

*9-12 Women Contributions to the Civil War*

# *How Did Women Contribute to the Civil War?*



National Museum of Civil War Medicine. *“Primary Sources: Nurses.”* <https://www.civilwarmed.org/explore/bibs/nurses/>

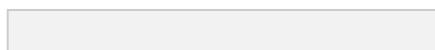
## Supporting Questions

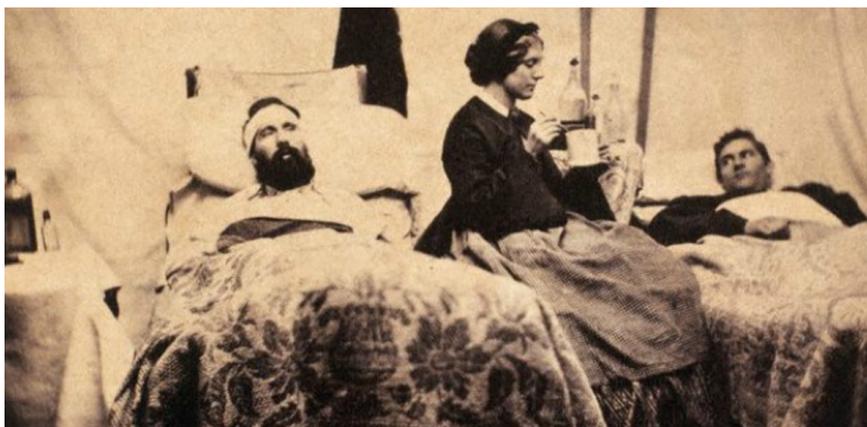
1. How did women contribute to the war effort?
2. Was Sarah Edmonds truthful?
3. Why is Harriet Tubman’s involvement in the war significant?



## 9-12 Women Contributions to the Civil War

How did women contribute to the Civil War?	
<b>Content Angle and Standards</b>	<p><b>D2.His.1.9-12.</b> Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.</p> <p><b>D2.His.15.9-12.</b> Distinguish between long-term causes and triggering events in developing a historical argument.</p> <p><b>D2.His.16.9-12.</b> Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past.</p> <p><b>D3.3.9-12.</b> Identify evidence that draws information directly and substantively from multiple sources to detect inconsistencies in evidence in order to revise or strengthen claims.</p> <p><b>D4.1.9-12.</b> Construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses.</p> <p><b>D4.2.9-12.</b> Construct explanations using sound reasoning, correct sequence (linear or non-linear), examples, and details with significant and pertinent information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanation given its purpose (e.g., cause and effect, chronological, procedural, technical).</p>
<b>Staging the Compelling Question</b>	<p>In staging the compelling question, have students answer the following questions in a Think-Pair-Share:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What was the role of men during the Civil War?</li> <li>2. Because many men went off to fight during the Civil War, what roles did women take on? Make a list of roles women took on.</li> </ol> <p>Have students review the photographs in the section below. Lead a discussion about observations or surprises sparked by the photos.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Civil War Nurses:</li> </ul>





National Museum of Civil War Medicine. "Primary Sources: Nurses."  
<https://www.civilwarmed.org/explore/bibs/nurses/>

- Women disguised as male soldiers



Nuwer, Racheal, 2014. "Women Fought in the Civil War Disguised as Men." Smithsonian Magazine.  
Photo credit Library of Congress.

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/modern-day-female-civil-war-re-enactors-honor-women-who-fought-men-north-and-south-180951249/>

- Harriet Tubman- Show students the following photo and ask these questions to begin a short discussion about Harriet Tubman.
  - What is Harriet Tubman most well known for? *Students will likely discuss her work as a famous conductor of the Underground Railroad*
  - How do you believe Tubman will impact the war effort?



Michals, Debra. "Harriet Tubman." National Women's History Museum. 2015.  
[www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/harriet-tubman](http://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/harriet-tubman).

**Supporting Question 1**

How did women contribute to the war effort?

**Formative Performance Task**

Write a paragraph or two explaining the contributions women made to the Civil War, based on Clara Barton's poem. Be sure to use evidence to support your answer.

**Featured Sources**

**Source A: The Women Who Went to the Field, November 18, 1892**

**Supporting Question 2**

Was Sarah Edmonds truthful?

**Formative Performance Task**

Write a paragraph explaining if Sarah Edmonds was truthful or not. Take a clear stance and use evidence from the sources to support your answer.

**Featured Sources**

**Source A: Publisher's Notice**  
**Source B: Book Excerpt**

**Supporting Question 3**

Why is Harriet Tubman's involvement in the war significant?

**Formative Performance Task**

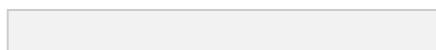
Write a paragraph explaining Harriet Tubman's significance to the war effort. In your response, compare her experience in the Civil War to the other two women that were focused on in the two previous lessons.

**Featured Sources**

**Source A: Passages from The Americans**  
**Source B: History Channel short article**  
**Source C: Harriet Tubman's Great Raid (New York Times)**  
**Source D: Harper's Weekly Illustration**  
**Source E: Historical Marker at the Combahee River (South Carolina)**  
**Source F: Colonel Montgomery Telegraph, June 8, 1863**  
**Source G: The Commonwealth, July 10,**



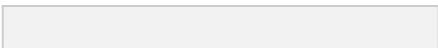
		<p><b>1863</b> <b>Source H: UnCivil Podcast</b></p>
<p><b>Summative Performance Task</b></p>	<p><b>ARGUMENT:</b> [How did women experience the Civil War?] Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that evaluates the need to study, remember, and/or celebrate this expedition using specific claims and relevant evidence from sources while acknowledging competing views.</p>	
	<p><b>EXTENSION.</b> After the above lessons, consider one of the following extensions to the learning.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Discussion:</b> Consider facilitating a discussion of the analysis questions. Ask students to share their response with someone, or if they already worked in a group, ask them to nominate someone to represent their group to the class as a whole. Capitalize on differences between group responses. Why did one group answer differently than another? What impacted them or stood out more?</li> <li><b>Four Corner Debate:</b> Consider a "four-corner debate." In the corners of the room tack up a piece of paper with four differing and possible answers to the inquiry question. After students complete the lesson packet, pose the question to the room at large and ask students to move to the corner of the room (or in between locations) that represent their answer. Then, ask students to explain their choice. As students discuss they are allowed to move closer or further from ideas. This is a great strategy for kinesthetic learning.</li> <li><b>Socratic Seminar:</b> Consider doing a "Socratic seminar" to extend the learning and get students to question what they still don't know or understand. Start with the inquiry's question. Students should be encouraged to answer one another's question directly, but also to answer the question with another question. This continues the conversation and gets at more rich ideas. The teacher should try to say as little as possible and let the students lead the dialog. One strategy for this is to seat students in a circle. Give each of them a cup and 2-3 tokens. When a student makes a substantive contribution to the discussion the teacher will walk over and place a token in the cup signaling that they have contributed. Students will become aware of who has spoken and who has not, and leave space for one another.</li> <li><b>Structured Academic Controversy:</b> Consider turning the lesson into a "structured academic controversy." Take the overarching question and turn it into a "debate." Students can choose or be assigned a side in the debate and use the documents provided to argue their "answer" to the overarching question. They can argue over interpretations and credibility of some documents.</li> <li><b>Reacting to the Past:</b> Consider doing some role play with your class. Reacting to the Past is an active learning pedagogy of role-playing games designed by Barnard University. In Reacting to the Past games, students are assigned character roles with specific goals and must communicate, collaborate, and compete effectively to advance their objectives. Reacting promotes engagement with big ideas, and improves intellectual and academic skills. Provide students with a set of rules about staying in character and what types of things they must know about their character. Students should be provided with a packet of role sheets with instructions on their individual goals and strategies for game play. Students can use sources and information from these activities, and can search for more details online about their individual character. Reacting roles and games do not have a fixed script or outcome. While students are obliged to adhere to the philosophical and intellectual beliefs of the historical figures they have been assigned to play, they must devise their own means of expressing those ideas persuasively in papers, speeches, or other public presentations.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Taking Informed Action</b></p>	<p><b>UNDERSTAND</b> The way women were treated in the past often times persists into the present in how we teach about it or in societal norms that have not changed. Students can examine the way that this issue is addressed in textbooks and standards, as well as exploring the ways that the issues at play are still relevant.</p>	





	<p><b>ASSESS</b> Students should consider <i>what should be done</i> today to correct either the portrayal of women from this period in history or the issues at play?</p> <p><b>ACT</b> Students could take informed action in one of the following ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Find an article or book about history that misrepresents women and gender in history and write to the author or editor.</li><li>2. Write a letter to the Secretary of Education for your state about the teaching of women and gender history.</li><li>3. Investigate women and gender rights issues that persist and engage with the movement by attending a protest, signing a petition, or donating to the cause.</li><li>4. Make a PSA video, blog, or social media post with the intent to persuade the audience to better understand women from history or a persistent gender rights from this inquiry.</li></ol>
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*\*Featured sources are suggested and links are provided. It may be that these links are broken and we apologize in advance for the inconvenience.*



## Overview

### Inquiry Description

This inquiry leads students through an investigation of the role of women in the American Civil War. Women held crucial roles during the Civil War, and are oftentimes looked over. Students will explore the impact of three women: Clara Barton, Sarah Edmonds, and Harriet Tubman.

This inquiry highlights the following additional thematic standards from NCSS:

- **POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE:** Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people create, interact with, and change structures of power, authority, and governance.
- **TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE:** Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.
- **CULTURE:** Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

This inquiry also highlights the following additional thematic standards from the Common Core:

- Key Ideas and Details 1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- Key Ideas and Details 3. Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- Key Ideas and Details 7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., quantitative data, video, multimedia) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- Key Ideas and Details 8. Evaluate the hypotheses, data, analysis, and conclusions in a science or technical text, verifying the data when possible and corroborating or challenging conclusions with other sources of information.
- Key Ideas and Details 9. Synthesize information from a range of sources (e.g., texts, experiments, simulations) into a coherent understanding of a process, phenomenon, or concept, resolving conflicting information when possible.
- Text Types and Purposes 8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

## C3 TEACHERS

It is important to note that this inquiry requires prerequisite knowledge of some key terms, which are defined and provided to students in the inquiries where relevant.

Note: This inquiry is expected to take 3 class periods. The inquiry time frame could expand if teachers think their students need additional instructional experiences (e.g., supporting questions, formative performance tasks, featured sources, writing). Teachers are encouraged to adapt the inquiry to meet the needs and interests of their students. This inquiry lends itself to differentiation and modeling of historical thinking skills while assisting students in reading the variety of sources.

### Structure of the Inquiry

In addressing the compelling question, students will be tasked with developing a proposal that outlines the need for a women's Civil War memorial honoring the accomplishments and sacrifices brave women made during the American Civil War. To gain a better understanding of these women, students will analyze sources that will focus on three specific women, Clara Barton, Sarah Edmonds, and Harriet Tubman. While these women are not the only ones to make a significant difference in the Civil War, they act as an introduction to the extraordinary women that contributed to the Union war effort.

## Staging the Compelling Question

In staging the compelling question, have students answer the following questions in a Think-Pair-Share:

3. What was the role of men during the Civil War?
4. Because many men went off to fight during the Civil War, what roles did women take on? Make a list of roles women took on.

Have students review the following photographs. Lead a discussion about observations or surprises sparked by the photos.

