

## Mapping Sherman's March

### A WebQuest for 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies

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August 30, 2013



Marching Through Georgia: Sheet Music  
<http://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.200001301>

**In 1864, General William T. Sherman led thousands of Union soldiers on a destructive march through the state of Georgia. What was the most important result of Sherman's march? In this WebQuest, you'll answer that question by investigating primary sources from the Civil War.**

### Introduction

How do you know what you know about the American Civil War? You might read about it in books. You could investigate photographs and newspapers from the 1860s. You can read letters and diaries written by people who lived at this time and learn about the events they experienced. You could organize those events chronologically in a timeline and look for causes and effects and connections between events.

One of these events occurred in 1864 in the southern state of Georgia, a part of the Confederacy that was at war with the Union. Starting in the northern mountains, Union forces led by General William Tecumseh Sherman fought their way south to capture the city of Atlanta. General Sherman called this series of battles the "Atlanta Campaign". When it was over, Atlanta had been almost completely destroyed. Sherman and his troops then marched farther south, toward Savannah, on what the soldiers called the "March to the Sea". Along the way the Union soldiers destroyed everything that could help support their enemy, the Confederate army. They tore up railroad tracks, burned bales of cotton and took food from farmers.

Historians still ask questions about Sherman's March to the Sea. Why did General Sherman believe his soldiers could help win the war for the Union by tearing up Georgia's railroads and burning crops? Some people in Georgia still think that General Sherman was a villain who didn't like the South. Other people say that he did what he had to do to bring the war to an end. You're going to learn about the March to the Sea using primary sources so you can make up your own mind about it and support your opinion with evidence.

In this WebQuest you will be thinking like a historian about Sherman's march. You will create a map showing the route that General Sherman took from Atlanta to Savannah and find out what really happened along the way. Can you explain why General Sherman thought his plan would help the Union army win the war? Do you know if his plan worked? You're going to need to come up with some answers. Because there's a problem...

## What was the most important result of General Sherman's "March to the Sea"?

### Task

There's been a terrible mistake. The local library is bringing a historian from Georgia to town for a program including a visit to your class. You were looking forward to asking questions about what happened when General Sherman made his "March to the Sea" through Georgia in 1864. But it looks like you're going to be answering questions instead.

The visiting historian is from the **Republic** of Georgia, a country that is located between Russia and Turkey. In a note to your teacher, the historian wrote, "I am looking forward to learning about the Civil War in American Georgia. I know nothing about it and want to hear what happened especially during the March to the Sea. I plan to follow the route of the march during my visit. I always wanted to visit the important stops along the route that General Sherman took. I would also like to know what Americans believe are the most important results of this campaign. I look forward to hearing what your class thinks." Uh-oh.

You're going to have to collect a lot of information about the March to the Sea. Then you will need to organize it and get ready to answer questions. Everybody has a different idea about how to become overnight experts on Sherman's March. Finally you come up with a plan. First you'll divide into teams and use a map to figure out the route General Sherman's troops took from Atlanta to Savannah. Each team will research the places that soldiers went and decide which places are the most important. One good question to ask is whether you think a visitor from another country should go there to learn about the March to the Sea. Your team will use your research to make a map of your own. Your map will show the route you researched and the places you decided were most important. You can add pictures and illustrations to your map. You will present the map to your class and tell them how you decided which places to put on it.

The best way to find out what happened is to look for **primary sources** from the time of the March to the Sea. You will investigate reports from Sherman's troops as they traveled from Atlanta to Savannah. General Sherman himself wrote a memoir after the war, remembering what happened during his march through Georgia. There are newspapers from the Civil War that report the results of battles. Maybe there will be some descriptions of the March to Sea. You're sure that some civilians wrote letters describing what they saw and heard when Sherman's troops arrived. There might even be some photographs of what Atlanta and Savannah looked like at the time of Sherman's march. All of these sources will be evidence to support your decisions about what was the most important result of the march. You'll present this map as a team to the class

Then, using what you have learned, develop your own statement about the effects of the March to the Sea on people in Georgia and the entire, divided, nation that was the United States in 1864. Write a letter to the visiting historian from the Republic of Georgia. In it explain what you believe was the most important result of General Sherman's March. Remember your audience! The professor does not know anything about the March to the Sea. Make sure you explain everything clearly. List your sources so someone else can find them again.

## What was the most important result of General Sherman's "March to the Sea"?

### Process

You will be assigned to a team of 4-5 students by your teacher. Each member of your group will have a role and you will work together to research and draw an illustrated map of the March to the Sea.

Cartographer - in charge of drawing your team's map, including a legend, distance scale and compass rose

Photographer - in charge of finding images of places on the map, historical monuments and markers, and people who were affected by the march. Will prepare illustrations for map.

Researchers – in charge of finding articles printed in newspapers, letters, diaries and official records about the march and preparing copies for the map

Editor – records each source on a notecard and checks the final version for map display and presentation.

There is a map at the Library of Congress that was created during the Civil War to show where General Sherman led his troops. You can find it here: <http://www.loc.gov/item/99447285>  
You will need a large printout of the map to start your project.

The March to the Sea started in Atlanta and ended in Savannah. In between were all the towns Union soldiers destroyed, the rivers they crossed and the railroad tracks they followed as they marched.

First, find Atlanta and Savannah on the map. Then decide what other places you would put on your map.

- Look for information about Atlanta and Savannah. How many people lived there? What happened to them before and after the March to the Sea? Why would General Sherman be interested in these cities?
- When did Sherman and his soldiers leave Atlanta? Where did they go? Why were there several routes on the March?
- Research cities that are named on the map. When did Federal troops arrive in those cities?
- What did places on the map look like before Sherman arrived? What did they look like after? How can you find out? Are there any monuments or historic markers on the route now? Did anyone write an eyewitness report of the march? Remember to record WHEN an event happened.

Research descriptions of the places that were on the March to the Sea. You must have Atlanta and Savannah on your map. Then choose at least four more places you want on your map. Collect descriptions of what happened at each of those places. You will need at least four different kinds of sources for these descriptions for your map:

- At least one will be from a newspaper
- At least one will be from a letter or diary
- At least one will be an official government document
- At least one will be an image such as a photograph or drawing.

Each team must complete a list of their sources, with links so other researchers can find them. You can use information you find in encyclopedias and books about the March to the Sea too. These descriptions should have been created as closely to the time of the March as possible. In other words, they should be **primary sources**. Think about the point of view in each text. Have you included different ones?

Read the texts you find with questions in mind: why do you think General Sherman decided to take this route through Georgia? What was he looking for? What was he trying to do? What did he think the March to the Sea would accomplish? Do you think he did accomplish his goals? What were the results of this effort by Sherman and his troops? What did people who were living in Georgia at the time think about the March to the Sea?

You can use modern day pictures as well as images from the Civil War to show where something happened. You may need to look at some **secondary sources** to help you find clues about what happened.

Each team will work together to choose evidence, either visual or written, from the sources that supports the team's story of the March. Each team will organize their evidence on the map in chronological order. The map must have a title and list the dates of the events that are included on it. The map must include a scale indicator, a legend and compass rose. Teams may include any other decorative and interpretive materials that will fit onto the map when it is secured to a tri-fold display board. Be prepared to present your map to the class and talk about your choices. You should be ready to answer the Essential Question of the WebQuest by then!

When your map is finished and presented, you are ready to complete your individual work. Write a formal letter, with salutation, to the professor who will be visiting your class. The letter should be at least three paragraphs long. In the letter explain what the March through Georgia was, when it happened and who was involved. Tell the teacher at least three things you have learned about the March and the people who experienced it. Then conclude the letter by answering the teacher's questions: what were the causes and effects of the March? In your opinion, why are we still talking about the March through Georgia and General Sherman? Why was the March important?

## What was the most important result of General Sherman's "March to the Sea"?

### Background Reading and Viewing

[Library of Congress Exhibit: The Civil War in America](#)

[March to the Sea Article from New Georgia Encyclopedia](#)

HISTORY CHANNEL [www.history.com](http://www.history.com)

<http://www.history.com/topics/william-t-sherman>

The National Park Service has information about places that were important during the Civil War in Georgia:

<http://www.nps.gov/hps/abpp/battles/GAmap.htm>

The state of Georgia tourist office has a website that shows places a person who wants to learn about the Civil War might want to see:

<http://www.gacivilwar.org/>

### Maps

Simplified map with a compass rose and legend

[http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/magazines/assets/sn\\_ts\\_030411\\_map.html](http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/magazines/assets/sn_ts_030411_map.html)

Modern map of Georgia

[http://www.dot.ga.gov/informationcenter/maps/Documents/StateMaps/2013\\_2014\\_SM13\\_front.pdf](http://www.dot.ga.gov/informationcenter/maps/Documents/StateMaps/2013_2014_SM13_front.pdf)

Historic maps of Georgia

<http://georgiainfo.galileo.usg.edu/histmaps.htm>

### Images: Stereoviews

Stereoview of Atlanta Railroad Station, before March to Sea

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2011647099/>

What's a stereoview and why were they so popular? And what did Oliver Wendell Holmes have to do with them?

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/stereo/background.html>

### Images: Engravings and Drawings

Alexander Hay Ritchie engraving, 1868, from a painting by American illustrator Felix Octavius Carr Darley: "Sherman's March to the Sea"

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/96512373/>

Harpers Weekly engraving, "Destruction of the depots, public buildings, and manufactories at Atlanta, Georgia, November 15, 1864"

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/00652832/>

Fort McAllister, on the Ogechee River, near Savannah, GA

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2011649191/>

### Photographs

Selected Civil War Photographs from the Library of Congress

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/cwphtml/>

[Atlanta, before being burnt: by order of Gen'l. Sherman, from the cupola of the Female Seminary.](#)  
[Birdseye view of Savannah, Ga.](#)

### Documents

Telegram from General Sherman to President Lincoln, December 1864

<http://research.archives.gov/description/301637>

### Digital Newspapers from the Library of Congress

<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>

Here are three examples of primary newspaper resources available through the Library of Congress. Search for more as you investigate the March to the Sea. Remember that news in the Civil War moved at a slower speed than we're used to now. General Sherman and his troops left Atlanta for Savannah on November 16, 1864. Many people, including President Abraham Lincoln and General Ulysses Grant, did not know where the Union soldiers were going. General Sherman did not let newspaper reporters travel with his troops so some of the reports about the March to the Sea came from civilians who had seen the soldiers on the road.

