



**AMERICAN  
BATTLEFIELD  
TRUST ★ ★ ★**

# Antietam Battlefield Field Trip Lesson Plan



American Battlefield Trust, 2022

# Table of Contents

<b>Tour Preparation .....</b>	<b>2-5</b>
<b>Lesson Plan 1 - <i>Religion &amp; the Dunkers at Antietam</i></b>	
• Lesson Plan.....	6-8
• Battle Quotes.....	9
<b>Lesson Plan 2 - <i>Farming &amp; Field Hospitals: The Poffenberger Farm</i></b>	
• Lesson Plan.....	10-13
• Worksheet Page.....	14-15
• Answer Key Page.....	16
• Battle Quotes.....	17
<b>Lesson Plan 3 - <i>Weaponry, Photography, and the Cornfield</i></b>	
• Lesson Plan.....	18-21
• Worksheet Page.....	22
• Battle Quotes.....	23
<b>Lesson Plan 4 - <i>Battlefield Preservation and the Bloody Lane</i></b>	
• Lesson Plan.....	24-27
• Worksheet Page.....	28-34
• Battle Quotes.....	35
<b>Lesson Plan 5 - <i>Burnside Bridge: Building Bridges through History</i></b>	
• Lesson Plan.....	36-38
• Worksheet Page.....	39-40
• Battle Quotes.....	41
<b>Lesson Plan 6 - <i>Antietam National Cemetery</i></b>	
• Lesson Plan.....	42-44
• Worksheet Page.....	45-48

**These lesson plans are listed according to their locations on the National Park Service's Self-Guided Auto Tour route. Please consult the [Antietam National Battlefield's Self-Guided Auto Tour map](#) when planning your visit with these lesson plans and battlefield investigations.**



# Teacher Preparation – Before You Go

Visiting [Antietam National Battlefield](#) will be a memorable experience for you and your class. We want it to be memorable for the right reasons...not logistical headaches! Here are a few helpful tips as you prepare to use this lesson plan and begin your battlefield explorations.

## TIPS FOR USING THIS LESSON PLAN

1. Read through the lesson plan to plan how you wish to use it.
2. Print the photographs for “The Cornfield” and “The Sunken Road” on large paper if possible.
3. Print the worksheets and your answer keys.
4. Print any additional resources that you will want on paper – like the battlefield maps or extra photographs.
5. Pre-watch any videos that you don’t want to pre-download for the battlefield day (See “Limited Internet Coverage”)

## LIMITED PHONE AND INTERNET COVERAGE

Please be aware that many cellphone networks have difficulty providing coverage at Antietam National Battlefield due to its rural location. It may be extremely difficult or impossible to download battlefield apps or stream videos while on the battlefield. We suggest that you download any resources that you want to view on the field ahead of your arrival.

## MAPS

This is the FREE map available at the Visitor Center. (Official Park Brochure) You will need this map to help you navigate the driving tour and arrive at your lesson stops. We have included a [link to this map here](#) for preparation. Also, check out the [Google Map](#) designed specifically for this lesson plan. (If you are looking for historical maps, please reference the links in “Extra Resources” at the end of this lesson plan.)

## NATIONAL PARK ENTRANCE FEE

Antietam National Battlefield is a national park with an entrance fee. We recommend calling ahead if bringing a bus to see what the rangers recommend or if you are in a small van, simply stop at the Visitor Center to pay the entrance fee.

## BATTLEFIELD GUIDES

Like Gettysburg, Antietam offers a licensed battlefield guide service. You may enhance your visit by hiring a guide to take you and your class across the battlefield.

<https://antietamguides.com/>



## FACILITIES

Restrooms are limited at Antietam National Battlefield, and at this time, are only located at the Visitor Center. Also, be aware that some of the roads are one-way only, making it a longer trek back to the Visitor Center.

Vending machines are not available. We recommend taking a cooler with water or other drinks for the tour.

## FOOD

Food options are limited around Sharpsburg, Maryland. If taking a large group for a meal, you'll want to call ahead to make sure there is plenty of room or ask to order in advance for pick up.

Some suggestions include:

- Battleview Market - <http://www.battleviewmarket.com/>
- Bonnie's at Red Byrd - <https://bonnies-byrd.edan.io/>
- Nutter's (Local Ice Cream) - <https://www.facebook.com/nuttersicecream/>
- Shepherdstown, WV (~4 miles) has more food options, including Subway, McDonalds, and various pizza eateries

## HELPFUL LINKS

Antietam Battlefield in 1 Day - <https://www.battlefields.org/visit/itineraries/tour-antietam-battlefield-one-day>

Antietam and Vicinity in 3 Days - <https://www.battlefields.org/visit/itineraries/tour-antietam-and-vicinity-three-days>



# Classroom Preparation – Before You Go...Or As You Start

## WATCH

American Battlefield Trust's Animated Map of the Battle of Antietam (15 minutes):

[https://youtu.be/\\_8ybkoGmHww](https://youtu.be/_8ybkoGmHww)

American Battlefield Trust's In4 Video of Antietam (4 minutes):

<https://youtu.be/CxDAJlmmPXo>

## THE BATTLE OF ANTIETAM – OVERVIEW

The first Confederate invasion of Union-held territory is not going as planned. After a Union victory at [the battle of South Mountain](#) and a Confederate victory at [the battle of Harpers Ferry](#), Confederate general Robert E. Lee opts to make one last stand in the hopes of salvaging his Maryland Campaign.

With Federal forces closing in from the east, Lee selects strategic ground near Antietam Creek and orders his army to converge there. A mile east of the town of Sharpsburg, the creek meanders through the hilly but open countryside, good for long-range artillery and moving infantry. The water is deep, swift, and crossable only at three stone bridges, making it a natural defensible location. On September 15, Lee positions his men behind the creek and waits for McClellan to arrive.

On the afternoon of September 16, Union general George B. McClellan sets his army in motion, sending Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker's I Corps across Antietam Creek to find Lee's left flank. At dusk, Hooker bumps into Confederate general John Bell Hood's division and the two forces skirmish until dark. The following morning, McClellan attacks.

September 17. The battle of Antietam begins at dawn when Hooker's Union corps mounts a powerful assault on Lee's left flank. Repeated Union attacks and equally vicious Confederate counterattacks sweep back and forth across Miller's cornfield and the West Woods. Hooker sees thousands of his Federals felled in the corn rows, where, "every stalk of corn in the northern and greater part of the field was cut as closely as could have been done with a knife, and the slain lay in rows precisely as they had stood in their ranks a few moments before." Despite the great Union numerical advantage, Lt. Gen. Stonewall Jackson's Confederate forces hold their ground near the Dunker Church.

Meanwhile, towards the center of the battlefield, Union assaults against the Sunken Road pierce the Confederate center after a terrible struggle for this key defensive position. Unfortunately for the Union, this temporal advantage in the center is not followed up with further advances and eventually the Union defenders must abandon their position.

In the afternoon, the third and final major assault by Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside's IV Corps pushes over a bullet-strewn stone bridge at Antietam Creek. (Today it's called Burnside Bridge.) Just as Burnside's forces begin to collapse the Confederate right, Maj.



Gen. A.P. Hill's division charges into battle after a long march from Harpers Ferry, helping drive back the assault and saving the day for the Army of Northern Virginia.

There are more than 22,000 casualties at the Battle of Antietam. Doctors at the scene are overwhelmed. Badly needed supplies are brought in by nurse Clara Barton, known as the "Angel of the Battlefield." During the night, both armies tend their wounded and consolidate their lines. In spite of his diminished ranks, Lee continues to skirmish with McClellan on September 18, while removing his wounded south of the Potomac River. Late that evening and on September 19, after realizing that no further attacks are coming from McClellan, Lee withdraws from the battlefield and slips back across the Potomac into Virginia. McClellan sends Maj. Gen. Fitz John Porter to mount a cautious pursuit, which is repulsed at [the battle of Shepherdstown](#).

While the Battle of Antietam is considered a tactical draw, President Lincoln claims a strategic victory. Lincoln has been waiting for a military success to issue his preliminary [Emancipation Proclamation](#). He takes his opportunity on September 22. The Proclamation, which vows to free the slaves of all states still in rebellion as of January 1, 1863, will forever change the course of the war and the nation by marrying the Union cause with an attack on the institution of slavery. Hesitant to support a pro-slavery regime, England and France decline to form an alliance with the Confederate States of America.

After McClellan fails to pursue Lee on his retreat south, Lincoln loses faith in his general. Weeks later, in the wake of the Northern midterm elections, Lincoln names Burnside commander of the Army of the Potomac.

## DEFINITIONS

- *Casualties* – a term used to refer to dead, wounded, or missing soldiers. See also:
- *Strategic* – over-arching goals that military tactics will be used to accomplish. (At Antietam, the Union needs to drive the Confederates out of Maryland as their strategic goal.)
- *Tactics* – organizing and employing fighting forces on a battlefield.
- *Tactical Draw* – neither side gains a tactical battlefield advantage. (At Antietam, both sides remain on their sides of the battlefield.) However, one side usually gains a strategic victory. (At Antietam, the Union gains the strategic victory when the Confederates retreat toward Virginia.)