- Civil War Nurses:



National Museum of Civil War Medicine. "Primary Sources: Nurses." <https://www.civilwarmed.org/explore/bibs/nurses/>

- Women disguised as male soldiers



## C3 TEACHERS

Nuwer, Racheal, 2014. "Women Fought in the Civil War Disguised as Men." Smithsonian Magazine. Photo credit Library of Congress. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/modern-day-female-civil-war-re-enactors-honor-women-who-fought-men-north-and-south-180951249/>

- Harriet Tubman- Show students the following photo and ask these questions to begin a short discussion about Harriet Tubman.
  - What is Harriet Tubman most well known for? *Students will likely discuss her work as a famous conductor of the Underground Railroad*
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## Supporting Question 1

Lesson used for this supporting question:

Wagner, Kevin. *Clara Barton*. Carlisle Area School District.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xFNk6ZS9jkTLFOMafpkApOljwVXGGGh5/view>

The first supporting question: How did women contribute to the war effort?

The formative task: Write a paragraph or two explaining the contributions women made to the Civil War, based on Clara Barton's poem. Be sure to use evidence to support your answer.

Teachers may implement this task with the following procedures...

1. Introduce the lesson by posing the following question: *What is the importance of nurses during war time?*
2. Distribute a copy of the poem to each student. Ask them to read the poem silently and highlight five examples of perseverance by women described in the poem.
3. Have students turn to a partner to share their highlighted sections and discuss the perseverance of women during the Civil War.
4. Lead students through a sectioned analysis of the poem and ask the following questions:
  - a. What were the common assumptions about women and battle during war (lines 1–23)?
  - b. How did the Civil War change these assumptions (lines 24–29)?
  - c. What actually became the role of women in battle (lines 30–69)?
  - d. How should we view the women of the Civil War (lines 70–81)?
  - e. How did Barton connect women's courage to the Red Cross Movement (lines 82–91)?
5. Have students complete the formative task by writing at least a paragraph that contains evidence from the provided source.
6. Lead a closing reflection with students that addresses their surprises, possible misconceptions, and further questions about the topic.

The following sources were selected to give students perspective on the perseverance and role of women during the Civil War. Clara Barton revolutionized nursing during war time and created the Red Cross organization that is still impactful to this day.

- **Featured Source A: Clara Barton, "The Women that went to the Field" November 18, 1892**

The women who went to the feld, you say,  
The women who went to the feld; and pray  
What did they go for? just to be in the way!-



## C3 TEACHERS

They'd not know the difference betwixt work and play,  
What did they know about war anyway? 5  
What could they do? - of what use could they be?  
They would scream at the sight of a gun, don't you see?  
Just fancy them round where the bugle notes play,  
And the long roll is bidding us on to the fray.  
Imagine their skirts 'mong artillery wheels, 10  
And watch for their futter as they fee 'cross the fields  
When the charge is rammed home and the fre belches hot;-  
They never will wait for the answering shot.  
They would faint at the first drop of blood, in their sight.  
What fun for us boys,-(ere we enter the fight;) 15  
They might pick some lint, and tear up some sheets,  
And make us some jellies, and send on their sweets,  
And knit some soft socks for Uncle Sam's shoes,  
And write us some letters, and tell us the news.  
And thus it was settled by common consent, 20  
That husbands, or brothers, or whoever went,  
That the place for the women was in their own homes,  
There to patiently wait until victory comes.

But later, it chanced, just how no one knew,  
That the lines slipped a bit, and some 'gan to crowd through; 25  
And they went, - where did they go? - Ah; where did they not?  
Show us the battle, - the feld, - or the spot  
Where the groans of the wounded rang out on the air  
That her ear caught it not, and her hand was not there,

Who wiped the death sweat from the cold, clammy brow, 30  
And sent home the message; - "T is well with him now"?  
Who watched in the tents, whilst the fever fres burned,  
And the pain-tossing limbs in agony turned,  
And wet the parched tongue, calmed delirium's strife  
Till the dying lips murmured, " My Mother," " My Wife"! 35  
And who were they all? - They were many, my men:  
Their record was kept by no tabular pen:  
They exist in traditions from father to son.  
Who recalls, in dim memory, now here and there one.-  
A few names where writ, and by chance live to-day; 40  
But's a perishing record fast fading away.

## C3 TEACHERS

Of those we recall, there are scarcely a score,  
Dix, Dame, Bickerdyke, - Edson, Harvey and Moore,  
Fales, Wittenmeyer, Gilson, Saford and Lee,  
And poor Cutter dead in the sands of the sea; 45  
And Frances D. Gage, our "Aunt Fanny" of old,  
Whose voice rang for freedom when freedom was sold.  
And Husband, and Etheridge, and Harlan and Case,  
Livermore, Alcott, Hancock and Chase,  
And Turner, and Hawley, and Potter and Hall, 50  
Ah! the list grows apace, as they come at the call:  
Did these women quail at the sight of a gun?  
Will some soldier tell us of one he saw run?  
Will he glance at the boats on the great western food,  
At Pittsburgh and Shiloh, did they faint at the blood? 55  
And the brave wife of Grant stood there with them then,  
And her calm, stately presence gave strength to his men.  
And Marie of Logan; she went with them too;  
A bride, scarcely more than a sweetheart, 'tis true.  
Her young cheek grows pale when the bold troopers ride. 60  
Where the "Black Eagle" soars, she is close at his side,  
She staunches his blood, cools the fever-burnt breath,  
And the wave of her hand stays the Angle of Death;  
She nurses him back, and restores once again  
To both army and state the brave leader of men. 65  
She has smoothed his black plumes and laid them to sleep,  
Whilst the angels above them their high vigils keep:  
And she sits here alone, with the snow on her brow -  
Your cheers for her comrades! Three cheers for her now.

