

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# *His Soul Goes Marching On*

## The Life and Legacy of *John Brown*

A lesson from West Virginia Archives and History [www.wvculture.org/history](http://www.wvculture.org/history)

Subject	Date	Period(s)
<i>Intelligence of Authentic Character</i> – News coverage of John Brown’s Raid		
<b>Materials Needed</b>		
<p>1. <i>Intelligence of Authentic Character</i> Worksheet</p> <p>2. Internet access or print out of Chapter 10 The Raid from <i>His Soul Goes Marching On: The Life and Legacy of John Brown</i> at <a href="http://www.wvculture.org/history/jbexhibit/jbtoc.html">http://www.wvculture.org/history/jbexhibit/jbtoc.html</a>.</p>		
<b>Content Standards</b>		
<u>West Virginia Studies</u>		
<p><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.</p> <p><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.</p> <p><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.</p> <p><u>SS.O.8.05.15</u> point out and locate places of historical importance in West Virginia that can be visited by tourists.</p>		
<u>United States Studies to 1900</u>		
<p><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.</p> <p><u>SS.O.10.05.16</u> compare and contrast the political, economic and social conditions in the United States before the Civil War.</p> <p><u>SS.O.10.05.17</u> analyze and sequence the causes and effects of the major events of the Civil War and Reconstruction</p> <p><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.</p>		
<p><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.</p>		
<p><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.</p>		
<p><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</p>		

execute tasks; and interact productively as a member of a group.

### Objectives

Students will interpret primary source documents.  
Students will analyze news reports related to John Brown's Raid.  
Students will identify and describe the events related to John Brown's Raid.  
Students will compare the actual events with early news reports on John Brown's Raid.  
Students will evaluate the pitfalls related to modern instantaneous news coverage.

### Time

90 minutes

### Essential Questions

What should a viewer keep in mind when watching or reading the news?  
How should a viewer interpret 24 hour news coverage?

### Anticipatory Activities

To begin the lesson ask students questions about their interaction news coverage:

1. How do you learn about things going on in the world?
2. What media do you use to get your news?
3. What was a new story that you recently read or watched ?
4. How do you think that reporters get their information?
5. What do you think some of the problems could be with news coverage that reports things as it happens?

### Procedures

1. Following the Anticipatory Activity break students into groups of two.
2. Pass out the worksheet and explain that the information on the worksheet was taken from the October 18, 1859, edition of *The Daily Intelligencer* that was published in Wheeling (West) Virginia.
3. Have the students read the excerpt and use a highlighter or pen to identify the important information in each dispatch and then answer questions 1-4.
4. When students have completed question 1-4, have them go to Chapter 10 The Raid from *His Soul Goes Marching On: The Life and Legacy of John Brown* an online exhibit produced by West Virginia Archives and History at <http://www.wvculture.org/history/jbexhibit/jbtoc.html> and answer question number 5.
5. Have students complete the remaining questions on the worksheet.
6. When students complete the questions, review and discuss their answers.

### Assessments

#### **Performance Tasks**

Worksheet completion  
Question 5 essay  
Participation points

#### **Final Assessments**

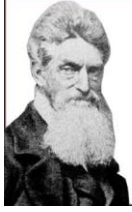
##### Bell Ringer

Make a list of three problems that could arise when news agencies rush to get the news on the air.

##### Essay questions:

Using the early reports of John Brown's raid as an example, describe and explain some of the

problems that arise when news is delivered “as it happens.”



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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

## *Intelligence of Authentic Character*

**Instructions** Modern news coverage boasts of its ability to provide twenty-four hour coverage of news “as it happens.” Instant news coverage, however, is not a new creation. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century news was spread by the telegraph. This exercise will examine instant news coverage of John Brown’s Raid at Harpers Ferry. The following are actual transcriptions of telegraph news dispatches printed in the October 18, 1859 edition of *The Daily Intelligencer*, a prominent newspaper in Wheeling, (now West) Virginia. Read the dispatches below and answer the questions that follow.

### **RIOT AT HARPER’S FERRY!**

**Baltimore, Oct. 17.** — The following dispatch has just been received from Frederick. It seems very improbable, and should be received with caution till confirmed:

**Frederick, Md., Oct. 17.** — An insurrection is reported to have taken place at Harper’s Ferry. An armed band of Abolitionists have full possession of the U.S. Arsenal at Harper’s Ferry. The Express train running East was fired into twice, and one of the railroad hands, a negro, was killed while trying to get the train through the town. The mob arrested two men who come [sp.] in with a load of wheat, and took a wagon, loaded it with rifles and sent it into Maryland. They are led by about 250 whites, with a gang of negroes fighting.

#### [SECOND DISPATCH]

**Baltimore, Oct. 17.** — A later dispatch received at the Railroad Office says the affair is greatly exaggerated. It has foundation in a difficulty at the armory. The negroes have nothing to do with it.

#### [THIRD DISPATCH]

It is apprehended that the affair at Harper’s Ferry is more serious than the people here are willing to believe. The telegraph wires have been cut from Harper’s Ferry, and there is no communication beyond Monocacy. It is reported that there has been a stampede of Negroes from Maryland. The train due here early this morning, has not yet arrived. Many wild rumors are afloat, but no intelligence of authentic character has yet been received.

## [FOURTH DISPATCH]

The Western train on the Ohio Road has just arrived. The officers confirm the statement first received. They say the bridge keeper discovered the light had been extinguished, and went to ascertain the cause, and was pursued and fired upon by a gang of blacks and whites. The colored assistant baggage master was shot and mortally wounded, Conductor Phelps was threatened that the train should not proceed. As it was uncertain as to the condition of the bridge, the train waited till after daylight, and was detained. It is said the insurrectionists number 200 whites and blacks. They have full possession of the armory, and are commanded or led by a man named Anderson, who lately arrived at Harper's Ferry. The rioters seized a wagon which was loaded with a quantity of muskets sent up to Virginia. The military of Frederick were ordered out. President Buchanan has also ordered out troops. A special train is now getting ready to convey troops from this city. He has also ordered companies from Old Point. This is authentic, and it seems now to be considered that something serious is going on.

Another account by the train says that the bridge across the Potomac was filled with insurgents, all armed. Every light in town had been extinguished, hotels all closed, all the streets in possession of the mob, every road and lane leading thereto barricaded. Guarded men were seen in every quarter with muskets and bayonets. Citizens were arrested and pressed in service, including many negroes. This is being done, the United States Arsenal, and Government Pay House, in which it was said there was a large amount of money, including all the other Public Works, were seized by the mob. Some are of the opinion that their object was to plunder and rob the Government funds deposited on Saturday at the Pay House. During the night they made a demand on the Wager Hotel for provision, and enforced their claim with a body of armed men. The citizens are in a terrible state of alarm, the insurgents having threatened to burn the town.

The following has just been received from Monocacy, reports the train unable to get through; town in possession of negroes, who arrest every one they can catch and imprison them. The train due here at 3 P.M. could not get through. The agent came down on an empty engine. The mail train bound west got as far as Sandy Hook. The baggage master and another party started on foot to the bridge; went through the bridge; were taken and imprisoned; went before the Capt. of insurrectionists, who refused to let anything pass. All of the eastbound trains lying west of Harper's Ferry have been seized. The mail train bound west has returned to the station. There are from 500 to 700 whites and blacks.

At 4 o'clock a train filled with the military, consisting of the Law Grays, City Guards, Shield Guards, and other companies left here for Harper's Ferry. Several representatives of the Press accompany the train.

**Washington, Oct. 17 – 3 o'clock P.M.** -- It is reported on good authority that some weeks ago Sec'y Floyd received an anonymous epistle stating that about the 15<sup>th</sup> of Oct. the Abolitionists, negroes, and other disaffected persons, would make an attempt to seize the arsenal and hold the place, but the statement was so indefinite and improbable as to cause no fears of such an outbreak.

**Ten o'clock P.M.** -- It has been suggested by well informed persons, that the cause of the insurrection, is the reported fact that not long since the contractor for the construction of the government dam at Harper's Ferry absconded, largely indebted to several hundred employees, who have taken this step to indemnify themselves by the seizure of the government funds which it was supposed, had been transported thither on Saturday. A gentleman who has just arrived from Harper's Ferry, thinks the blacks are only participants in the outbreak by companies.

*Dispatches from the Union Line Telegraphic Dispatch from the Daily Intelligencer, Wheeling, Virginia, October 18, 1859*

## Riot at Harper's Ferry

We learned that a serious riot was prevailing yesterday, at Harper's Ferry, among the Workmen at the U.S. Armory. The bridge of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at that place was blockaded and a serious time was apprehended. We are authorized to say that the affair will not interfere with the passage of trains on the road.

The *Daily Intelligencer*, Wheeling, West Virginia, October 18, 1859

### *Questions:*

1. The telegraphic dispatches offered several explanations for the riot at Harpers Ferry. What were the various explanations provided by the telegraph company?

2. In the dispatches above the telegraph company identified their sources to add credibility to their reporting. Who were the sources of the information that they identified in their reports?

3. Several of the dispatches above listed the number of people involved in the riot. What was the number range of the groups that were blamed for the riot?

4. From your reading of the dispatches above, which scenario do you think the telegraph company believed was the most plausible? Why?

5. On the internet go to: <http://www.wvculture.org/history/jbexhibit/jbtoc.html>. Read Chapter 10 The Raid and write a brief description of John Brown's Raid. Be sure to provide journalistic details (who, what, where, when and why) to your description.

6. How does the information from your description in number 5 compare to the news dispatches from above?

7. In what ways did the telegraphic news get it wrong in their coverage?

8. When watching news "as it happens," what things should a viewer keep in mind?