# American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Lesson

## Antietam: Dunker Church

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What was the role of the Dunkers and their church in the Battle of Antietam? Should their church have been used as a hospital in the aftermath of the battle? Should Dunkers who were eligible to serve in the military be allowed an exemption from service because of their religious views?

### OVERVIEW

The Dunker religion was founded in Germany at the turn of the 18th century. As this religious group split from the Protestant and Catholic congregations, they were not well received. They were forced to meet and practice their beliefs in areas that tolerated their split from the other religions. The Dunkers were appropriately named after their practice of baptism, which fully immersed their members. Over time, the religion grew and spread, now officially known as the Church of the Brethren.

As Dunkers immigrated to America, they originally settled in Pennsylvania before eventually moving elsewhere. A large population of Dunkers had migrated southward from their original settlements in Pennsylvania to in and around the town of Sharpsburg, Maryland.

The Dunker religion is based around a modest lifestyle, pacifism, and the opposition of enslaving people. This pacifism was demonstrated through refusal of military enlistment and service in both the North and South. Ironically, the war came to them, with the bloodiest single-day battle of the Civil War centering around their place of worship.

The structure you are now at – the Dunker Church – sustained heavy damage during the battle and was also used as a make-shift field hospital for wounded soldiers. After the battle, the structure fell into great despair and in 1921, a storm demolished what remained of the original structure. The land was purchased in the early 1950's by the Washington County Historical Society. They later donated the site to the National Park Service and the church was rebuilt on the original site using as much original material as possible.

### OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Knowledge (Describe)
  - a. Recall defining factors of the Dunker religion.
  - b. List common features of Dunker churches.
2. Comprehension/Application/Analysis (Explain)
  - a. Discuss how their views on slavery may have been controversial based on their location at the time of the war.
  - b. Formulate an opinion as to whether the church should have been used as a field hospital during and after the battle.



3. Evaluation (Interpret)
  - a. Form and defend an opinion as to whether or not Dunkers should have been allowed to not serve in the army during the war.
  - b. Draw conclusions as to what the fighting around the Dunker Church looked like during the battle.

### **BATTLEFIELD LOCATION**

**Antietam National Battlefield Auto Tour Stop #1-** Dunker Church/ Hagerstown Pike

American Battlefield Trust Antietam Virtual Tour – Dunker Church Segment

<https://www.battlefields.org/visit/virtual-tours/antietam-360-virtual-tour>

NPS Website Virtual Tour:

<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/virtualtour.htm>

### **ACTIVITIES**

#### **Motivational Activity:**

1. Gather students in the Dunker Church if it is open. To provide students with a historical reference as to how religious services were conducted, have male students sit on one side of the church and female students sit on the other side.
2. Provide students with an overview of the Dunker religion and the Dunker Church at Antietam. This can be located in the Overview section above.

#### **Procedure:**

1. After you have provided the overview, facilitate a discussion focusing on the following:
  - a. The Dunkers' views on slavery.
  - b. Allowing men to be exempt from serving in the military during a time of conflict based solely on their religious views.
  - c. Since the location of the Dunker Church was heavily fought upon, allow students to discuss and express their views on the church being used as a field hospital.
    - i. Is this a conflict of interest?

#### **Summary Activity:**

1. After the class discussion, allow students to move their seats based on their opinion.
  - a. Have students who defend the right to abstain from fighting sit on one side and students who oppose the right to abstain from fighting sit on the other side.
  - b. After the students have chosen their side, finish the lesson by facilitating a discussion about the division in the class.





## RESOURCES

### Teacher:

- Snyder, Keith. *Antietam Remembered: A Walking Tour*. Sharpsburg: Western Maryland Interpretive Association.
- Walker, K. M., and Kirkman, K. C. *Antietam Farmsteads: A Guide to the Battlefield Landscape*. Sharpsburg: Western Maryland Interpretive Association, 2010.
- American Battlefield Trust “The Dunkers: A Religious Community Caught in the Throes of War”  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/dunkers>
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: Religion <https://youtu.be/DLQe22xjN6s>
- National Park Service Website
  - <https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/historyculture/dunkerchurch.htm>

### Students:

- Snyder, Keith. *Antietam Remembered: A Walking Tour*. Sharpsburg: Western Maryland Interpretive Association.
- National Park Service Website  
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/historyculture/dunkerchurch.htm>
- American Battlefield Trust “The Dunkers: A Religious Community Caught in the Throes of War”  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/dunkers>
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: Religion <https://youtu.be/DLQe22xjN6s>

## STANDARDS

### Social Studies - National Council for the Social Studies

- Theme 1: Culture
- Theme 2: Time, Continuity, and Change
- Theme 3: People, Places, or Environments
- Theme 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Theme 6: Power Authority and Governance



**BATTLE QUOTES — DUNKER CHURCH**

***“For a time the loss of life was fearful. We had never seen anything like it.”***

A Massachusetts soldier

***“On one side of this turnpike lay rows of the union dead,-in some instances taking in every man in the line-while on the opposite side lay the dead Confederates, equally thick, showing how terribly in earnest these lines had been which lay on each side of the narrow road and shot at each other. A terrible sight to go into battle over!”***

Historian of the 19th Massachusetts Infantry

***“Suddenly, loud above the rattle of musketry and the roar of the artillery, that historic rebel yell was heard. To those who have never heard it I will simply say that it is indescribable; but if ten thousand fiends were unchained and let loose it could not be more unearthly.”***

James Larkin, 72nd Pennsylvania Infantry

***“The noise of the musketry and artillery was so great that I judged more by the gestures of the general as to the disposition he wished me to make than by the orders that reached my ears.”***

Oliver O. Howard’s description of Sumner riding toward him in the West Woods

***“We were in the hottest part of the fight under Jackson, and for me to give an idea of the fierceness of the conflict, the roar of musketry, and the thunder of artillery is as utterly impossible as to describe a thousand storms in the region of Hades. The Malvern Hill fight was a circumstance....[Federals] fought better than they ever did before.”***

A South Carolina soldier

***“On a field shrouded with smoke, the church alone was the only visible landmark. And so, this Dunker Church stood out as a beacon by which commanders took their direction and men found their way through the smoky chaos of battle. May it stand in peace as it did in war, as a beacon to guide those searching their way through the darkness. May it stand throughout all ages as a symbol of mercy, peace, and understanding.”***

Maryland Governor Millard Tawes, Re-dedication of the Dunker Church, Sept. 2, 1962



# American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Lesson

## Antietam: Joseph Poffenberger Farm

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What was it like for soldiers who were wounded in the Battle of Antietam and taken to field hospitals in the hours and days that followed? How were local farms, homes, and other buildings transformed into field hospitals to accommodate the large amount of wounded soldiers following the battle of Antietam?

### OVERVIEW

The farm of Joseph Poffenberger is located just north of the town of Sharpsburg, Maryland. A large, white farmhouse, along with many outbuildings, sit on a large piece of property. Purchased in 1852, Joseph Poffenberger bought the property from his father-in-law, and he and his wife Mary Ann worked to expand the farm. Their hard work and large farm made them well-known farmers in the Sharpsburg area.

The summer and early fall of 1862 proved to be a fruitful time for the Poffenberger family. They had an abundance of fruit, grains, and smoked meats to carry them through the upcoming winter months. Little did they know that on the evening of September 16, 1862, Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker's I Corps of the Union Army would advance right through their property. Hundreds of soldiers settled on the property and raided the Poffenbergers' bountiful harvest that evening. Furthermore, Union troops broke into the home and raided the house, taking all that they could carry. During the early morning hours of September 17, 1862, Confederate artillery began to fire at the Union troops bivouacking on their property, further damaging it. After the battle, many wounded soldiers were left behind here.

When looking to establish a location for an outdoor field hospital, medical staff, including surgeons, considered several important features. First, they sought a large, open area to accommodate the hundreds, if not thousands, of patients that they would be treating over the coming days and weeks. The battle had raged over numerous private farmlands in the area that could serve just this purpose. Second, medical staff looked for protection when establishing a field hospital. If the hospital was opened during the fighting and close to the front lines, protection would be needed from projectiles landing in and around the site. Farm complexes with their homes, large barns, and numerous outbuildings would certainly fulfill this need and provide further protection from the weather. A doctor with the Sanitary Commission recalled, "Indeed there is not a barn, or farmhouse, or store or church, or schoolhouse...that is not gorged with wounded—Rebel and union. Even the corn-cribs, and in many instances the cow stable, and in one place the mangers were filled. Several thousands[sic] lie in open air upon straw and all are receiving the kind services of the farmers' families and the surgeons."

Civil War medicine, and more specifically Civil War nurses, are often overlooked during the study of battles and engagements. Nurses played an important and critical role in nursing troops back to health after numerous battles. They collected and distributed



supplies, cooked and cared for wounded and sick soldiers, and provided necessary aid to surgeons and doctors.

Clara Barton was one of the most prominent medical volunteers in the Civil War and helped revolutionize battlefield medicine well after it ended. After the Battle of Antietam, Barton was a nurse at the Poffenberger farm. Later, in 1880, Clara Barton founded the American Red Cross. She modeled the organization after its international counterpart and served as its first president from 1881 to 1904. She was well known for leading the Red Cross in aiding victims of natural disasters in America and abroad.

## OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Knowledge (Describe)
  - List local resources that were utilized for the care and aid of wounded soldiers following the battle of Antietam.
  - Name the key elements that made the J. Poffenberger farm an ideal hospital site.
2. Comprehension/Application/Analysis (Explain)
  - Discuss the positive impact that field hospitals had on the overall health of the armies.
  - Draw conclusions as to how the local resources depleted by the armies affected the town and townspeople of Sharpsburg.
3. Evaluation (Interpret)
  - Connect the medical advancements that Clara Barton provided during the Civil War to medical practices today.
  - Evaluate the importance of Clara Barton's contributions to the nursing efforts during the American Civil War.

## BATTLEFIELD LOCATION

**Antietam National Battlefield Near Auto Tour Stop #2- J. Poffenberger Farm,**  
Mansfield Avenue

- National Park Service Virtual Tour  
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/virtualtour.htm>

## ACTIVITIES

### Motivational Activity:

1. Gather students at the Clara Barton monument at the edge of the Poffenberger property.
2. Begin by providing the history of Clara Barton and her impact on nursing and medical care during and after the Battle of Antietam. This information is provided in the **Overview** section above.
3. Move your group down the lane of the Joseph Poffenberger property and find an area to reconvene near the homestead.



**Procedure:**

1. Introduce students to the Joseph Poffenberger family and farm site. This information is provided in the **Overview** section above.
2. Point out the outbuildings and other structures on the property to help familiarize your students with the farmstead.
3. Divide students into pairs and distribute the [Battlefield Investigation- J. Poffenberger Farm](#) worksheet.
4. Allow students to explore the property to gather their answers and supporting evidence.

**Summary Activity:**

1. After the time allotted to complete the worksheet, reconvene students and facilitate a discussion based on their findings.
2. Allow students to provide justification for their answers and to compare answers with their peers.

**Extensions:**

Have students research other farms and structures that were utilized as hospitals after the battle of Antietam. They can then compare these findings to the experiences at the hospital that had been made at the Poffenberger farm..

**RESOURCES****Teacher:**

- Walker, K. M., and Kirkman, K. C. *Antietam Farmsteads: A Guide to the Battlefield Landscape*. Sharpsburg: Western Maryland Interpretive Association, 2010.
- [Battlefield Investigation - J. Poffenberger Farm](#)
- [Battlefield Investigation - J. Poffenberger Farm Answer Key](#)
- National Park Service Website  
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/tour-stop-2.htm>
- American Battlefield Trust Video: Clara Barton Collection at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine  
<https://youtu.be/BplGSE-9Gek>
- American Battlefield Trust – In4 Video: Battlefield Fences  
<https://youtu.be/StvjCIZTxxc>
- American Battlefield Trust – In4 Video: Civil War Medicine  
<https://youtu.be/IDYWP2fz4-E>

**Students:**

- [Battlefield Investigation - J. Poffenberger Farm](#)
- National Park Service Website  
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/tour-stop-2.htm>
- American Battlefield Trust Video: Clara Barton Collection at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine  
<https://youtu.be/BplGSE-9Gek>



- American Battlefield Trust – In4 Video: Battlefield Fences  
<https://youtu.be/StvjCIZTxxc>
- American Battlefield Trust – In4 Video: Civil War Medicine  
<https://youtu.be/IDYWP2fz4-E>

## STANDARDS

### **Social Studies - National Council for the Social Studies**

- Theme 2: Time, Continuity, and Change
- Theme 3: People, Places, or Environments
- Theme 4: Individual, Development and Identity
- Theme 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Theme 6: Power Authority and Governance



**American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation  
Antietam: Joseph Poffenberger Farm**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Locate the different buildings, crops which would have been grown on the farm at the time of the battle, and other daily necessities and identify how each would have been used to support the field hospital. Find evidence around Joseph Poffenberger's property that reveals why this site was used as a major field hospital during and after the Battle of Antietam.**

- 1.) Describe the importance of different crops grown on the farm of Joseph Poffenberger. How could each of the following crops support the important role the Poffenberger farm played during and after the battle?

**Crops -**

**Straw -**

**Fruit -**

**Animals -**

- 2.) Describe how roads around the Joseph Poffenberger farm played an important role during and after the battle. List and discuss supporting facts.
- 3.) Describe the location of a source of water in relation to the home of Joseph Poffenberger. What information in this area supports the fact that this property played an important role during the battle?



- 4.) Describe the location of the following buildings in relation to the home of Joseph Poffenberger. What information about these buildings/areas support the fact that this property played an important role during the battle?

**Ice House -**

**Corn Crib/Granary -**

**Kitchen -**

**Barn -**

**Smoke House -**





**American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation  
Antietam: Joseph Poffenberger Farm  
Answer Key**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Locate the different buildings, crops which would have been grown on the farm at the time of the battle, and other daily necessities and identify how each would have been used to support the field hospital. Find evidence around Joseph Poffenberger's property that supports the establishment of a field hospital on this site following the battle of Antietam.**

- 1.) Describe the importance of crops grown on the farm of Joseph Poffenberger. How could each of the following crops support the important role the Poffenberger farm played during and after the battle.

**Crops- Corn/Wheat/ Flax/Clover  
Straw, Fruit Orchard, Animals**

**All provided necessary food to sustain the hospital while it was on this site.**

- 2.) Describe how roads around the Joseph Poffenberger farm played an important role during and after the battle. List and discuss supporting the facts that support their importance.

**Easy to transport supplies to wounded troops. Provided access to transport wounded troops after the battle.**

- 3.) Describe the location of the source of water in relation to the home of Joseph Poffenberger. What information on this area supports the fact that this property played an important role during the battle.

**Water Well- Provided water for various needs while the hospital was on this property.**

- 4.) Describe the location of the following buildings in relation to the home of Joseph Poffenberger. What information on this building/area supports the fact that this property played an important role during the battle.

**Out Buildings- Provided shelter for wounded soldiers.  
Ice House, Corn Crib/Granary, Kitchen, Barn, Smoke House**



**BATTLE QUOTES — J. POFFENBERGER FARM**

***“I returned to my house; it was completely empty. I had nothing left. I lived on army crackers that I found on the battlefield for five days.”***  
Joseph Poffenberger

***“All realized that there was ugly business and plenty of it just ahead. This was plainly visible in the faces as well as in the nervous, subdued demeanor of all. The absence of joking and play and the almost painful sobriety of action, where jollity had been the rule was particularly noticeable.”***

Frederick L. Hitchcock of the 132nd Pennsylvania Infantry

***“we was aroused at 11 o’clock from tired natures sweet repose. Our officers ordered us to fall in and make no noise. We were even warned not to let our canteens or tin cups rattle.”***

Frederick Crouse of the 128th Pennsylvania Infantry

***“with Hooker, there was bustle and cooking, with Jackson there was only munching of cold rations and water from the spring.”***

Bradley Johnson , September 17, 1862



# American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Lesson

## Antietam: The Cornfield

### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How does a photograph taken shortly after the battle of Antietam help us understand the horrors of war for soldiers and civilians?

### OVERVIEW

On the morning of September 17, 1862, Union Gen. George McClellan moved almost 15,000 men into position at the northern end of the growing battle near a cornfield. The Union's objective was to move south towards a piece of high ground where the modern day Visitor's Center is located. Halfway between the high ground and the North Woods was a field of corn. At approximately 5:45 am, Union soldiers under the command of Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker moved out of the North Woods, heading south towards the cornfield and high ground beyond. Confederate artillery off to their right opened fire. Hooker's men received their first casualties.

To combat the deadly Confederate artillery fire, General Hooker ordered up some of his own cannons and an artillery duel began. With the artillery firing, Hooker's men moved south, but soon this attack fell into disarray, leaving only 1,000 Union soldiers making it to the cornfield. By 6:30 am, almost half of these 1,000 soldiers had been killed or wounded. As the Union soldiers struggled to push southward and through the corn, they finally met their foes, Confederate soldiers from the state of Louisiana. Later that morning, more men from General Hooker's I Corps were thrown into the swirling action in the cornfield, and, even later, soldiers from the Union Army's XII Corps joined the fray.

Over the next three hours the struggle for this plot of corn raged back and forth, changing hands too many times to count. As the Union soldiers gained more ground and pushed further southward towards the rise of ground in the distance, they encountered reinforcements for the Confederate line from Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, and Virginia. During one critical moment, Confederate soldiers from Texas charged into the battle to save this sector of the Confederate line. One regiment, the 1st Texas Infantry, suffered 82% casualties from their charge.

The fighting in the now famous Cornfield was violent, chaotic, and at a close range between the opposing lines. All of these factors increased the number of casualties from the fight. Adding to this bloodshed was the use of the rifled musket by many soldiers. The rifled musket was a weapon that had better accuracy and range than older smoothbore muskets. These weapons, used at close quarters, only increased the carnage.

Alexander Gardner photographed the aftermath of the Battle of Antietam, including the Cornfield and Hagerstown Pike. His images of dead soldiers across the landscape were exhibited in New York, shocking the nation. Taking photographs on a battlefield was a difficult and timely process, with photographers having to bring portable lightrooms



and lots of equipment and chemicals. Furthermore, photographers were limited in their subjects; most Civil War documentary photographs were taken by Northern photographers of Eastern subjects. This was one of relatively few engagements where photographers recorded images of dead soldiers, making these photographs of Sharpsburg after the battle an invaluable source for both contemporary and modern historians.

The landscape was also transformed by this battle. The land that comprised the now famous Cornfield was owned by farmer David R. Miller at the time of the battle. After the battle, he submitted a damage claim to the United States government to help recoup some of the loss to his livelihood. In all, Miller submitted a claim of \$1,237 to the government and, nine years later, only received \$995.

## OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Knowledge (Describe)
  - a. Cite specific examples of modern weaponry.
  - b. Discuss why casualties were high during close range fighting.
2. Comprehension/Application/Analysis (Explain)
  - a. Compare the similarities and differences between smoothbore and rifled muskets.
  - b. Explain the important role photographers of the time played in documenting the events of the Civil War.
3. Evaluation (Interpret)
  - a. Analyze clues within the photograph to determine the photographers location when the image was taken in September 1862.

## BATTLEFIELD LOCATION

**Antietam National Battlefield Auto Tour Stop #4** - The Cornfield, Cornfield Avenue

American Battlefield Trust Antietam Virtual Tour – Cornfield and Hagerstown Road Segments

<https://www.battlefields.org/visit/virtual-tours/antietam-360-virtual-tour>

NPS Website Virtual Tour:

<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/tour-stop-4.htm>

## ACTIVITIES

### Motivational Activity:

1. Gather your students near the fence at the southern edge of The Cornfield opposite the parking lot. As you are sharing historical information from the **Overview** section, encourage them to imagine what this field would have looked like during the late summer of 1862, before, during, and after the battle.
  - a. Note: The cornfield is not always planted with corn as the National Park Service issues permits to farmers who cultivate this land as they deem necessary.



2. After reading the overview above, introduce your students to the more modern weapons used during the American Civil War, specifically the rifled musket. Rifled muskets were a new type of weapon for infantrymen and posed a much greater threat to the enemy.
  - a. Rifled muskets have grooves in the barrel that allow the bullet to fit snugly and then spin as the weapon was discharged.
  - b. Smooth bore muskets could only accurately hit a target at approximately 50 yards.
  - c. Rifled muskets could accurately hit a target at approximately 300 yards.
  - d. Rifled muskets had a flatter and longer trajectory than smoothbore muskets.
  - e. The velocity of the ammunition leaving the barrel is higher from a rifled musket than it is from a smoothbore musket.

**Procedure:**

1. Show students the following picture:
  - a. [Antietam, Md. Confederate dead by a fence on the Hagerstown road](#)
2. Provide them with a brief background on Civil War photography, found in the **Overview**.
3. Have students work together to find the location that this photograph was taken just two days after the battle.
4. Once the students have located where they believe the photograph was taken, share with them that photographer Alexander Gardner took these photos to help document the destruction and toll that battles had taken on both armies.
5. At this location, have students complete the photography worksheet. This will allow them to immerse themselves into both the photo and its story as well as specific locations on the battlefield. Students can also take photos at each location to create their own “Then & Now” to compare historic photos with the current-day landscape. They can utilize this link as well: [National Archives Photograph Analysis Worksheet](#)

**Summary Activity:**

Close this lesson by facilitating a discussion that focuses on the effect that rifled muskets would have on the number of casualties incurred by both armies. Do the photographs the students analyzed support the claims that rifled muskets led to increased casualty rates?

**RESOURCES****Teacher:**

- National Park Service Website  
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/tour-stop-4.htm>
- Library of Congress Photograph  
[Antietam, Md. Confederate dead by a fence on the Hagerstown road](#)
- Battlefield Investigation
- [Battlefield Investigation - The Cornfield - National Archives Photo Analysis Worksheet](#)



- American Battlefield Trust Video: The Cornfield, Unknown Antietam 159  
<https://youtu.be/cOctOj8vRwY>
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: Infantry Tactics During The Civil War  
<https://youtu.be/tYg3v9lUuNA>
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: Soldier Life  
<https://youtu.be/zgNxfMIObBk>
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: Photography in the Civil War  
<https://youtu.be/kDzYkygdJO8>

**Students:**

- National Park Service Website  
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/tour-stop-4.htm>
- Library of Congress Photograph  
[Antietam, Md. Confederate dead by a fence on the Hagerstown road](#)
- Battlefield Investigation  
[Battlefield Investigation - The Cornfield - National Archives Photo Analysis Worksheet](#)
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: Infantry Tactics During The Civil War  
<https://youtu.be/tYg3v9lUuNA>
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: Soldier Life  
<https://youtu.be/zgNxfMIObBk>
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: Photography in the Civil War  
<https://youtu.be/kDzYkygdJO8>

**STANDARDS****Social Studies - National Council for the Social Studies**

- Theme 2: Time, Continuity, and Change
- Theme 3: People, Places, or Environments
- Theme 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Theme 7: Production, Distribution, and Consumption
- Theme 8: Science, Technology, and Society



**American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation  
Antietam: The Cornfield**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Analyze a Photograph**



**Meet the photo.**

What do you see?

Is the photo?

- BLACK AND WHITE
- COLOR

Is there a caption?

- YES
- NO

If so, what does the caption tell you?

**Observe its parts.**

Circle what you see in the photo.



PEOPLE OBJECTS BOTH

What are the people doing in the photo?

What are the objects used for in the photo?

Write two words that describe the photo.

**Try to make sense of it.**

Who do you think took this photo?

Where do you think this photo was taken?

List something that helps you prove where it was taken.

Why do you think the photo was taken?

How does this photo compare to modern times?



**Use it as historical evidence.**  
Where do you think we could find out more information about the people or objects in the photo?



**BATTLE QUOTES — THE CORNFIELD**

***“it seemed the whole world was in arms against us....Their new bright flags were waving in every direction.”***

E. Scott Carson of Hampton's Legion remembers the Cornfield fight

***“Just as fast as one man would pick it up, he would be shot down. Eight men were killed or wounded trying to bring it off the field. I can't say we were whipped, but we were overwhelmed.”***

H. Watters Berryman of the 1st Texas describing his battle flag in the Cornfield

***“the air was full of shot and shell...it seemed almost impossible for a rat to live in such a place.”***

J. M. Polk of the 4th Texas

***“The corn and the trees, so fresh and green in the morning, were reddened with blood and torn by bullet and shell, and the very earth was furrowed by the incessant impact of lead and iron.”***

Francis Palfrey of the 20th Mass





# American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Lesson

## Antietam: Bloody Lane

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What can historic photographs tell us about ever-changing landscapes and their importance to American history? Why is it important to preserve this battlefield landscape for future generations?

### OVERVIEW

Historically known as the Sunken Road, the Bloody Lane, located on the battlefield of Antietam, saw a staggering number of casualties during the battle. Originally, this piece of land was used as a farm lane or cut-through for local farmers. The transportation of goods required the use of wagons and without modern roads, traveling between properties was common. Due to wagons being weighed down by goods and its constant use, the soil eroded, causing the path to sink deeper into the ground.

On the morning of September 17, 1862, approximately 2,600 Confederates assumed a defensive position along and in the Sunken Road. As these troops waited for the Union army to advance, they utilized the available fence rails to build a primitive fortification to help strengthen their position. As nearly 5,500 Union soldiers marched towards the Confederates, they were hit with nearly endless volleys of fire. For nearly four hours, both armies exchanged fire at close range. The Confederate troops, although outnumbered, held their position for a good portion of the morning but were finally overrun by Union soldiers after a miscommunication by Confederate officers. At the end of this fight, nearly 5,500 soldiers were considered casualties; killed, wounded, missing, or captured. With such carnage and loss of life, after the battle, the Sunken Road would be forever known as the Bloody Lane.

Alexander Gardner photographed the aftermath of the Battle of Antietam, including the Bloody Lane. His images of dead soldiers across the landscape were exhibited in New York and shocked the nation. Photographing on a battlefield was a difficult and timely process, with photographers having to bring portable lightrooms and lots of equipment and chemicals. Furthermore, photographers were limited in their subjects; most Civil War documentary photographs were taken by Northern photographers of Eastern subjects. Hence why this was one of relatively few engagements where photographers recorded images of dead soldiers, making these photographs of Sharpsburg right after the battle an invaluable source for both contemporary and modern historians.

### OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Knowledge (Describe)
  - Discuss the history of the Sunken Road (Bloody Lane).
  - List benefits of historic preservation for future generations.
2. Comprehension/Application/Analysis (Explain)
  - Examine and compare historic photographs to modern terrain.



- Develop an argument to support preservation of battlefields.
3. Evaluation (Interpret)
    - Analyze and appropriately discuss historic photos.