And these were the women who went to the war: 70  
The women of question; what did they go for?  
Because in their hearts God had planted the seed  
Of pity for woe, and help for its need;  
They saw, in high purpose, a duty to do,  
And the armor of right broke the barriers through. 75  
Uninvited, unaided, unsanctioned oft-times,  
With pass, or without it, they pressed on the lines;  
They pressed, they implored, till they ran the lines through,  
And this was the "running" the men saw them do.  
'T was a hampered work, its worth largely lost; 80

## C3 TEACHERS

'T was hindrance, and pain, and efort, and cost:

But through these came knowledge, - knowledge is power.-  
And never again in the deadliest hour  
Of war or of peace shall we be so beset  
To accomplish the purpose our spirits have met. 85  
And what would they do if war came again?  
The scarlet cross floats where all was blank then.  
They would bind on their "brassards" and march to the fray,  
And the man liveth not who could say to them nay;  
They would stand with you now, as they stood with you then, 90  
The nurses, consolers, and saviours of men.

Clara Barton, "The Women Who Went to the Field," November 18, 1892, Clara Barton National Historic Site, National Park Service

### Supporting Question 2

The second supporting question: Was Sarah Edmonds truthful?

The formative task: Write a paragraph explaining if Sarah Edmonds was truthful or not. Take a clear stance and use evidence from the sources to support your answer.

Teachers may implement this task with the following procedures...

1. Introduce the lesson by posing the following question: *When is it okay to tell a lie? Consider the consequences of a small versus big lie.*
2. Provide students with sources to read and analyze independently or with a partner. As students read, they should complete the provided chart with evidence that Sarah Edmonds is credible or she exaggerated.
3. Have students complete the formative task by writing at least a paragraph that contains evidence from the provided sources.
4. Lead a closing reflection with students that addresses their surprises, possible misconceptions, and further questions about the topic.

The following sources were selected to give students a glimpse of reasons some women choose to disguise themselves as male to fight in the Civil War. Students will explore the documents, pull evidence, and answer analysis questions to gain a better understanding of Sara Edmonds choice to become a male soldier.

**Was Sarah Edmonds truthful?**

Examine the documents below. Then consider the question above.

*Sarah Edmonds, born Sarah Edmonson, was a Canadian woman whose father had always wanted a son. At a young age she fled her hostile home and changed her name to Edmonds. Fearful her father would find her she donned men's clothes as Frank Thompson. She took a job as a Bible salesman and ended up in Flint, Michigan. When the Civil War broke out, she enlisted. She served in numerous capacities during the war. She eventually contracted malaria and deserted in order to avoid discovery. After recovery she wrote a book about her time serving for the Union and petitioned Congress to have her desertion charges dropped and receive a pension.*

*Edmonds was one of many people who donned different clothes to serve in the Civil War. Her story is one of the few published and it became a nation-wide sensation. Some people wonder if she exaggerated it. Was it possible she was everywhere she says she was? Decide for yourself.*

- **Featured Source A: Publisher's Note**

### **Publisher's Notice**

No apology is necessary for adding one more to the numerous "War Books" which already fill a large space in American Literature; for, to the general reader, nothing connected with the Rebellion can be more interesting than the personal experiences of those who have been intimately associated with the different phases of military life, in Camp, Field, and Hospital.

The "Nurse and Spy" is simply a record of events which have transpired in the experience and under the observation of one who has been on the field and participated in numerous battles – among which are the first and second Bull Run, Williamsburg, Fair Oaks, the Seven days in front of Richmond, Antietam, and Fredericksburg – serving in the capacity of "Spy" and as "Field Nurse" for over two years.

While in the "Secret Service" as a "Spy," which is one of the most hazardous positions in the army – she penetrated the enemy's lines, in various disguises, no less than eleven times; always with complete success and without detection.

Her efficient labors in the different Hospitals as well as her arduous duties as "Field Nurse," embrace many thrilling and touching incidents, which are here most graphically described.

Should any of her readers object to some of her disguises, it may be sufficient to remind them it was from the purest motives and most praiseworthy patriotism, that she laid aside, for a time, her own costume, and assumed that of the opposite sex, enduring hardships, suffering untold privations, and hazarding her life for her adopted country, in its trying hour of need.

In the opinion of many, it is the privilege of woman to minister to the sick and soothe the sorrowing – and in the present crisis of our country's history, to aid our brothers to the extent of her capacity – and whether duty leads her to the couch of luxury, the abode of poverty, the crowded hospital, or the terrible battle field – it makes but little difference what costume she assumes while in the discharge of her duties. – Perhaps she should have the privilege of choosing for herself whatever may be the surest protection from insult and inconvenience in her blessed, self-sacrificing work.

The moral character of the work, – being true to virtue, patriotism, and philanthropy – together with the fine embellishments and neat mechanical execution – will, we trust, render it an interesting and welcome visitor at every fireside.

Source

1. Why did the publisher write this?



hands and arms were colored black as any African, and then, to complete my contraband costume, I required a wig of real negro wool. But how or where was it to be found? There was no such thing at the Fortress, and none short of Washington. Happily I found the mail-boat was about to start, and hastened on board, and finding a Postmaster with whom I was acquainted, I stepped forward to speak to him, forgetting my contraband appearance, and was saluted with—"Well, Massa Cuff—what will you have?" Said I: "Massa send me to you wid dis yere money for you to fotch him a darkie wig from Washington." "What the — — does he want of a darkie wig?" asked the Postmaster. "No matter, dat's my orders; guess it's for some 'noiterin' business." "Oh, for reconnoitering you mean; all right old fellow, I will bring it, tell him." I remained at Fortress Monroe until the Postmaster returned with the article which was to complete my disguise, and then returned to camp near Yorktown.

On my return, I found myself without friends—a striking illustration of the frailty of human friendship—I had been forgotten in those three short days. I went to Mrs. B.'s tent and inquired if she wanted to hire a boy to take care of her horse. She was very civil to me, asked if I came from Fortress Monroe, and whether I could cook. She did not want to hire me, but she thought she could find some one who did require a boy. Off she went to Dr. E. and told him that there was a smart little contraband there who was in search of work. Dr. E. came along, looking as important as two year old doctors generally do. "Well, my boy, how much work can you do in a day?" "Oh, I reckon I kin work right smart; kin do heaps o' work. Will you hire me, Massa?" "Don't know but I may; can you cook?" "Yes, Massa, kin cook anything I ebber seen." "How much do you think you can earn a month?" "Guess I kin earn ten dollars easy nuff." Turning to Mrs. B. he said in an undertone: "That darkie understands his business." "Yes indeed, I would hire him by all means, Doctor," said Mrs. B. "Well, if you wish, you can stay with me a month, and by that time I will be a better judge how much you can earn."

So saying Dr. E. proceeded to give a synopsis of a contraband's duty toward a master of whom he expected ten dollars per month, especially emphasizing the last clause. Then I was introduced to the culinary department, which comprised flour, pork, beans, a small portable stove, a spider, and a medicine chest. It was now supper time, and I was supposed to understand my business sufficiently to prepare supper without asking any questions whatever, and also to display some of my boasted talents by making warm biscuit for supper. But how was I to make biscuit with my colored hands? and how dare I wash them for fear the color would wash off? All this trouble was soon put to an end, however, by Jack's making his appearance while I was stirring up the biscuit with a stick, and in his bustling, officious, negro style, he said: "See here nig—you don't know nuffin bout makin bisket. Jis let me show you once, and dat ar will save you heaps o' trouble wid Massa doct'r for time to come." I very willingly accepted of this proffered assistance, for I had all the necessary ingredients in the dish, with pork fat for shortening, and soda and cream-tartar, which I found in the medicine chest, ready for kneading and rolling out. After washing his hands and rolling up his sleeves, Jack went to work with a flourish and a grin of satisfaction at being "boss" over the new cook. Tea made, biscuit baked, and the medicine chest set off with tin cups, plates, etc., supper was announced. Dr. E. was much pleased with the general appearance of things, and was evidently beginning to think that he had found rather an intelligent contraband for a cook. [...]

I took the cars the next day and went to Lebanon—dressed in one of the rebel prisoner's clothes—and thus disguised, made another trip to rebeldom. My business purported to be buying up butter and eggs, at the farmhouses, for the rebel army. I passed through the lines somewhere, without knowing it; for on coming to a little village toward evening, I found it occupied by a strong force of rebel cavalry. The first house I went to was filled with officers and citizens. I had stumbled upon a wedding party, unawares. Captain Logan, a recruiting officer, had been married that afternoon to a brilliant young widow whose husband had been killed in the rebel army a few months before. She had discovered that widow's weeds were not becoming to her style of beauty, so had decided to appear once more in bridal costume, for a change.

## C3 TEACHERS

I was questioned pretty sharply by the handsome captain in regard to the nature of my business in that locality, but finding me an innocent, straightforward Kentuckian, he came to the conclusion that I was all right. But he also arrived at the conclusion that I was old enough to be in the army, and bantered me considerably upon my want of patriotism.

The rebel soldier's clothes which I wore did not indicate any thing more than that I was a Kentuckian—for their cavalry do not dress in any particular uniform, for scarcely two of them dress alike—the only uniformity being that they most generally dress in butternut color.

I tried to make my escape from that village as soon as possible, but just as I was beginning to congratulate myself upon my good fortune, who should confront me but Captain Logan. Said he: "See here, my lad; I think the best thing you can do is to enlist, and join a company which is just forming here in the village, and will leave in the morning. We are giving a bounty to all who freely enlist, and are conscripting those who refuse. Which do you propose to do, enlist and get the bounty, or refuse, and be obliged to go without anything?" I replied, "I think I shall wait a few days before I decide." "But we can't wait for you to decide," said the captain; "the Yankees may be upon us any moment, for we are not far from their lines, and we will leave here either to-night or in the morning early. I will give you two hours to decide this question, and in the mean time you must be put under guard." So saying, he marched me back with him, and gave me in charge of the guards. In two or three hours he came for my decision, and I told him that I had concluded to wait until I was conscripted. "Well," said he, "you will not have long to wait for that, so you may consider yourself a soldier of the Confederacy from this hour, and subject to military discipline."

This seemed to me like pretty serious business, especially as I would be required to take the oath of allegiance to the Confederate Government. However, I did not despair, but trusted in Providence and my own ingenuity [creativity] to escape from this dilemma [problem] also; and as I was not required to take the oath until the company was filled up, I was determined to be among the missing ere it became necessary for me to make any professions of loyalty to the rebel cause. I knew that if I should refuse to be sworn into the service after I was conscripted [enlisted], that in all probability my true character would be suspected, and I would have to suffer the penalty of death—and that, too, in the most barbarous manner.

I was glad to find that it was a company of cavalry that was being organized, for if I could once get on a good horse there would be some hope of my escape. There was no time to be lost, as the captain remarked, for the Yankees might make a dash upon us at any moment; consequently a horse and saddle was furnished me, and everything was made ready for a start immediately. Ten o'clock came, and we had not yet started. The captain finally concluded that, as everything seemed quiet, we would not start until daylight.

Music and dancing was kept up all night, and it was some time after daylight when the captain made his appearance. A few moments more and we were trotting briskly over the country, the captain complimenting me upon my horsemanship, and telling me how grateful I would be to him when the war was over and the South had gained her independence, and that I would be proud that I had been one of the soldiers of the Southern confederacy, who had steeped my saber in Yankee blood, and driven the vandals from our soil. "Then," said he, "you will thank me for the interest which I have taken in you, and for the gentle persuasives which I made use of to stir up your patriotism and remind you of your duty to your country."

In this manner we had traveled about half an hour, when we suddenly encountered a reconnoitering [scouting] party of the Federals, cavalry in advance, and infantry in the rear. A contest soon commenced; we were ordered to advance in line, which we did, until we came within a few yards of the Yankees.

The company advanced, but my horse suddenly became unmanageable, and it required a second or two to bring him right again; and before I could overtake the company and get in line the contending parties had met in a hand to hand fight.

