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Extra! Extra! Read All About It!

In order to keep their citizens informed about the progress of the Civil War, most cities and towns published daily or weekly newspapers. Let students test their journalistic skills by recreating a newspaper from the Civil War era (1861-65). Help students agree on a specific date of publication (perhaps just after The Battle of the Wilderness), location (city and state), and newspaper name.

Divide students into groups to create different sections of the paper. These may include National News, Local News, Editorial Comments, Obituaries, and Entertainment. The number of students per group should depend on the task at hand. Have each group select a leader to serve as editor and then brainstorm a list of specific articles that should be included in their section. Keep a supply of current newspapers on hand during the entire process for groups to use as examples. Since photography was just in its infancy during the Civil War, students may want to make pencil sketches to accompany their articles.

After the articles have been written, encourage students to exchange their work and proofread. After corrections are made, articles should be rewritten in preparation for typing. Editors are responsible for final proofing. The entire staff can then lay out the newspaper, using an acceptable format and design. Finally, copy the newspaper and distribute one to every student.

You may wish to use this worksheet to help students get started.

Newspaper Name: _____

Date of publication: _____

City and state where paper is published: _____

National News Page

What recent battle would be of interest to your readers?
Where and when did the battle occur?
Who were the important military leaders?
What were some important details of the fighting?
Who won the battle?
What effects did the battle have on both sides?
How many casualties did each side have?
What statements or decisions had recently been made by President Lincoln of the Union or President Jefferson Davis of the Confederacy that would be of interest to your readers?
What effects did these statements/decisions have on both the Union and the Confederacy?
What were the reactions of people of both sides to those decisions/statements?

Local News Page

What battles have local regiments been involved in?
How have hometown heroes fared in the war?
What are local businesses doing to help the war effort?
What are the women in the community doing to support the soldiers in the field?
How are men who were left at home helping to fight the enemy?
How is the economy of the area faring during the war?

Editorial Page

What is the editor's opinion of the war? of President Lincoln?
What opinions about the war or President Lincoln have readers expressed in letters to the editor?
What opinions have readers expressed in their letters to the editor about the local political or economic system?
What opinions do political cartoons featured in the newspaper express?

Obituary Page

Each obituary of local soldiers or townspeople who have recently died should include the following:

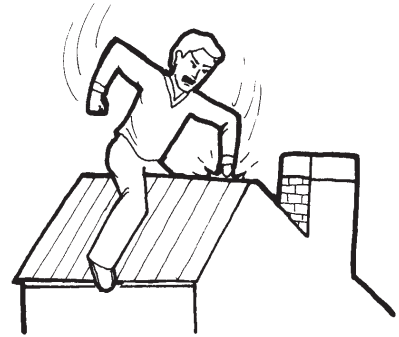
- full name of deceased
- age at death
- residence
- date of death
- where the deceased died and of what causes
- information about the funeral
- list of surviving relatives

Entertainment Page

Which recent church or social gatherings would be of interest to your readers?
What is the location of the closest theatrical company? Name of the play being performed?
Details of the production?
What are local social clubs doing to provide entertainment or education for the community?
What advice might a local columnist give to the lovelorn?

It Figures!

Using literary devices is one way a writer has to make a story more exciting or more descriptive for the reader. One type of literary device is figurative language. For example, “I’m bushed!” doesn’t mean you are really a bush but that you are very tired. Consider the figurative expression, “He really hit the roof.” The man didn’t actually get on top of his house and punch his roof, did he? The writer actually means, “He was very angry.” But “hitting the roof” is a phrase that draws a more vivid picture than “being very angry.”



The following are examples of figurative speech used to interpret *Charley Skedaddle*. Work together as a class to explain them.

1. Granny helps Charley to find himself.
2. We learn from Granny not to judge a book by its cover.
3. Charley constantly jumps hurdles to keep the mountain lion from hurting the farm animals or himself.
4. When Charley first meets Granny Bent, he carries the weight of the world on his shoulders.

The next three examples of figurative language are from chapter 13. Explain the meanings of all three on the lines provided.

5. “He felt his anger rise.” (page 136)

6. “. . . they got the Confederates bottled up real good . . .” (page 138)

7. “Thad’s got sand in his gizzard.” (page 140)

On the lines below, write more examples of figurative language from the book. Choose one of your examples and illustrate it on the back of this paper.
