



Educator Information

“Civil War Emergency Care” Interactive Program

The Seminary Ridge Museum provides students with engaging and fun educational programs. All of our interactive activities and learning resources investigate historical content while also teaching critical thinking and analytical skills essential to the formation of the next generation of citizens and leaders. The Seminary Ridge Museum’s “Civil War Emergency Care” interactive program fulfills the following learning and affective objectives and satisfies both National Center for History in the Schools Standards in Historical Thinking and Content Standards and Common Core State Standards.

Program description:

United States Army Medical Officer Louis Duncan, one of a new generation of medical officers reflecting on the Civil War from the vantage point of the early 20th century, wrote “It marked the end of an old era, the beginning of a new one in the medical department of the United States Army; the end of working without authority, the beginning of control; the end of confusion, the beginning of methods and order.” While the Civil War has long been viewed as being waged during the “medical middle ages,” the conflict ushered in revolutionary advancements in battlefield medicine. Jonathan Letterman, Medical Director of the Union Army of the Potomac from 1862-1864, is credited with instituting reforms such as forward care for wounded soldiers, effective ambulance transportation, and triage. The Battle of Gettysburg was the first time that these new methods were used on a large scale. Several these principles, established in army in the 1860s, have influenced present day emergency care in military and civilian settings.

This program draws upon the rich medical resources at the Seminary Ridge Museum. The Museum’s replica Howard Ambulance will be employed to illustrate the ways in which ambulances were used to evacuate wounded soldiers from the field in a timely manner. Participants will learn the proper way to load wounded soldiers on a stretcher and the steps of administering first aid. Activities at the end of the program draw parallels between 19th and 21st century medical care.

Learning objectives (At the end of this lesson, students will be able to...):

- Analyze the advancements in emergency care during the Civil War
- Recall the order in which care was given to wounded Civil War soldiers.
- Apply triage principles learned in the unit to Civil War cases.
- Compare and contrast Civil War emergency care and contemporary emergency care.

Affective objectives (As a result of this activity, students are expected to...):

- Actively contribute to a discussion with peers analyzing medical care received by soldiers during the Civil War.
- Demonstrate empathy for wounded Civil War soldiers and caregivers.
- Recognize the long-lasting consequences of warfare.
- Value critical thinking skills in responding to complex problems.

National Standards:

National Center for History in the Schools Standards in Historical Thinking:

This program builds students' skills in historical comprehension, historical analysis and interpretation, and historical issues decision-making and analysis.

National Center for History in the Schools Content Standards (Civil War and Reconstruction):

Standard 2A—The student understands how the resources of the Union and Confederacy affected the course of the war (Identify the innovations in military technology and explain their impact on humans, property, and the final outcome of the war).

Standard 2B—The student understands the social experience of the war on the battlefield and homefront (Compare the motives for fighting and the daily life experiences of Confederate with those of white and African American soldiers).

Common Core State Standards (6-8): CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.1, .2, .4, .9; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.1, .2, .4, .9; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1, .2, .4, .9; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1, .2, .3, .4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.1, .2, .4, .5, .9; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1, .2, .4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1, .2, .4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1, .2, .4.

Common Core State Standards (9-12): CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1, .2, .4, .6; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1-4, .6, .8-9; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.1-2, .7-9; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1, .1.C, 1.D, .4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.1, .2, .4, .6; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1-4, .8-9; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.1-2, .4, .7-9; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1, 1.C, 1.D, .4

For more information on National Center for History in the Schools standards, visit www.nchs.ucla.edu.

For more information on Common Core standards, visit www.corestandards.org.

For information on how this program meets standards of individual states, please contact Peter Miele, Director of Education and Museum Operations, at pmiele@seminaryridge.org.