

# Historic Preservationist: Civil War Battlefields

## Adventure Description:

In this adventure, you will think like a historic preservationist and evaluate a restoration plan to preserve part of a Civil War battlefield.

## Activity

Teacher note: This lesson is long and can be completed across multiple days. If you want to complete it across multiple days, complete Steps 1-4 on one day and Step 5 on another day.

### Step 1: Background Information on Historic Preservationists and Civil War Battlefields (5 minutes)

- Show [Video: Civil War Battlefields](#).
- Discuss how historic preservationists preserve battlefields so that future generations can visit important locations and learn about history. The problem is that it is difficult for battlefields to be preserved over time. For example, battlefields can become ruined if a natural disaster hits the area. The appearance of battlefields can also change if people build houses or roads in the area.
- Ask students why historic preservationists can provide valuable feedback on how best to preserve Civil War battlefields. Review [Handout: Being an Expert on Civil War Battlefields](#). If time permits, have students brainstorm other types of professionals who could provide valuable feedback on preserving battlefields (e.g., historians, archivists, archaeologists).

### Step 2: Activity Explanation (5 minutes)

- Explain to student that they will be divided into groups and given a proposal from a team of local historians, politicians, and archaeologists that want to re-evaluate a historic Civil War battlefield site. Students should think like historic preservationists and carefully evaluate the group's proposal to determine whether the proposal should be used to help preserve the battlefield or whether it needs to be revised.
- Provide students with [Handout: Steps to Evaluate Proposals](#). As a class, read through the steps.
- Divide students into small groups or pairs. Provide each group with the following:
  - One proposal from [Handout: Group Assignments](#)
  - [Handout: Sources](#)
- Teacher note: there are three choices for group assignments. Give each group an assignment. Groups can receive the same assignments.

### Step 3: Evaluating Proposals (20 minutes)

- Have groups read through and evaluate their proposals.
- As students are filling out rubrics, ask the following questions:
  - What would happen if historic preservationists did not review these proposals?
  - Is there additional information you wish you had to analyze the proposal? Would it be helpful to consult with another type of professional?

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- Teacher notes: You can have groups submit their rubrics to you for feedback. See [Handout: Teacher Key](#) for our suggested feedback and ratings on each proposal. While there are no right or wrong scores, we suggest providing groups with questions to consider and notes on what other historic preservationists might think about if they were evaluating the proposal.

## Step 4: Comparing Proposals (5-10 minutes)

- Have a class discussion about the differences between the proposals and ranking that students gave. Suggested discussion points to cover:
  - Similarity to original design
  - Materials used
  - Credibility and experience of people working on the project
  - Knowledge of historical structure and time period

## Step 5: Building a Model (20+ minutes)

- Explain to students that they will build a model of what they think McLean House should look like based on the sources they were provided with, proposals they evaluated, and the class discussion.
- Provide students with an assortment of art supplies and building materials.
- Teacher note: Since students don't have access to traditional building materials, they will use substitute craft materials. Students should create a key on a separate piece of paper for the materials they are using and what they represent. For example, a student might choose to represent traditional wooden logs with popsicle sticks. On their key should be popsicle sticks = wooden logs.
- Extra Time? Two additional proposals are provided for students to evaluate. One proposal focuses on restoring Power's Hill at the Gettysburg Battlefield. The other proposal focuses on restoring To restore the historic landscape at Fleetwood Hill where the Battle of Brandy Station occurred. You can have students evaluate these proposals for homework or for extra credit. See the following handouts:
  - [Handout: Additional Proposals to Evaluate](#)
  - [Handout: Teacher Key for Proposals on Power's Hill and Fleetwood Hill](#)
  - [Handout: Sources on Power's Hill and Fleetwood Hill](#)

## Materials List

### Provided online:

- Video: Civil War Battlefields
- Handout: Being an Expert on Civil War Battlefields
- Handout: Steps to Evaluate Proposals
- Handout: Group Assignments
- Handout: Sources
- Handout: Additional Proposals to Evaluate
- Handout: Teacher Key for Proposals on Power's Hill and Fleetwood Hill
- Handout: Sources on Power's Hill and Fleetwood Hill

### Not Provided Online:

- Art and Building Supplies

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