## BATTLEFIELD LOCATION

**Antietam National Battlefield Auto Tour Stop #8** - Sunken Road (Bloody Lane),  
Richardson Avenue

American Battlefield Trust Antietam Virtual Tour – Above Bloody Lane and Bloody Lane Segments

<https://www.battlefields.org/visit/virtual-tours/antietam-360-virtual-tour>

NPS Website Virtual Tour:

<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/tour-stop-8.htm>

## ACTIVITIES

### Motivational Activity:

1. Begin by providing students a brief history of the Bloody Lane as found in the **Overview** section.
2. Facilitate a discussion focusing on the modern day preservation of this piece of land. Questions may include:
  - a. Can you imagine this as a historic lane (Sunken Road) used for travel and transportation of goods?
  - b. What features show us that it has been well-preserved?
  - c. Can you imagine the intense fighting that took place on this portion of the battlefield?
  - d. What advantages or challenges would this terrain have posed to both armies during the fighting?

### Procedure:

1. Break students into partners for this activity. You can either have all students work on the entire worksheet, or assign different partners to work on one photograph, depending on time or other constraints. If choosing the latter option, encourage students to compare and contrast their photographs and findings with each other.
2. Provide each pair with a copy of the [Battlefield Investigation - Bloody Lane](#) worksheet. If you are completing this on the battlefield, you may choose to print the Battlefield Investigation photos prior to the lesson. Students can also access the photos electronically from the worksheet.
3. Provide the students with background on Civil War battlefield photography, included in the **Overview**.
4. Instruct students to use the photographs provided and locate the modern day vantage point.
5. Partners will need to complete the worksheet which focuses on battlefield preservation.
6. Have students stand in the location that they have determined the historic photograph was taken. Students may choose to take a selfie or a photograph of that location.



7. Students can compare the current state of preservation with the historic image either on the battlefield or by taking an image on their device and upon returning to the classroom, they can compare their modern day photo to the historic photograph on the worksheet.

**Summary Activity:**

After the allotted time, gather your class at your desired location and facilitate a brief discussion on the students' findings. Has preservation allowed for visitors to understand what happened at this specific location during the battle? What arguments do you have to support historic preservation? How does preservation impact the study of history for generations to come?

**Extensions:**

Have students take photos of other areas of the battlefield. Upon returning to the classroom, students should research their photo of choice and find historic photos that match their modern day photos. Students should appropriately discuss changes in the terrain, landscape, and preservation and share their findings.

**RESOURCES****Teacher:**

- Adelman, Garry E. and Timothy H. Smith. *Antietam: Then & Now*. Gettysburg: Thomas Publications, 2005.
- [Battlefield Investigation - Bloody Lane](#)
- Snyder, Keith B., and Brian Baracz. *Antietam Farmsteads: A Guide to the Battlefield Landscape*. Sharpsburg: Western Maryland Interpretive Association.
- Library Of Congress
  - [View of ditch, which had been used as a rifle-pit at the Battle of Antietam](#)
  - [The "Sunken Road" at Antietam](#)
  - [Bloody Lane, Antietam Battlefield, near Sharpsburg, Maryland](#)
- National Park Service Website  
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/tour-stop-8.htm>
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: Soldier Gear  
<https://youtu.be/1-R9uKn7Fv4>
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: Battlefield Terrain  
<https://youtu.be/RktUeoA3F7w>
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: Photography in the Civil War  
<https://youtu.be/kDzYkygdJO8>

**Students:**

- Adelman, Garry E. and Timothy H. Smith. *Antietam: Then & Now*. Gettysburg: Thomas Publications, 2005.



- [\*\*Battlefield Investigation - Bloody Lane\*\*](#)
- Library Of Congress
  - [\*\*View of ditch, which had been used as a rifle-pit at the Battle of Antietam\*\*](#)
  - [\*\*The "Sunken Road" at Antietam\*\*](#)
  - [\*\*Bloody Lane, Antietam Battlefield, near Sharpsburg, Maryland\*\*](#)
- National Park Service Website  
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/tour-stop-8.htm>
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: Soldier Gear  
<https://youtu.be/1-R9uKn7Fv4>
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: Battlefield Terrain  
<https://youtu.be/RktUeoA3F7w>
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: Photography in the Civil War  
<https://youtu.be/kDzYkygdJO8>

## STANDARDS

### Social Studies - National Council for the Social Studies

- Theme 2: Time, Continuity, and Change
- Theme 3: People, Places, or Environments
- Theme 6: Power, Authority, and Governance
- Theme 7: Production, Distribution, and Consumption
- Theme 8: Science, Technology, and Society



**American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation  
Antietam: Bloody Lane**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Use the historic photographs provided to locate specific areas along the Bloody Lane (Sunken Road). Complete the chart to collect your evidence of preservation efforts on this portion of the battlefield.**

[View of ditch, which had been used as a rifle-pit at the Battle of Antietam](#)

Location	
When do you think this photo was taken?	
Prominent landscape features.	
What has remained the same?	
What has changed?	
How has preservation positively affected this area of the battlefield?	





**American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation  
Antietam: Bloody Lane**

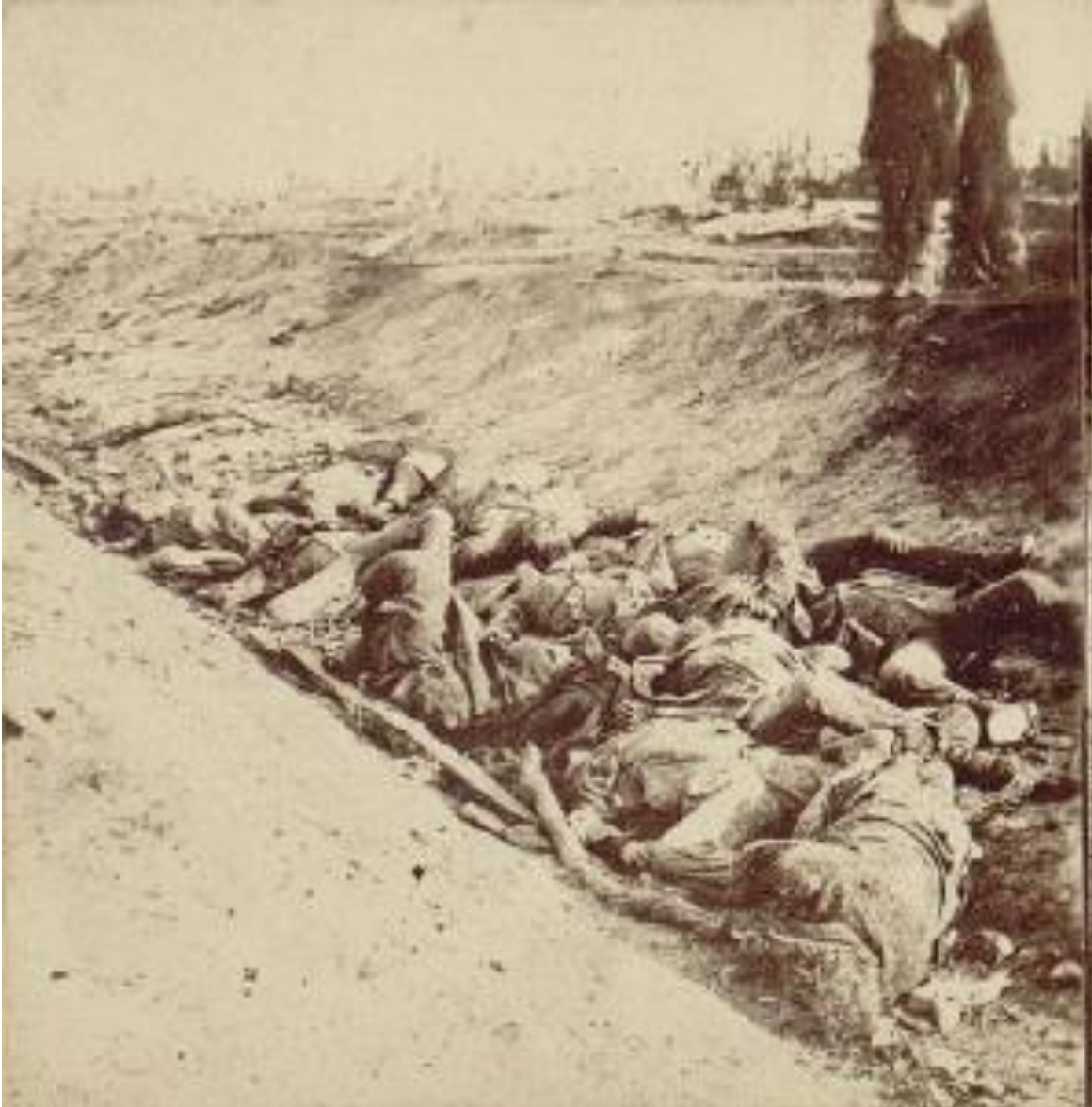
**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Use the historic photographs provided to locate specific areas along the Bloody Lane (Sunken Road). Complete the chart to collect your evidence of preservation efforts on this portion of the battlefield.**

[The "Sunken Road" at Antietam](#)

Location	
When do you think this photo was taken?	
Prominent landscape features.	
What has remained the same?	
What has changed?	
How has preservation positively affected this area of the battlefield?	







