

# Directions

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD: \_\_\_\_\_

Your assignment is to reproduce the front page of a newspaper from the Civil War era. You will need a piece of poster board for this assignment.

# PROJECT ASSIGNMENT: MAKE YOUR OWN CIVIL WAR NEWSPAPER

NOTE: THE DATE FOR YOUR NEWSPAPER IS JULY 10, 1863.



## COMPONENTS OF YOUR NEWSPAPER:

### 1. NAME AND MASTHEAD:

Decide on a name for your newspaper and a city of origin. For a Northern paper, choose New York, New York. For a Southern paper, choose Richmond, Virginia. The masthead should be done in a fancy style similar to the Harper's Weekly. A carefully drawn, creative and fancy masthead will gain more points. "Google up" Harper's Weekly and you can find images of the masthead of an old newspaper.

### 2. ILLUSTRATIONS:

You need to put at least one illustration in your newspaper. It should be about the size of a piece of typing paper. It can be a portrait of a famous leader. It can illustrate the main story, the editorial, or

the battle. It can make a comment on the news of the day, either serious or humorous. The higher the quality, the more the points.

### 3. REPORTS FROM THE FRONT:

**a. GETTYSBURG** - Have a war correspondent with the eastern armies submit a dispatch describing the fighting around Gettysburg at the end of the FIRST day of fighting only. the article should sound very upbeat, vigorous, and patriotic. It should describe the fight in some detail and speculate as to the outcome of the next day's fighting. You will have to do some research to pull this one off.

**b. VICKSBURG** - The southern fortress of Vicksburg surrendered to General Grant on the Fourth of July, 1863. Have a war correspondent with the western armies describe the surrender negotiations and give a brief history of the struggle for the city. If you are a northern paper, your tone would be jubilant, if you are a southern newspaper, your tone would be sad and bitter and looking to blame someone for the loss of the city. Again, some background research is needed on Vicksburg.

### 4. INTERVIEW -Your interview must be in a question and answer format.

**a. Northern paper** - interview General Grant. Ask about his early life and military background. Find out how he gained such a great victory at Vicksburg and what he intends to do next.

**b. Southern paper** - interview General Lee. Ask about his early life and military background. Find out about his great victories in 1862 and 1863, and ask him what he hopes to gain from the current invasion of Pennsylvania.

### 5. EDITORIAL

**a. Northern paper** - Comment on the good and bad points of the military draft. Come up with an opinion as to whether or not there should be a draft. Remember, in the editorial, you are supposed to give your opinion.

**b. Southern paper** - Comment on the idea proposed by some southerners that black slaves should be trained to fight as soldiers and used to protect the south from Yankee invaders alongside white soldiers.

### 6. LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

a. Include two letters to the editor. The first letter should take the OPPOSITE viewpoint from that expressed in your editorial. The second letter should be from a soldier who fought at either Vicksburg or Gettysburg. This letter should tell what he did during the fight and how he reacted to the outcome.

### 7. NOVEL - UNCLE TOM'S CABIN

a. Write a fictional version of the book Uncle Tom's Cabin, using the characters of Simon Legree, uncle Tom and Little Eva. If you are a northern paper, your story should be very anti-slavery, just

like the real version. If you are a southern paper, your story should make slavery look like a very positive thing. Newspapers of the time often included novels published in segments of a chapter at a time. Therefore, your story can start in the middle of an action sequence and end in a "cliffhanger" ending without the need to come up with a complete short story with a beginning and ending etc.

## **8. ADVERTISEMENTS**

- a. Write ten advertisements, each worth one point. At least half of these adds must be illustrated. Humorous ads are welcome. All products must be true to the time period - and not modern items.
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## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON RESEARCHING FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT:**

In order for you to produce a quality product for this assignment, you will need to have a working knowledge of the following topics: (on-line information is fine for this research.)

- The *Harper's Weekly* illustrated newspaper – particularly the masthead, illustrations, and advertisements.
- The FIRST DAY'S fighting at the Battle of Gettysburg – July 1, 1863. (ONLY the first day's fighting.)
- The siege of Vicksburg in 1863.
- General U.S. Grant (up until June of 1863) if you choose a Northern newspaper.
- General Robert E. Lee (up until June of 1863) if you choose a Southern newspaper.
- The controversy over a military draft if you choose a Northern newspaper.
- The controversy over arming slaves to fight as soldiers if you choose a Southern newspaper.
- The novel Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe.