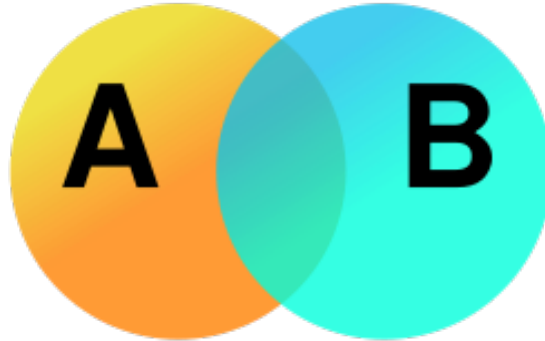
Use the guidelines below to create a more effective newsletter

- Use a multi-column layout.
 - Using shorter lines of text will prevent the reader from becoming bored with your newsletter.
 - Makes it easier for the reader to keep his/her place when going from one line to the next.
- Use graphics, but do not go overboard.
 - Smaller graphics are usually best, but not so small that the reader cannot tell what the graphics represent.
 - 72 dpi (dots per inch) resolution is as fine as you need for reading on a computer. Any larger and the newsletter might take too long to load.
 - Do not rely solely on graphics to dress up your page, use font formatting to catch the readers' eyes as well.
- Proofread.
 - Nothing will lose a reader's respect of the newsletter more than typographical and grammatical errors.
 - Have several people read over the newsletter and do not depend solely on the spelling and grammar function to catch all mistakes.
- Be creative!
 - Do not be afraid to try new formats. Your creativity and ingenuity will be rewarded!
 - Browse the Internet for sample newsletters to gather examples of what eye-catching, well-designed newsletters look like.

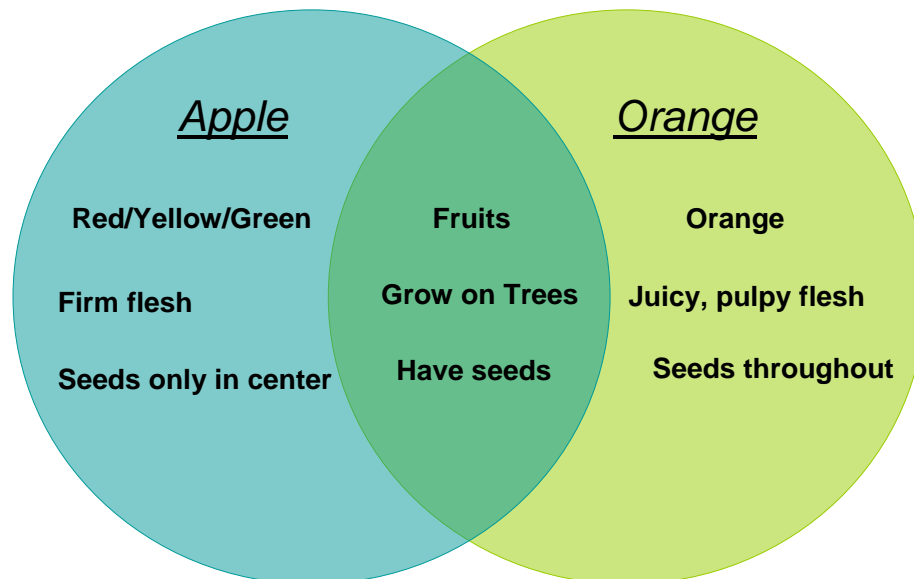
Civil War

Learner Handout - Venn Diagram

Below is a description of what a Venn Diagram is and how it works.



- In the example above you see how both “A” and “B” are distinct circles, but there is an area in the middle where they merge.
 - The items only in “A” or “B” are examples of how “A” is different from “B”
 - The merged area in the middle represents the similarities between “A” and B”



Civil War

Learner Handout - Useful Web Sites

Use these Web sites to gain a preliminary understanding of Civil War technologies, communication options and perspectives:

www.kidport.com/RefLib/UsaHistory/CivilWar/Communication.htm

<http://scard.buffnet.net>

www.civilwarhome.com/telegraph.htm

www.civilwarsignal.org/

www.unitedstatesmilitarytelegraph.org/

www.americancivilwar.com/statepic/pennsylvania.html

www.cr.nps.gov/hps/abpp/battles/PAmap.htm

www.gettysburgreenactment.com/

www.pacivilwar.com/

www.pacivilwar.com/cwpaflags.html

<http://mciunix.mciu.k12.pa.us/~spjvweb/civilwarwq.html>

Also, feel free to use search engines (Google, Yahoo, MSN, etc) to find additional resources for this assignment. The URLs are:

www.google.com



www.yahoo.com



www.msn.com