**American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation  
Antietam: Bloody Lane**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Use the historic photographs provided to locate specific areas along the Bloody Lane (Sunken Road). Complete the chart to collect your evidence of preservation efforts on this portion of the battlefield.**

[Bloody Lane, Antietam Battlefield, near Sharpsburg, Maryland](#)

Location	
When do you think this photo was taken?	
Prominent landscape features.	
What has remained the same?	
What has changed?	
How has preservation positively affected this area of the battlefield?	





**American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation  
Antietam: Bloody Lane  
Answer Key**

These answers will be based on observation.  
There are not right or wrong answers for this activity.



**BATTLE QUOTES — BLOODY LANE**

***“These men are going to stay here, General, till the sun goes down.”***

John B. Gordon to Robert E. Lee

***“Death from the bullet is ghastly but to see a man’s brains dashed out at our side by a grape shot and another’s body severed by a screeching cannon ball is truly appalling. May I never see such horrors as I saw that day.”***

Lt. Augustus Van Dyke

***“The end of the Confederacy was in sight.”***

E.P. Alexander

***“The rebels seemed to have a special spite against the green flag, and five color-bearers were shot down successively in a short time. As the last man fell even these Irishmen hesitated a moment to assume a task synonymous with death.”***

Capt. Edward Field

***“[the Federals] came like ocean billows to break on the rock of Gibraltar”***

Cullen A. Battle, commander of the 3rd Alabama

***“The shrieks of the wounded and dying was terrible, but they rallied and came at us again and our men again awaited until they come in range and again arose and mowed them down the second time, but they came again.”***

James C. Steele of the 4th NC

***“The line swayed forward and back like a rope exposed in rushing currents. A force too heavy to be withstood would strike and drive in a weak point till we could collect a few fragments, and in turn force back the advance till our lost ground was recovered.”***

James Longstreet

***“It appeared as though mutual extermination would put a stop to the awful carnage.”***

James W. Shinn of the 4th NC

***“it was simply awful the way the canister was tearing up the ground, and making kindling-wood of the fences around Piper’s buildings.”***

Charles A. Hale of the 5th New Hampshire

***“fear was not that I might be killed, but that I might be grievously wounded and left a victim of suffering on the field.”***

Frederick L. Hitchcock of the 132 PA



# American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Lesson

## Antietam: Burnside Bridge

### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Why was this stone bridge over Antietam Creek so important for both the Union and Confederate armies on September 17, 1862?

### OVERVIEW

What has since been referred to as Burnside Bridge was originally known as Rohrbach's Bridge or the Lower Bridge. Architect John Weaver was tasked with producing a way to cross Antietam Creek at a point southeast of Sharpsburg, Maryland. The bridge was completed in 1836 at a cost of \$3,200. Constructed from large pieces of locally sourced limestone, the bridge has three iconic arches. In the late 1960s, it was finally closed to traffic and now it can be visited as part of the Antietam National Battlefield.

On the morning of September 17, 1862, Union troops under the command of Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside were given orders to attack the Confederate position on the opposite side of Antietam Creek, on the heights above the Lower Bridge, and beyond. Burnside needed to move the entire IX Corps, approximately 18,000 men, across Antietam Creek and to the southern end of the battlefield to accomplish his orders. Instead of wading the creek, Burnside and other officers initially focused on capturing and using the bridge. The Antietam Creek was much too deep and its banks were much too steep and muddy for troops to safely wade across. Thus this bridge was their only hope.

Using the terrain to their advantage, the 500 or so Confederate troops located on the western bank of the creek were able to position themselves in rifle pits, providing ample cover to attack the approaching Federals. The largely outnumbered Confederates were able to hold this position and keep Burnside from capturing it for nearly three hours. Eventually the Confederates were overrun, having run out of ammunition, and Burnside's men were able to secure this critical point of crossing and attack towards the Confederate line.

Due to the delay posed by Confederates earlier that morning, it took the Union Army an additional two hours to cross their troops over the bridge, hindered by thousands of soldiers bottleneaking as they crossed the twelve-foot-wide span. During this delay, Confederate reinforcements arrived from the area of Harpers Ferry, Virginia (today West Virginia). These Confederate troops drove Burnside's men back, saving the Confederate line and brought an end to the battle. It was after the battle that the bridge would be forever referred to as Burnside Bridge.

### OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Knowledge (Describe)
  - a. Recall the events that occurred at Burnside's Bridge.
  - b. Describe the structural and architectural points specific to the bridge.



2. Comprehension/Application/Analysis (Explain)
  - a. Explain why Antietam Creek played an important role in the battle.
3. Evaluation (Interpret)
  - a. Develop an argument supporting or opposing Burnside's choice to cross the bridge here.

## BATTLEFIELD LOCATION

**Antietam National Battlefield Auto Tour Stop #9** - Burnside Bridge

American Battlefield Trust Antietam Virtual Tour – Burnside's Bridge

<https://www.battlefields.org/visit/virtual-tours/antietam-360-virtual-tour>

NPS Website Virtual Tour:

<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/tour-stop-9.htm>

## ACTIVITIES

### Motivational Activity:

1. Begin by gathering your group of students at a spot near the bridge. You will want to position them so they can see the bridge in its entirety. The overlook in the parking area is an excellent vantage point.
2. Once you have all gathered, begin by sharing the history of the bridge and the events that occurred here on September 17, 1862. This information can be located in the **Overview** section above.

### Procedure:

1. Group students into partners and distribute [Battlefield Investigation - Burnside Bridge](#) worksheet.
2. Explain to students that they will need to answer the questions on the worksheet and then use their findings to discuss and draw conclusions about the events that occurred at this location at the conclusion of the lesson.
3. Students can either use apps on their phones or devices to complete the worksheet; or, if you would rather, they can find creative ways to measure and complete the worksheet.

### Summary Activity:

Gather your students back at a designated location and have students share their findings from their Battlefield Investigation. Have your student reflect on Burnside's choice to use the bridge as a key part of his military objective to get across the creek.

### Extension:

Have students research other types of bridges. What types of bridges are the strongest and can support the most weight? Was using arches in the nineteenth-century like those on the Burnside Bridge the strongest they could build during that time? Do we still use arches in modern bridge construction?



## RESOURCES

### Teacher:

- American Battlefield Trust Virtual Tour – Burnside Bridge segment  
<https://www.battlefields.org/visit/virtual-tours/antietam-360-virtual-tour>
- National Park Service Website  
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/tour-stop-9.htm>
- American Battlefield Trust Antietam Map – Burnside's Bridge 12pm to 1pm  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/antietam-burnsides-bridge-september-17-1862-12pm-1pm>
- American Battlefield Trust Antietam Map – Burnside's Bridge 3:30pm until dark  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/antietam-burnsides-bridge-sep-17-1862-330-pm-dark>

### Students:

- American Battlefield Trust Virtual Tour – Burnside Bridge segment  
<https://www.battlefields.org/visit/virtual-tours/antietam-360-virtual-tour>
- National Park Service Website  
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/tour-stop-9.htm>

## STANDARDS

### Social Studies - National Council for the Social Studies

- Theme 3: People, Places, or Environments
- Theme 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Theme 6: Power, Authority, and Governance
- Theme 8: Science, Technology, and Society



**American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation  
Antietam: Burnside Bridge**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 1.) Describe the overall appearance and prominent features of the bridge.
  
- 2.) What material(s) is the bridge made from?
  
- 3.) Do you think that the bridge was built by hand or with machinery? Please defend your answer.
  
- 4.) Using your device, please figure out the following dimensions of the bridge:
  - a.) Length:
  - b.) Width:
  - c.) Height:





**American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation  
Antietam: Burnside Bridge  
Answer Key**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

1.) Describe the overall appearance and prominent features of the bridge.

Large, made of stone, 3 arches

2.) What material(s) is the bridge made from?

Local stone (Limestone and Granite)

3.) Do you think that the bridge was built by hand or with machinery? Please defend your answer.

Built by hand- you can see the chisel marks and variations in the shape of the rocks

4.) Using your device, please figure out the following dimensions of the bridge:

a.) Length: 125' Long

b.) Width: 12' Wide

c.) Height: The height at the central part of the bridge is 35.5' tall and the height at the ends is 30' tall.



