

Lesson 4: Soldiers & their families: Using the U.S. 1860 Census

Focusing Question: How can we learn more about our town's Civil War soldiers?
What is a census? How is it useful to historians?
What impact did the Civil War have on life in our community?

Vermont Standard:

Being a Historian: 6.6c: Collect and use primary resources in building original historical interpretations

New Hampshire Standard:

15.1 Identify, using maps; illustrations; photographs, and documents from different time periods, how land use in their community has changed and discuss the reason for these changes.

Procedure:

1. First, revisit with students the list of Civil War soldiers found in your cemetery. Give particular consideration to those that were, in addition, found on the 19th century map. (Your Quest will end up focusing on the things you know the most about.)
2. The 1860 census can be accessed on-line, or via a print copy. Before students use the census on their own, they need to learn basic information about a census: What is it? How do you read it? What information can it provide? Begin by asking them questions, e.g.: *What is a census?*
3. Next, hand out sheets to the student (different pages, corresponding to some of the Veteran's names you are working with).
4. Then use the **Document Analysis Form (p. 20)** to learn how to “see” and learn from this important primary resource. Begin doing this slowly—working together as a group—in order to discuss problems, questions, and open student's eyes.
5. Once students have completed this and feel comfortable, they can work individually—or in pairs or small groups—with the census to answer the “**Our Town**” questions (p. 20); and then use the “**My Soldier**” form (p. 21) as they focus on a particular soldier.

| Family Name | Address | Head of Family | Age | Sex | Color | Profession | Value of Real Estate | Value of Personal Estate | Total Value | Married | Single | Under 18 | Over 18 | Under 18 | Over 18 | Under 18 | Over 18 | Under 18 | Over 18 |
|-------------|----------|----------------|-----|-----|-------|------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------|---------|--------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|
| Gilman | Allen St | John | 40 | M | W | Farmer | 1000 | 500 | 1500 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Claw | 68 St | John | 35 | M | W | Farmer | 800 | 400 | 1200 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Carroll | 8th St | John | 30 | M | W | Farmer | 600 | 300 | 900 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wright | 10th St | John | 25 | M | W | Farmer | 400 | 200 | 600 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Handout # 4: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS FORM

1. Type of Primary Document (check one):

Journal/Diary Poster/Broadside Census Legal
 Letter Print Trade Card Contract
 Newspaper Bill/Declaration Drawing/Painting Other

2. WHAT is the name or title of this document? _____

3. WHERE was this document written? _____

4. WHEN was this document written? _____

5. Write a SUMMARY of the document's content:

7. What was its PURPOSE? Why do you think the document was written?

8. What EVIDENCE in the document helps you know why it was written?

Handout # 5: OUR TOWN IN 1860

1. What were some different economic activities in our town in 1860? How can you tell?

2. What work did women do? How can you tell?

3. How did children and young adults spend their time? How can you tell?

4. What categories are not filled in...and why?

5. What questions do you have about your town based on the 1860 census?

Handout # 6: MY SOLDIER IN 1860

| | | |
|------------|----------------|-----------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| First Name | Middle Initial | Last Name |

Did this soldier leave a spouse or parents behind?

Did this soldier leave children behind? How many? How old were they?

Did this soldier leave work behind? What kind of work? How might that have impacted the family (& the community?)

Profession _____ Can't tell

Name of Husband or Wife: _____ Can't tell

Son/daughter of: _____ Can't tell

Names of children:

Other information discovered: