The Civil War and San Diego

Grade Level: 8th

History-Social Science Standards:
8th Grade
8.8 Students analyze the divergent paths of the American people in the South from 1800 to the mid-1800’s and the challenges they faced.
8.8 (6) Describe the War for Independence and the Mexican-American War, including territorial settlements, the aftermath of the wars, and the effects the wars had on the lives of Americans, including Mexican-Americans today.
8.10 Students analyze the multiple causes, key events, and complex consequences of the Civil War.
8.10 (5) Study the views and lives of leaders and soldiers on both sides of the war, including those of black soldiers and regiments.
8.10 (7) Explain how the war affected combatants, civilians, the physical environment, and future warfare.

Common Core Reading Standards For Literacy In History/Social Studies
8th Grade
1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
3. Identify key steps in a text’s description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).
4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
6. Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g. loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).
7. Integrate visual information (e.g. in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
8. Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

Documents Included:
Document 1: Etching, New San Diego Barracks, c. 1880
Documents 3 and 4: Reports from Major Edwin A. Rigg, Official Records: Serial 105, (11 & 12)
Document 5: Oath of Allegiance (7)

Historical Context:
The only Civil War incident in California took place in San Diego County in November of 1861, seven months after the first shots were fired across a continent at Fort Sumter. A party of 16 Confederate sympathizers, led by assemblyman Dan Showalter, were captured without a struggle by Union forces near what is now Mesa Grande. They were believed to have been planning the capture of the Union outpost of Fort Yuma, claiming California for the Confederacy. The Union soldiers, stationed at Camp Wright (near Warner’s Ranch), intercepted the would-be Confederates and administered loyalty oaths. After their release, though, the majority headed to the South to fight for the Confederacy.

Source: “California’s Only Rebels Met Defeat.” San Diego Union Tribune. 27 January 1955

San Diego History Center, 2014
Students’ Task:
Your students’ task is based on the accompanying documents and is designed to assess their ability to work with and interpret historical documents. As they analyze each document, remind them to take into account the source of each, the author/organization’s point of view(s), and their knowledge of the historical era. Let them know that their answers are based on their own interpretation of the documents and that as long as their answers are logical and their interpretations are supported by the contents of the document, they will be considered correct. *Small group, whole-class, or jigsaw (recommended)

8th Grade Questions and Essay Prompts

Part A: Analyze the documents to answer the following questions

Document 1: Etching, New San Diego Barracks, c. 1880

1. What does this etching tell you about the location of the barracks in New San Diego?
2. If the date of this etching were not included, what other clues would help you recognize this time period?
3. Do you think New San Diego had a relatively large or small population based on this etching? Why or why not?


1. Where is Camp Wright?
2. What is a secessionist?
3. Why does Major Edwin A. Rigg believe they were “on their way to lend aid and comfort to the enemy?”

Documents 3 and 4: Reports from Major Edwin A. Rigg, Official Records: Serial 105, (11 & 12)

1. T.L. Roberts is quoted as saying he is “opposed to taking up arms against [his] own people”. To what group of people is he referring?
2. Why do you think William Woods says “it is hard to say which side would I take”?
3. None of these captured men are originally from California. Based on these documents and your knowledge of American history, why do you think they all moved to California?
4. Based on all of testimony provided, what do you think these men felt was the cause of the Civil War?
5. What other possible causes of the Civil War are not mentioned?
6. What reasons were given by some of the captured men as to why they were hesitant to take the Oath of Allegiance?

Document 5: Oath of Allegiance (7)

1. What year was the Oath administered?
2. To which organization is the person swearing allegiance to when taking this oath?
3. Does the Oath specifically name the “enemies and opposers”? Based on the date given, who were the “enemies”?

**Part B: Essays**

Using both your knowledge of US History and the documents provided, write a well organized essay that includes an introduction, body, and conclusion.

1. Explain how the Civil War affected the entire nation, and not just the East Coast states.
2. Explain the different causes for the Civil War given by both the Union and the Confederacy.

http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/76spring/civilwar.htm

http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/61april/civilwar.htm
Document 1
Etching, New San Diego Barracks
San Diego and the Civil War
Courtesy of the San Diego History Center Archives
//Inclosure No. 2//

CAMP WRIGHT,
Oak Grove, San Diego County, California.
November 30, 1861

COLONEL:

I take advantage of Senor Sepulva, Ramon Carrillo's brother-in-law, to inform you of the capture of the Showalter party, Showalter with them. The party consists of 16 men, each man armed with a rifle and pair of revolvers. They gave us a hard chase, but we finally captured them. They parleyed, but finally concluded not to resist, although against the advice of Showalter.

The names of the parties are: T.A. Wilson, Tennessee; W. Woods, Missouri; Charles Benbrook, Kentucky; William Sands, Tennessee; T.L. Roberts, South Carolina; H.H. Hard, Mississippi; T. Woods, Virginia; J.M. Sampson, Kentucky; S.A. Rogers, Tennessee; J. Lawrence, Arkansas; William Edwards, Arkansas; Levi Rogers, Alabama; Henry Crowell, Pennsylvania; A. King, Tennessee; William Turner, Georgia; Dan Showalter, Pennsylvania. I took two of the party on the 27th near this post, viz., E.G. Summer, F.N. Chum. They were the acquaintance party. Eighteen in all.

I am now examining them, and will send you by express that will leave here tonight some time full particulars. They now regret that they did not resist. If they had they would have given us a hard fight. There is no doubt but every one of them is a rank secessionist, and are on their way to lend aid and comfort to the enemy.

I would like to know as soon as possible what to do with them. They have pack-mules and are well fitted out, and a desperate set of men. I will send you, as I have stated, a full account of all the facts by an express that will leave tonight, or perhaps not until the morning.

I am under great obligations to Francisco O'Campo for my success. It is reported that some 61 more are getting ready and on the road. I will keep a good watch for them.

Very respectfully,

EDWIN A. RIGG,
Major First Infantry, Commanding Camp Wright.

P.S. - They were captured at daylight on the morning of the 29th at John Winter's ranch, near San Jose Valley. E.A.R.

Col. James H. Carleton,
First Infantry Calif. Vols., Los Angeles, Calif.
II. WILLIAM WOODS says:

I am from Clay County, Missouri; have lived for the last three years in Los Angeles County, Cal.; came to California in 1850; have lived most of the time in Sierra and Plumas counties, except the time I lived in Los Angeles; left Los Angeles alone; joined the party at El Monte; knew a portion of the party were at El Monte when I left Los Angeles; my sympathies have heretofore been with the South, having been born there; if I were in Missouri and obliged to take sides it is hard to say which side I would take; have no objections to taking the oath of allegiance; am thirty years of age.

WM. WOODS

III. CHARLES BENBROOK says:

Am from Simpson County, Ky.; left Mariposa County on the 26th day of October, 1861; lived in Mariposa County since August, 1850, when Sands and myself left Mariposa together; left Mariposa with the intention of spending the winter in Los Angeles; when I got to Los Angeles I found a party was forming to go to Sonora, Mexico, and I joined it; was acquainted with Wilson before I started; he had left Mariposa some time before I left; had no idea of meeting Wilson on the trip; I left Kentucky when I was a boy; came to California in 1849 from Texas; do not like to take the oath of allegiance if it can be avoided; have never held the doctrine that any State has a right to secede; will never take arms against the Government of the United States under any circumstances.

CHARLES BENBROOK

IV. WILLIAM SANDS says:

I am from Mariposa; came to California in 1849; lived ten years in Calaveras County; I was born in Wilson County, Tenn.; came to California from Memphis, Tenn.; Charles Benbrook left Mariposa with me; we started to Sonora, Mexico; were going to Sonora to better our condition; my sympathies are with my people; if I were in Tennessee I can't say which side I would take in the present war; do not think that one State alone has any right to secede; am willing to take the oath of allegiance; am 40 years of age.

WILLIAM (his X mark) SANDS
V. T.L. ROBERTS says:

I was born in Fairfield, S.C.; left there when a boy; came to Calif. in 1860; came from Placer County to this place, via Los Angeles; stopped in Los Angeles about four months; went to San Francisco with the intention of taking the steamer for Cuyamaca, Mexico; waited two weeks for the steamer, and finally concluded to go through by land; was going with the intention of going into business if the country suited me; had not or do up my mind whether I would return to San Francisco or to my native State, in case Sonora did not suit me; my sympathies are with the people of the South, but would not like to see them break up the Government; am sincerely opposed to taking up arms against the Government; am also opposed to taking arms against my own people; do not like to take the oath of allegiance because I might thereby be compelled to take up arms against my own people; will, however, take it if required; am 20 years of age.

T. L. ROBERTS

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VI. R.H. HARD says:

I am from Jackson, Miss.; came to California in 1852; first ten months in Calif. I lived in Santa Barbara; then lived in Taftville till 1856; since that time I lived in Merced County; a man by name of Holland started with me from Merced; Holland has gone overland to the Atlantic States; was acquainted with Bemboom and Hamilton before starting from Merced; then I started it was my intention to go to Arkansas; and was about starting back to Merced when I heard of this party forming to go to Sonora, and made up my mind to go with it; thought of staying in Sonora a year or two, and then returning to California or to Arkansas; was not fully determined to which State; I am conditionally a Union man; I do not believe in the right of any State to secede; all my people are in the South; am perfectly willing to take the oath of allegiance; never thought of taking up arms against the Federal Government; I consider the seceded States as a portion of the United States; am 27 years of age.

R.H. HARD

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VII. T.J. GOODS says:

I am from Bedford County, Va.; have been in Calif. since July, 1852; came from Missouri to this State; I left Placer County with the intention of going to Sonora, Mexico; T.L. Roberts and a man by the name of Southwick started with me; had heard a good deal of Sonora as being a good country for mining; thought of prospecting for mines; I am a Union man, and always have been; don't believe any State has a right to secede; am perfectly willing to take the oath of allegiance.

T.J. (his X mark) GOODS
OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

I, __________, do solemnly swear that I will bear true allegiance to the Government of the United States; that I will serve them honestly and faithfully against all their enemies and opposers whatsoever, and that I will support, maintain, and defend the supremacy of the Constitution of the United States, and all laws of Congress made in pursuance thereof, and that I will in all things well and faithfully discharge the duties of a citizen of the United States to the best of my ability.

So help me God.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 1st day of December, 1861.
Camp Wright, Oak Grove Station, San Diego County, Southern California.

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HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA,
Los Angeles, Cal., December 7, 1861

The above is a true copy of the oath administered by Maj. E.A. Rice, First Infantry California Volunteers, and by Lieut. J.F. Harmon, First Infantry California Volunteers, post adjutant at Camp Wright, to the man composing the party of Dan Showalter. It was sworn and subscribed to by the following-named persons:

T. A. WILSON    WILLIAM WOODS    C. BERNBROOK
WILLIAM SANDS   T. L. ROBERTS   R. H. WARD
T. W. WOODS      J. M. SAMPSON    S. A. ROGERS
WILLIAM EDWARDS  JAMES LAURENCE    WILLIAM TURNER
A. KING          LEVI ROGERS       HENRY CROWE
DAN SHOWALTER    WILLIAM HAMILTON  B. B. SUGAR
                 F. N. CHUM

BEN C. CUTLER