All were engaged, so that when I, by accident, got on the Federal side of the line, none observed me for several minutes, except the Federal officer, who had recognized me and signed to me to fall in next to him. That brought me face to face with my rebel captain, to whom I owed such a debt of gratitude. Thinking this

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would be a good time to cancel all obligations in that direction, I discharged the contents of my pistol in his face.

This act made me the center of attraction. Every rebel seemed determined to have the pleasure of killing me first, and a simultaneous dash was made toward me and numerous saber strokes aimed at my head. Our men with one accord rushed between me and the enemy, and warded off the blows with their sabers, and attacked them with such fury that they were driven back several rods.

The infantry now came up and deployed as skirmishers, and succeeded in getting a position where they had a complete cross-fire on the rebels, and poured in volley after volley until nearly half their number lay upon the ground. Finding it useless to fight longer at such a disadvantage they turned and fled, leaving behind them eleven killed, twenty-nine wounded, and seventeen prisoners.

The confederate captain was wounded badly but not mortally; his handsome face was very much disfigured, a part of his nose and nearly half of his upper lip being shot away. I was sorry, for the graceful curve of his mustache was sadly spoiled, and the happy bride of the previous morning would no longer rejoice in the beauty of that manly face and exquisite mustache of which she seemed so proud, and which had captivated her heart ere she had been three months a widow.

Our men suffered considerable loss before the infantry came up, but afterward scarcely lost a man. I escaped without receiving a scratch, but my horse was badly cut across the neck with a saber, but which did not injure him materially, only for a short time.

After burying the dead, Federal and rebel, we returned to camp with our prisoners and wounded, and I rejoiced at having once more escaped from the confederate lines.

I was highly commended by the commanding general for my coolness throughout the whole affair, and was told kindly and candidly that I would not be permitted to go out again in that vicinity, in the capacity of spy, as I would most assuredly meet with some of those who had seen me desert their ranks, and I would consequently be hung up to the nearest tree.

Not having any particular fancy for such an exalted position, and not at all ambitious of having my name handed down to posterity among the list of those who "expiated their crimes upon the gallows," I turned my attention to more quiet and less dangerous duties.

*Edmonds, Sarah Emma. Nurse and Spy in the Union Army: The Adventures and Experiences of a Woman in Hospitals, Camps, and Battle-Fields. Hartford: W. S. Williams & Co., 1865.*

### Inquiry

1. As you watch, record sentences or ideas that show Edmonds was credible or perhaps exaggerating in the middle columns.
2. After you finish the two middle columns, look back at the evidence. Which information is most persuasive to you? Mark that #8. Which evidence is least persuasive to you? Mark that #1.

Rank	Evidence she is Credible	Evidence she Exaggerated	Rank

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*Questions for Analysis*

1. Add up the rank on each side. Which side weighed more? Why do you think it worked out that way?

2. In conclusion, was Sarah Edmonds truthful?

*Questions for Analysis*

3. What dangers did she face that were different from her fellow soldiers?

4. Do you think Edmonds was a hero?

Edmonds, Sarah Emma. *Nurse and Spy in the Union Army: The Adventures and Experiences of a Woman in Hospitals, Camps, and Battle-Fields*. Hartford: W. S. Williams & Co., 1865.

## Supporting Question 3

Lesson used for this supporting question:

*University of Maryland - Difficult History Project: Teaching with Primary Sources: Troubled history, Troubling times: Wrestling with Maryland's difficult past using primary sources* Dr. Magdalena H. Gross and Alison Jovanovic  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kuP8vR0jznP4Tk9qhgTnAoit0\\_SX0K0Y/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kuP8vR0jznP4Tk9qhgTnAoit0_SX0K0Y/view?usp=sharing)

The third supporting question: Why is Harriet Tubman's involvement in the war significant?

The formative task: Write a paragraph explaining Harriet Tubman's significance to the war effort. In your response, compare her experience in the Civil War to the other two women that were focused on in the two previous lessons.

Teachers may implement this task with the following procedures...

1. Introduce the lesson by posing the following question: *Why is Harriet Tubman important to the Civil War?*
2. Provide students with sources to read and analyze independently or with a partner. Students should answer the "questions to consider" after each document to check for understanding and further analysis of the documents.
3. Have students complete the formative task by writing at least a paragraph that contains evidence from the provided sources.
4. Lead a closing reflection with students that addresses their surprises, possible misconceptions, and further questions about the topic.

The following sources were selected to allow students to analyze the efforts of Harriet Tubman to the success of the Union Army during the Civil War. These sources will also expand student knowledge of who Harriet Tubman was and the contributions she made during the war. Each document is accompanied with guiding questions for students to check their understanding before moving onto the next document.

- **Featured Source A: Passages from The Americans**

### Underground Railroad

One of the most famous conductors {of the Underground Railroad} was Harriet Tubman, born a slave in Maryland in 1820 or 1821. In 1849 after Tubman's owner died, she heard rumors that she was about to be sold. Fearing this possibility, Tubman decided to make a break for freedom and succeeded in reaching Philadelphia. Shortly after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act, Tubman resolved to become a



conductor on the Underground Railroad. In all she made 19 trips back to the South and is said to have helped 300 slaves - including her parents - flee to freedom.

### **Passage from A New Nation:**

The Underground Railroad. Of about 3,200 conductors, the best known was Harriet Tubman. She had escaped to the North as a “passenger” on the Underground Railroad. She then helped others as a conductor. Tubman later recalled how she felt when she planned to escape slavery: “no man should take me alive. I should fight for my liberty as long as my strength lasts.” After safely making her way to the North, Tubman risked great danger returning to the South 19 times, guiding more than 300 fugitives to freedom.

Questions to Consider:

1. According to these texts, what are Harriet Tubman’s main contributions to American History?
2. How do these narratives align with what you already KNOW about Harriet Tubman?
3. What questions do you still have?

- **Featured Source B: History Channel short article**

One of the most complicated myths about Tubman is the claim (first mentioned in a 19th century biography) that she escorted more than 300 slaves to freedom over the course of 19 missions. Tubman herself never used this number, instead estimating that she had rescued around 50 people by 1860 - mostly family members. Historians now believe that it’s likely that she was personally responsible for ushering around 70 people to freedom along the Underground Railroad in the decade before the Civil War... Shortly after war broke out in 1861...Working in a series of camps in Union-held portions of South Carolina, Tubman quickly learned the lay of the land and offered her services to the army as a spy, leading a group of scouts who mapped out much of the region. Tubman’s reconnaissance work laid the foundation for one of the more daring raids of the Civil War, when she personally accompanied Union soldiers in their nighttime raid at Combahee Ferry in June 1863. After guiding Union boats along the mine-filled waters and coming ashore, Tubman and her group successfully rescued more than 700 slaves working on nearby plantations.

Questions to Consider:

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1. What did you learn from this text about the number of slaves rescued by Tubman?
2. Does this corroborate or contradict the existing narrative you and/or the textbooks have about Tubman? Describe why or why not.
3. What new information would you add to her narrative from this text? Provide a quote from the text to support your answer:

History Channel short article published by Barbara Maranzani, a researcher and archivist for History.com, on May 31, 2013.  
<http://www.history.com/news/harriet-tubmans-daring-raid-150-years-ago>

- **Featured Source C: Harriet Tubman’s Great Raid (New York Times)**

### Harriet Tubman’s Great Raid

It is arguably the most beautiful scene ever recorded in war. Two Union gunboats, the Harriet A. Weed and the John Adams, converted ferryboats, churning up the Combahee River... Steam whistles signal, while in the bow of Adams, a small, powerful woman, is... singing. From all around, hundreds hear Harriet Tubman’s call and run for the boats, for freedom. At least 727 men, women and children escape, mothers carrying babies, including one pair of twins: the largest liberation of slaves in American history.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is the Combahee River Raid according to this document and what was Tubman’s role?
2. Does this corroborate or contradict the existing narrative you and/or the textbooks have about Tubman? Describe why or why not.
3. What new information would you add to her narrative from this text? Provide a quote from the text to support your answer:

Paul Donnelly (biographical note provided by the NYTimes): “Paul Donnelly is an advocate for legal immigration) for the New York Times, June 7, 2013:

- **Featured Source D: Harper’s Weekly Illustration**

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*Headnote: Harper's Weekly (at the time) was a partisan paper, on the side of Abraham Lincoln and the Union. It was published mostly in the North East United States and distributed. Circulation was about 200,000 people by 1860 (for the time this is a large number).*



### Questions to Consider:

1. Interpret this illustration (describe what you see and analyze). 2. How does this image fit into what you know about the raid?
3. What information is left out? Why might the illustrator have left some information out?

New York: Harper's Weekly, July 4, 1863. Title "Raid of 2nd South Carolina Volunteers (Col. Montgomery) among the rice plantations on the Combahee." Retrieved from *Library of Congress*.

- Featured Source E: Historical Marker at the Combahee River (South Carolina)



Historical marker at Combahee River. Photo by Jeff W. Grigg.

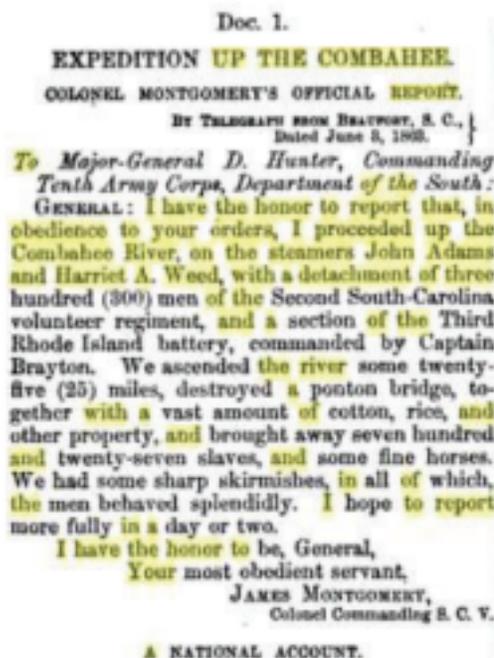
1. What new information do you learn through this plaque?
2. What might a plaque like this leave out?
3. Who created this plaque? And why might that matter?
4. How does this add to your initial narrative of Harriet Tubman and her life?

Historical Marker at the Combahee River in South Carolina. Photo taken by Jeff Grigg.

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- Featured Source F: Colonel Montgomery Telegraph, June 8, 1863

I have the honor to report that, in obedience to your orders, I proceeded up the Combahee River, on the steamers (**gun boats**) John Adams and Harriet A. Weed, with a detachment of three hundred (300) men of the Second South Carolina Volunteer Regiment and a section of the Third Rhode Island Battery, commanded by Captain Brayton. We ascended the river some twenty-five (25) miles, destroyed a pontoon bridge, together with a large amount of cotton, rice, and other property, and brought away seven hundred and twenty-seven slaves, and some fine horses. We had some sharp skirmishes, in all of which the men behaved splendidly. I hope to report more fully in a day or two.



Colonel Montgomery wrote a telegraph on June 8, 1863 describing the raid. Retrieved from *Library of Congress*.

### Questions to Consider:

1. What information is left out here and why might he have left it out?
2. What new information do you learn with this document?
3. How does this change your narrative of the life of Harriet Tubman?

- **Featured Source G: *The Commonwealth*, July 10, 1863**

Col. Montgomery and his gallant band of 300 black soldiers, *under the guidance of a black woman*, dashed into the enemy's country, struck a bold and effective blow, destroying millions of dollars worth of commissary stores, cotton and lordly dwellings, and striking terror into the heart of rebeldom, brought off near 800 slaves and thousands of dollars worth of property, without losing a man or receiving a scratch. It was ...glorious ...

### Questions to Consider:

1. What information is left out here and why might he have left it out?
2. What new information do you learn with this document?
3. How does this change your narrative of the life of Harriet Tubman?

*The Commonwealth*, a pro-Union, Boston newspaper, on Friday, July 10, 1863: Retrieved from *Library of Congress*.

- **Featured Source H: [UnCivil Podcast](#)**

### Questions to Consider:

1. What new information do you learn with this podcast?

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2. How does this change your narrative of the life of Harriet Tubman?

3. What questions do you still have?

*University of Maryland - Difficult History Project: Teaching with Primary Sources: Troubled history, Troubling times: Wrestling with Maryland's difficult past using primary sources* Dr. Magdalena H. Gross and Alison Jovanovic

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kuP8vR0jznP4Tk9qhgTnAoit0\\_SX0K0Y/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kuP8vR0jznP4Tk9qhgTnAoit0_SX0K0Y/view?usp=sharing)

## Summative Performance Task

At this point in the inquiry, students have examined the role and impact of three women that had very different roles within the American Civil War. Clara Barton worked as a nurse and recognized the perseverance and sacrifices of women through her 1892 poem. Sarah Edmonds went to fight in the war disguised as a man, and would not be the only woman to do so. Harriet Tubman was a conductor of the Underground Railroad and assisted in military operations to help the Union army. Each experienced the Civil War differently and shows the wide range of experiences women during this time had.

Students should be expected to demonstrate the breadth of their understanding and their abilities to use evidence from multiple sources to support their claims. In this task, students will develop a proposal of a memorial to honor and recognize the contributions of women during the Civil War period. In this proposal, students will need to address specific women and/or general experiences of women during the Civil War. The proposal should be two to three paragraphs in length and students will need to justify their inclusions. A sketch of what the memorial would look like should also be included.

Students' arguments will likely vary, but could include any of the following:

- *Overall students are arguing why their proposal should be used when constructing the memorial.*
- *Students may focus on specific roles such as nurses, spies, or disguised soldiers.*
- *Students may focus on specific individuals. Those individuals may be the ones learned about in this inquiry or those that the student researches.*

To support students in their writing they can use this provided organizer for a body paragraph:

First Argument	
Write a topic sentence that summarizes the paragraph and tells how this proves the thesis	<i>(Repeat the first part of your thesis)</i>
Provide background information here. <b>Cite anyone you paraphrase or quote!</b>	<i>When...</i>

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What textual evidence proves this? Describe 1 or 2 HAPP elements about the source of your evidence.	
What textual evidence proves this? Insert a short quote here.	
What makes this quote credible, valid, or helpful in providing insights to this issue?	<i>The quote revealed...</i>
Who disagrees or disputes a piece of your argument?  Describe 1 or 2 HAPP elements about the source of your evidence.	<i>Others claimed that...</i>
What textual evidence do you have? Insert a short quote here.	
What makes this quote seem untrue, inaccurate, or only partly true?	<i>While it may be true that _____, it was clear that...</i>

To extend their arguments, once students have written or formed an argument, consider doing one of the following extension activities:

1. **Discussion:** Consider facilitating a discussion of the analysis questions. Ask students to share their response with someone, or if they already worked in a group, ask them to nominate someone to represent their group to the class as a whole. Capitalize on differences between group responses. Why did one group answer differently than another? What impacted them or stood out more?
2. **Four Corner Debate:** Consider a "four-corner debate." In the corners of the room tack up a piece of paper with four differing and possible answers to the inquiry question. After students complete the lesson packet, pose the question to the room at large and ask students to move to the corner of the room (or in between locations) that represent their answer. Then, ask students to explain their choice. As students discuss they are allowed to move closer or further from ideas. This is a great strategy for kinesthetic learning.

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3. **Socratic Seminar:** Consider doing a "Socratic seminar" to extend the learning and get students to question what they still don't know or understand. Start with the inquiry's question. Students should be encouraged to answer one another's question directly, but also to answer the question with another question. This continues the conversation and gets at more rich ideas. The teacher should try to say as little as possible and let the students lead the dialog. One strategy for this is to seat students in a circle. Give each of them a cup and 2-3 tokens. When a student makes a substantive contribution to the discussion the teacher will walk over and place a token in the cup signaling that they have contributed. Students will become aware of who has spoken and who has not, and leave space for one another.
4. **Structured Academic Controversy:** Consider turning the lesson into a "structured academic controversy." Take the overarching question and turn it into a "debate." Students can choose or be assigned a side in the debate and use the documents provided to argue their "answer" to the overarching question. They can argue over interpretations and credibility of some documents.
5. **Reacting to the Past:** Consider doing some role play with your class. Reacting to the Past is an active learning pedagogy of role-playing games designed by Barnard University. In Reacting to the Past games, students are assigned character roles with specific goals and must communicate, collaborate, and compete effectively to advance their objectives. Reacting promotes engagement with big ideas, and improves intellectual and academic skills. Provide students with a set of rules about staying in character and what types of things they must know about their character. Students should be provided with a packet of role sheets with instructions on their individual goals and strategies for game play. Students can use sources and information from these activities, and can search for more details online about their individual character. Reacting roles and games do not have a fixed script or outcome. While students are obliged to adhere to the philosophical and intellectual beliefs of the historical figures they have been assigned to play, they must devise their own means of expressing those ideas persuasively in papers, speeches, or other public presentations.

Students have the opportunity to Take Informed Action by doing one of the following suggested action activities:

1. Find an article or book about history that misrepresents women and gender in history and write to the author or editor.
2. Write a letter to the Secretary of Education for your state about the teaching of women and gender history.
3. Investigate women and gender rights issues that persist and engage with the movement by attending a protest, signing a petition, or donating to the cause.
4. Make a PSA video, blog, or social media post with the intent to persuade the audience to better understand women from history or a persistent gender rights from this inquiry.