**BATTLE QUOTES — BURNSIDE'S BRIDGE**

***“During that long and terrible fire, not a man, except a wounded one, fell out and went to the rear-not a man.”***

Henry Benning

***“The conduct of the officers and men generally under my command in the battle of Sharpsburg was so strongly marked with the noble virtues of the patriot soldier that a narrative of this day’s deeds performed by them, however simple and unadorned***

Robert Toombs describing the actions of his men at Antietam

***“The brave fellows reeled and fell back as if smitten at the bridge with the blast of Hell....At this bridge the murderous balls and bursting shells were appalling destruction hovered in the air, death envired it; the approaches were strewn with dead men. It spanned the Antietam, but all who attempted to cross it had found eternity.”***

A Federal soldier on the tragic fate of the 2nd Maryland

***“Of the first hundred men who passed through the opening in the fence, at least nine tenths were either killed or wounded. Such sweeping destruction checked the advancing column, but the men sheltered themselves behind logs, fences, and whatever other cover they could find, and bravely held the ground already gained.”***

A 6th New Hampshire soldier

***The gravel struck up by the bullets stinging hand and face...we charged in regular order, but some of the boys could not be restrained from firing at the enemy...the shrieks of the wounded and the moans of the dying could only be faintly heard amid the din of noise and confusion.”***

A Union Private

***“so many of the men were shot down that the officers filled their places and loaded and fired their guns.”***

Theodore Fogle



# American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Lesson

## Antietam: National Cemetery

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

How and why were national cemeteries created during and after the American Civil War? What purpose do these cemeteries serve today and for future generations?

### OVERVIEW

In 1864, legislation was passed to create a national cemetery to bury the remains of both Union and Confederate soldiers from the Battle of Antietam. The next step was to purchase a suitable piece of land for the cemetery, for which the state of Maryland donated five thousand dollars. All of this work hit an early roadblock when working with the landowner. To circumvent this road block, the Maryland legislature passed legislation repealing the original act, and in March 1865, additional legislation was passed to provide for the purchase of ten acres of land. This time, Maryland would not work alone, with other state representatives and those from Maryland forming “a body politic in law, under the name, style and title of the Antietam National Cemetery.”<sup>1</sup> An additional seven thousand dollars was appropriated for the project as well.

It was the duty of all involved, including state trustees, to remove the remains of all soldiers from the Battle of Antietam. It was then decided that the remains of Confederate casualties would be buried on a portion of the ground separate from the Union casualties. Eventually eighteen other states, all Union, joined the Antietam National Cemetery corporation. They included Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. When the cemetery was completed, these states had contributed over \$90,000 and changed the purpose and scope of the cemetery. The addition of the Private Soldier Monument in 1880, which is a 44-foot tall stone depiction of a Union soldier, clearly marked the space as a Union cemetery.

A local resident of Sharpsburg, Aaron Good, was employed to help make a list of burial places. He had already devoted his time to identifying the dead and locating their graves before work on the cemetery had even begun. The community of Sharpsburg had been overwhelmed by the Battle of Antietam, so quick burial in shallow trenches had been the rule to prevent the spread of epidemic disease. Although some bodies had been embalmed, and some bodies had been buried in natural conditions that preserved the remains, by 1865 only skeletons remained in most of the trenches. <sup>2</sup> Good’s work greatly helped in identifying the dead as their remains were reinterred in the newly-created cemetery.

### OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Knowledge (Describe)



- a. Recall important facts about the mass number of casualties sustained at the battle of Antietam.
- b. List Union states who provided representatives for the Antietam National Cemetery corporation and explain what their ultimate goal was.
2. Comprehension/Application/Analysis (Explain)
  - a. Compare and discuss modern cemeteries to historic national cemeteries.
  - b. Discuss ways soldiers were honored through reburial in the Antietam National Cemetery.
3. Evaluation (Interpret)
  - a. Locate and label key components of the Antietam National Cemetery.

## BATTLEFIELD LOCATION

**Antietam National Battlefield Auto Tour Stop #11** - Antietam National Cemetery, Boonsboro Pike

NPS Website Virtual Tour:

<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/photosmultimedia/virtualtour.htm>

## ACTIVITIES

### Motivational Activity:

1. Gather your group near the Speaker's Rostrum, located within Antietam National Cemetery. This structure is located just to the left of the entrance off of Boonsboro Pike.
2. Share the brief history of the cemetery as provided in the **Overview** section of this lesson.
  - a. You may choose to move your location to best suit your group as you share the cemetery's history.
1. **Procedure:** Remind students that appropriate silence and respect is required while visiting this and other national cemeteries.
2. Provide students with a blank copy of the [Battlefield Investigation - Antietam National Cemetery](#).
3. Allow students time to explore the cemetery and to complete the worksheet.
  - a. You may choose to have students work individually or in small groups.
  - b. Students will need to identify and appropriately label the following:
    - i. State burial plots
    - ii. Monuments
    - iii. Two types of artillery
    - iv. Historic buildings and structures
4. After the allotted time, reconvene your students to discuss their findings.

### Summary Activity:

Bring your groups back to the Speaker's Rostrum or original group location. Begin a discussion focusing on the essential questions posed above. Encourage students or groups to discuss and support their answers. Another culminating discussion may include the way cemeteries in the post war years have changed.



**Extensions:**

Have each student select an identified soldier, buried within the Antietam National Cemetery. This soldier could be from your home state, have the same name as one of your students, or be from a distant state. Encourage students to research that soldier and compile their findings.

1. Students could create a powerpoint or a poster.
2. Students could write a tribute to be published in the local newspaper honoring them during Memorial Day or on the anniversary of the battle.

**RESOURCES****Teacher:**

- [Battlefield Investigation Worksheet - Answer Key](#)
- Snyder, Keith. *Antietam National Cemetery: Not For Themselves but for Their Country*. Maryland Interpretive Association.
- National Park Service Website  
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/historyculture/antietam-national-cemetery.htm>
- Stotelmyer, Steven R. *The Bivouacs of the Dead: The Story of Those Who Died at Antietam and South Mountain*. Baltimore: Toomey Press, 1997.
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: National Cemeteries  
<https://vimeo.com/443088022>
- American Battlefield Trust: “Antietam National Cemetery: The Final Resting Place”

<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/antietam-national-cemetery>

**Students:**

- [Battlefield Investigation Worksheet](#)
- National Park Service Website  
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/learn/historyculture/antietam-national-cemetery.htm>
- American Battlefield Trust In4 Video: National Cemeteries  
<https://vimeo.com/443088022>
- American Battlefield Trust: “Antietam National Cemetery: The Final Resting Place”

<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/antietam-national-cemetery>

**STANDARDS****Social Studies - National Council for the Social Studies**

- Theme 2: Time, Continuity, and Change
- Theme 3: People, Places, or Environments
- Theme 4: Individual, Development and Identity
- Theme 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Theme 6: Power, Authority, and Governance





**Antietam: National Cemetery**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

19. \_\_\_\_\_

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16. \_\_\_\_\_

34. \_\_\_\_\_

17. \_\_\_\_\_

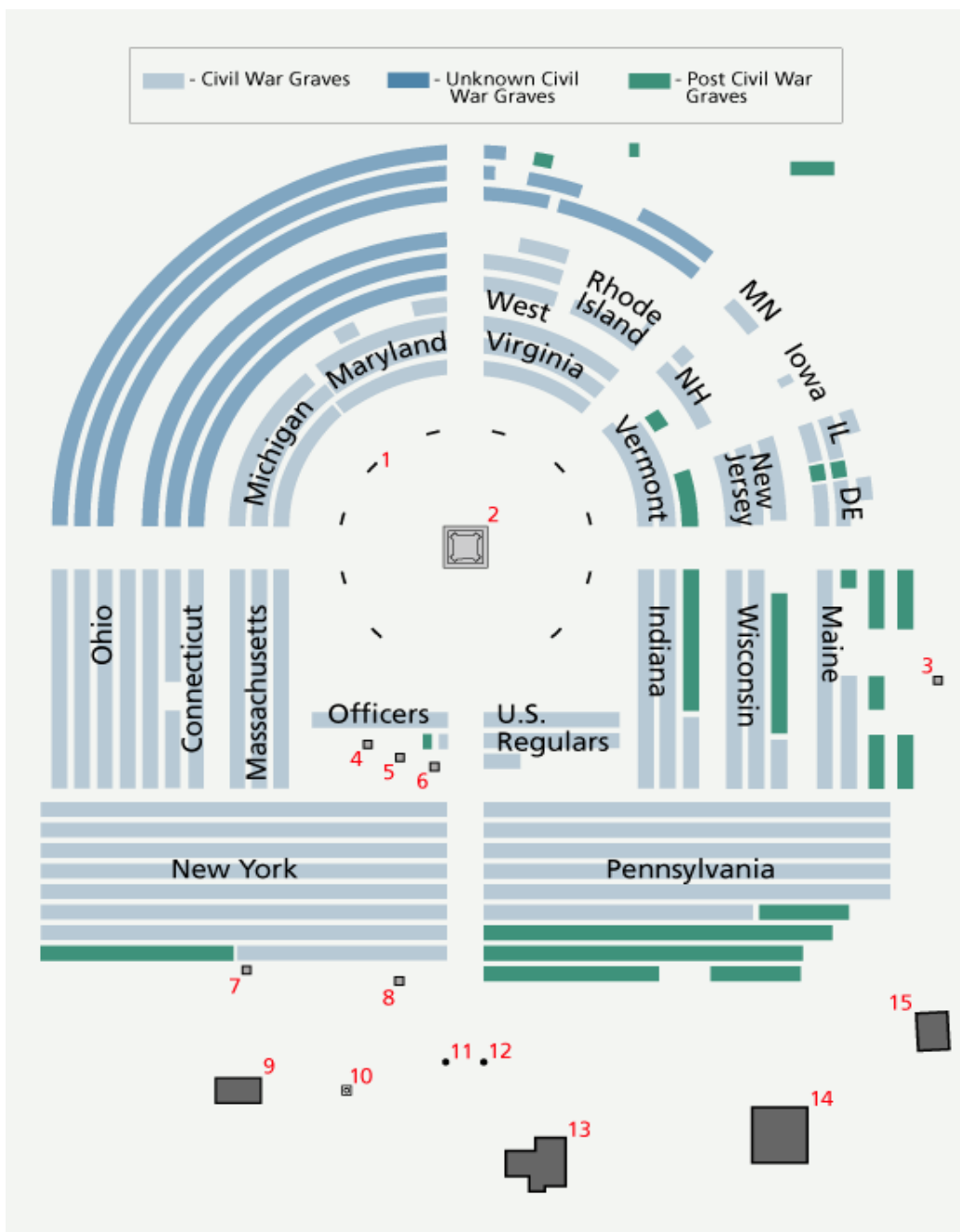
35. \_\_\_\_\_

18. \_\_\_\_\_

36. \_\_\_\_\_



**American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation**  
**Antietam: National Cemetery**  
**Answer Key**





