



His Soul Goes Marching On

The Life and Legacy of *John Brown*

A lesson from West Virginia Archives and History www.wvculture.org/history

Subject	Date	Period(s)
<i>Editorials: The Guiding Voice of Authority?</i>		
Materials Needed		
1. <i>Editorials: The Guiding Force of Authority</i> Worksheet .		
For additional information visit <i>His Soul Goes Marching On: The Life and Legacy of John Brown</i> at http://www.wvculture.org/history/jbexhibit/jbtoc.html .		
Content Standards		
<u>West Virginia Studies</u>		
<u>SS.O.8.05.07</u> research and construct the sequence of events and cite reasons for and resulting consequences of conflicts and wars that led to the formation of West Virginia as a state.		
<u>SS.O.8.05.08</u> interpret facts about West Virginia and other areas from various types of charts, graphs, pictures, models, timelines and primary sources and summarize what you have learned.		
<u>SS.O.8.05.13</u> access the moral, ethical, legal tensions that led to the creation of the new state of West Virginia and how those tensions were resolved.		
<u>SS.O.8.05.15</u> point out and locate places of historical importance in West Virginia that can be visited by tourists.		
<u>United States Studies to 1900</u>		
<u>SS.O.10.05.15</u> research the institution of slavery and its effects on the political, economic and social development of the United States and summarize their findings.		
<u>SS.O.10.05.16</u> compare and contrast the political, economic and social conditions in the United States before the Civil War.		
<u>SS.O.10.05.17</u> analyze and sequence the causes and effects of the major events of the Civil War and Reconstruction		
<u>SS.O.10.05.22</u> research, analyze and interpret primary sources and compare contemporary media to better understand events and life in the United States to 1900.		
<u>21C.S.9-12.1</u> The student will access, analyze, manage, integrate, evaluate, and create information in a variety of formats using appropriate technology skills and communicate that information in an appropriate oral, written, or multimedia format.		
<u>21C.S.9-12.2</u> The student will demonstrate the ability to explore and develop new ideas, to intentionally apply sound reasoning processes and to frame, analyze and solve complex problems using appropriate technology tools.		
<u>21C.S.9-12.3</u> The student will exhibit leadership, ethical behavior, respect for others; accept responsibility for personal actions considering the impact on others; take the initiative to plan and execute tasks; and interact productively as a member of a group.		
Objectives		
Students will analyze news editorials related to John Brown's Raid.		

Students will identify and describe the view points of Northerners and Southerners concerning John Brown's Raid.

Students will compare and identify the difference between editorials and news reports.

Students will evaluate the pitfalls related to modern news coverage.

Time

45 minutes

Essential Questions

What is the difference between news coverage and an editorial?

What were the differing views of John Brown's Raid?

What should a viewer or reader keep in mind when they encounter news coverage?

Anticipatory Activities

Ask students to take a few minutes to discuss a topic that they find to be important. It could be a popular news story or a rule at the school that they find particularly troubling. Then ask them to write a paragraph or two about the topic. After they finish, ask several students to share their topic or their views. When they finish explain that they had just completed what is called an editorial in journalism.

Procedures

1. Distribute the worksheet and explain the editorials in this exercise are real editorials taken from papers during the trial of John Brown following his raid on Harpers Ferry.
2. Ask the students to read the two editorials and answer the questions that follow.
3. While the students are working, walk around the classroom and answer questions that will come up.
4. When the students finish the exercise review and discuss the answers.
5. Spend extra time with questions 11, 12 and 13 to make sure that they understand the difference between the types of journalism and that they make connections to news coverage today.
6. As a follow up exercise give several examples and ask students to differentiate between news coverage and editorials.

Assessments

Performance Tasks

1. Completion of the Anticipatory Activity and the discussion that follows.
2. Review the worksheet for completeness and revision of the answers that follow.
3. Completion of the follow up exercise that distinguished between editorials and news coverage.

Final Assessments

Bell Ringer

1. Provide several examples and ask students to differentiate between editorials and news coverage. Examples from the newspaper or television news could also be used.
2. Ask students to identify the differing views of Northern abolitionists and Southern slave owners.

Essay Questions:

1. Explain the major differences between news coverage and editorials.
2. Identify and explain the problems that arise when the lines between news coverage and editorials blur.



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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Editorials: The Guiding Voice of Authority?

Instructions: Where journalists strive for objectivity in reporting the news, editorials are articles that represent the opinions of the editors or publishers of newspapers and other types of media. Below are two differing editorials concerning John Brown's Raid. Read these editorials below and answer the question on the following page.

The Daily Intelligencer

Wheeling, (West) Virginia

October 21, 1859

The Harper's Ferry Riot

The investigations which have been, and are being made, into the secret history of the recent terrible and remarkable outbreak, will, we hope and believe, be productive of good influences upon the popular mind in both sections of the Union. It has two lessons, which, it seems to us, that it may very appropriately teach. The first of these is, the lesson which it will convey to the North, teaching them to look even with more than their wide spread aversions on the principles and teachings of those visionary fanatics among them, who, like Garrison & Co., claim that the Constitution of our country "is a covenant with hell," and that the duty of slaves is to rise in the night and free themselves from thralldom by cutting the throats of their masters, and helping themselves to the property accumulated by their unrequited toil. It will we say, teach the Northern people when these fanatical abolitionists go about through their cities and towns, holding their periodical Saturnalia, to look upon their principles in the proper light, and will inspire in their minds more of a deep-seated hostility to their wicked and disorganizing ravings. In this way the results of these investigations will affect the Northern mind for good.

On the South it ought likewise make a deep impression. Here, in this Harper's Ferry riot, we have an illustration which both precept and example have before told us, is altogether a possible contingency in a country in whose midst there exists a large and degraded class of humanity. We cannot take fire in our bosoms and not be burned, the Scripture and our own experience has taught us. Neither can we have in our midst four million of serfs, whose color, whose intellect, whose habits, whose everything is different from the ruling element, without liabilities to the same dangers that have always attended society in every country where such a large servile element has existed. San Domingo has taught this lesson to the world. Southampton has taught the people of this country and this State. Scarcely more insecure are those people who work by day and sleep the night underneath the craters of Vesuvius and Aetna, and who are liable to an irruption [sic] at any moment of burning lava, than many communities in our Southern States where the slaves number two or three to one of the whites. . .

The Register

Shepherdstown, (West) Virginia

November 5, 1859

The Insurrection at Harper's Ferry--

The late insurrection at Harper's Ferry should teach the Southern people, in [the] future, to be watchful for the protection of their interests.

Verily, it seems as if the "irrepressible conflict," spoken by Northern fanatics, has already begun. The very confession of Brown himself behooves the men of the South to be on the alert and prepare a defence [sp.] against these infernal abolitionists, whose aim and object is, to liberate the slaves. "No one knows what a day may bring forth." Whilst the citizens of Harper's Ferry were slumbering in peaceful sleep, unconscious of impending danger, their town was invaded, the United States Arsenal possessed, and quiet and respectable citizens shot and taken prisoner by a band of abolitionists and desperadoes, who had come hither secretly, and in the darkness of night, to steal and carry away the slaves of our citizens. But alas! for them, how did this first attempt terminate? All their band, save four, were either killed or taken prisoners, a warning for the people of the North, that any future and similar attempt against the rights of the South, will be followed with like disastrous results to them. The people of the South will never submit to such outrages as has been perpetrated at Harper's Ferry. The slaves which they possess, they own lawfully, they provide and treat them kindly, and they will, to the last gasp, protect and defend them from the hands of lawless miscreants and abolitionists of the North.

Questions:

1. Both of the editorials above state that there were lessons to be learned by John Brown's Raid. What did each paper say was the lesson learned by both the North and the South?

The Daily Intelligencer	The Register
Northerners	Northerners
Southerners	Southerners

2. What is the hope of *The Daily Intelligencer* when it says the raid will “be productive of good influences upon the popular mind in both sections of the Union?”

3. What metaphor does *The Daily Intelligencer* use to describe the potential dangers of a slave uprising? Why do you think they chose this metaphor?

4. What is the basis of *The Daily Intelligencer's* argument against slavery? Which part of the editorial explains this?

5. In the editorial *The Register* issued a warning to Northerners. What was the warning that they were issuing?

6. *The Register* described the raid as an attempt to violate the rights of slave owners. Which right or rights were they meaning?

7. The last sentence of *The Register* editorial makes a defense of slavery. What are the main ideas of their defense?

8. Historians describe the view of *The Register* as a “paternalistic” defense of slavery. What does “paternalistic” mean?

9. In what ways did each editorial use loaded language (words with negative connotations)?

10. How do you think news coverage of the event would differ if John Brown’s Raid happened today?

11. Some contemporary social commentators complain that there is a trend to blend journalistic news coverage with editorializing. What problems do you think could arise from this trend?