**American Battlefield Trust Field Trip Battlefield Investigation**  
**Antietam: National Cemetery**  
**Answer Key**

1. Iron Tablets with poem "Bivouacs of the Dead"
2. Private Soldier Monument
3. Monument to Company F, 1st Regiment U.S. Sharpshooters
4. Grave of MD Congressman Goodloe Byron
5. Monument to 20th N.Y. Infantry
6. Grave of Civil War Brigadier General Jacob Duryee
7. Monument to four Union soldiers found in 1988
8. Monument to 4th N.Y. Infantry
9. Rostrum
10. Flag Pole
11. Smoothbore 24-pounder Naval cannon barrel captured at Harpers Ferry
12. Rifled 20-pounder cannon barrel found at the base of Elk Ridge
13. Lodge Building
14. Cemetery Superintendent's Quarters, now Park Headquarters
15. Mule Barn
16. New York
17. Ohio
18. Connecticut
19. Massachusetts
20. Officers
21. U.S. Regulars
22. Pennsylvania
23. Indiana
24. Wisconsin
25. Maine
26. Delaware
27. Illinois
28. Iowa
29. Minnesota
30. New Jersey
31. Vermont
32. New Hampshire
33. Rhode Island
34. West Virginia
35. Maryland
36. Michigan



# Extra Resources

## APP

- American Battlefield Trust’s Antietam Battle App (FREE):  
<https://www.battlefields.org/visit/mobile-apps/antietam-battle-app>

## ARTICLES

- African Americans at Antietam: Slavery and Freedom in a Border County:  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/african-americans-antietam>
- Antietam National Cemetery: The Final Resting Place:  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/antietam-national-cemetery>
- In the Bloody Cornfield, Pvt. Howard Left Behind a Widow and Three Children:  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/bloody-cornfield-pvt-howard-left-behind-widow-and-three-children>
- Lee's and McClellan's Headquarters at Antietam:  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/lees-and-mcclellans-headquarters-antietam>
- Lessons From the Fallen: Depictions of the Dead of Antietam:  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/lessons-fallen-depictions-dead-antietam>
- McClellan at Antietam: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/mcclellan-antietam>
- Rufus Dawes at the Epicenter: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/rufus-dawes-epicenter>
- The Dunkers: A Religious Community Caught in the Throes of War:  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/dunkers>
- The Flags of Antietam: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/flags-antietam>
- “We Suffered Badly”: The 10<sup>th</sup> Maine at Antietam:  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/we-suffered-badly>

## CURRICULUM

### Elementary School

- Antietam and Emancipation Traditional Elementary School Lesson Plan:  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/educators/curriculum/elementary-school/antietam-and-emancipation-traditional-elementary-civil>

### Middle School

- Antietam and Emancipation Inquiry Middle School Lesson Plan:  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/educators/curriculum/middle-school/antietam-and-emancipation-inquiry-middle-school-lesson-plan>



## ANTIETAM BATTLEFIELD FIELD TRIP LESSON PLAN

- Antietam 360: Natural and Man-made Features Middle School Lesson Plan: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/educators/curriculum/middle-school/antietam-360-natural-and-man-made-features-middle-school>

### High School

- Antietam and Emancipation Inquiry High School Lesson Plan: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/educators/curriculum/high-school/antietam-and-emancipation-inquiry-high-school-lesson-plan>
- Antietam 360: Natural and Man-made Features High School Lesson Plan: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/educators/curriculum/high/antietam-360-natural-and-man-made-features-high-school-lesson-plan>

### MAPS

#### Animated Maps

- American Battlefield Trust: The Civil War <https://youtu.be/CTLXVnr6x30> (27 minutes)
- American Battlefield Trust: Antietam [https://youtu.be/\\_8ybkoGmHww](https://youtu.be/_8ybkoGmHww) (15 minutes)

#### Battle Maps

- The Maryland Campaign: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/maryland-campaign-1862>
- East Woods, 5:30 - 6:00 am: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/antietam-east-woods-sep-17-1862-530-600-am>
- Fight for the Cornfield, 7:00 - 7:40 am: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/antietam-fight-cornfield-sep-17-1862-700-740-am>
- East Woods and Cornfield, 7:40 - 8:00 am: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/antietam-east-woods-and-cornfield-sep-17-1862-740-800-am>
- The West Woods, 9:00 - 11:30am: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/antietam-west-woods-sep-17-1862-900-1130am>
- Sunken Road, 9:00 - 11:30 am: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/antietam-sunken-road-sep-17-1862-900-1130-am>
- Burnside's Bridge, 12pm to 1pm: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/antietam-burnsides-bridge-september-17-1862-12pm-1pm>
- The Final Assault, 3:00 pm – Dark: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/antietam-final-assault-sep-17-1862-300-pm-dark>
- Burnside's Bridge, 3:30 pm – Dark: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/antietam-burnsides-bridge-sep-17-1862-330-pm-dark>



## ANTIETAM BATTLEFIELD FIELD TRIP LESSON PLAN

### Modern Maps

- Custom Google Map for this Lesson Plan:  
<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=16Ueuge3PvZVcLFlaVQ74gEYV0WRyMRs&ll=39.46984606022084%2C-77.74030404999999&z=14>
- Link to National Park Maps (sometimes you will have to use the drop down menu located on the top left corner of the map screen and toggle to “Brochure Map.”):  
<https://www.nps.gov/anti/planyourvisit/maps.htm>

### Historical Maps

- Map of Antietam Battlefield: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/map-battlefield-antietam>
- S.G. Elliott Burial Map: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/antietam-sg-elliott-burial-map>
- Jedidiah Hotchkiss “Preliminary Map No. 3”:  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/antietam-battlefield-preliminary-map-no-3>

### VIDEOS

#### Antietam:

- A Look Into the Battle of Antietam:  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/videos/inside-look-antietam> (12 minutes)
- Antietam and the 1862 Maryland Campaign:  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/videos/antietam-1862-maryland-campaign> (2 minutes)
- Antietam: The Epicenter <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/videos/antietam-epicenter> (5 minutes)

#### In4 Minutes

- Amputations: [https://youtu.be/WWD\\_rG\\_JrxU](https://youtu.be/WWD_rG_JrxU)
- Antietam: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/videos/battle-antietam> (4 minutes)
- Army Logistics: <https://youtu.be/ISDQGsdvX4>
- Battlefield Monuments: <https://youtu.be/DVeOr1-D980>
- Battlefield Terrain: <https://youtu.be/RktUeoA3F7w>
- Civil War Medicine: <https://youtu.be/IDYWP2fz4-E>
- Civil War Photography: <https://youtu.be/kDzYkygdJO8>
- Civil War Battlefield Preservation: <https://youtu.be/CYivaWMvC9Q>
- Emancipation Proclamation: [https://youtu.be/v9pjvo1\\_oto](https://youtu.be/v9pjvo1_oto)
- Firearms Used During The Civil War: <https://youtu.be/yAG8iclBVZQ>
- Infantry Tactics: <https://youtu.be/tYg3v9lUuNA>
- National Cemeteries: <https://vimeo.com/443088022>
- Soldier Gear: <https://youtu.be/1-R9uKn7Fv4>
- Soldier Life: <https://youtu.be/zgNxfMIOBk>

### Maps



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- American Battlefield Trust: Antietam [https://youtu.be/\\_8ybkoGmHww](https://youtu.be/_8ybkoGmHww) (15 minutes)

**VIRTUAL REALITY**

- Antietam: 360 <https://www.battlefields.org/visit/virtual-tours/antietam-360-virtual-tour>
- The Field Hospital [https://youtu.be/-Fi-ivR\\_kB8](https://youtu.be/-Fi-ivR_kB8)
- 1864: A Virtual Reality Experience <https://youtu.be/xuVHe-0r-BE>





# AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD TRUST ★ ★ ★

PRESERVE. EDUCATE. INSPIRE.

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