What will be the 'fate of Atlanta'

<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025925/1864-09-05/ed-1/seq-4.pdf>

Where is General Sherman?

<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053570/1864-09-05/ed-1/seq-2.pdf>

What do you notice about the point of view shown in this newspaper?

<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026897/1864-09-21/ed-1/seq-4.pdf>

### Memoirs of General William Sherman

Look in Volume 2, beginning on page 650, for a narrative of the March to the Sea that includes the text of Field Order 150, giving orders that the Union soldiers will find food as they march instead of bringing it with them.

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4361/4361-h/4361-h.htm>

### Memoirs of a Georgia Plantation Owner

[A Woman's Wartime Journal: an Account of the Passage over a Georgia Plantation of Sherman's Army on the March to the Sea, as recorded in the Diary of Dolly Lunt Burge](#)

**Another report from the South. Think about the different points of view that people would have about the March!**

[Savannah Republican editorial of Dec. 21, 1864](#)

***Are there any voices that you have not heard in the newspaper reports and the official documents about the war?***

Women, enslaved people, immigrants to the United States and children did not always get to tell their stories. Are there other points of view that you could find evidence for? A good place to start is with the primary sources at the Library of Congress. Check out the amazing stories you can read here: [America's Library - The Civil War](#)

**What was the most important result of the "March to the Sea"?**

## Teaching with Primary Sources Grading Rubric

### Mapping the March

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

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Work: \_\_\_\_\_

	Criteria				Points
	1	2	3	4	
<b>Group Grade: Creation of March to Sea map.</b>	Map is missing title, scale indicator, compass rose or legend. Map shows more than 5 errors in place names and/or spelling.	Map has a title and scale indicator but is missing a compass rose and legend. Map shows fewer than 5 errors in place names and/or spelling.	Map has all required elements and has only 1-3 errors in place names and spelling.	Map has all required elements. Map shows no errors in place names and/or spelling.	_____
<b>Group grade: Completed bibliographic organizer with citations.</b>	Fewer than 4 descriptions. Fewer than 4 citations. You do not know where you found some of your information.	Fewer than 6 descriptions. Fewer than 4 citations.	Fewer than 8 descriptions. Fewer than 8 citations.	8 or more descriptions with citations.	_____
<b>Individual Grade: letter explains the causes and effects of the March to the Sea</b>	Letter does not include anything about the causes and effects of the March to the Sea.	The letter contains only one idea about the cause and effect of the March.	The letter includes two causes of the March and explains effects.	The letter contains three statements explaining what caused the March to the Sea and connects those causes to effects.	_____
<b>Individual Grade: letter includes you learned and expresses your opinion about the importance of the March to the Sea</b>	There is no statement of what you learned about or your opinion about the importance of the March to the Sea.	The letter includes only one thing you have learned. The letter ends without a statement that expresses your opinion about the reasons we are still talking about the March to the Sea.	The letter included two things you have learned. The letter does not express your opinion about why we are still talking about the March to the Sea.	The letter includes at least three things you have learned. The letter concludes with a statement that expresses your opinion about the reasons we are still talking about the March to the Sea.	_____
<b>GROUP PRESENTATION GRADE:</b>	Presentation is not clear to your audience. Your group can't answer questions. Presentation runs longer than the allotted time. Presenters are missing materials. Some students in the group do not participate.	Presentation has a beginning, middle and end. Your group forgets to say what question you proposed and answered. One person in the group doesn't have a job to do.	Presentation has a beginning, middle and end. You explain what question you answered. But one person in the group does all the talking.	The presentation is clear, concise, and well-prepared. Everyone in the group participated.	_____
				<b>Total----&gt;</b>	_____

**Teacher Comments:**

## What was the most important result of the March to the Sea?

### Conclusion

The March to the Sea was over in December 1864. Historians still talk about it however. We are still debating its causes and effects. You can join that conversation. You have examined primary sources, connected events in the past with the landscape of modern Georgia, asked questions about the effects of the March to the Sea and evaluated its results. You can show your work on a map and point to the most important events of the March to the Sea, based on the evidence you have collected. Your map could show a visitor from another place where the March through Georgia went. It could be a roadmap to more research and help you answer a question about the cause and effects of the March.

There's one more thing you have learned during this lesson. You have read about the March to the Sea from many different points of view. It turns out that there's more than one side to every story, in the past and now. You have seen how important it is to look for evidence to support your interpretation. You're thinking like a historian now!

| [Link to Teacher Page](#) |

### Credits and References

Designed by Beth Woodward ([beth.o.woodward@gmail.com](mailto:beth.o.woodward@gmail.com)) in August 2013 as part of the *WebQuesting at the Library of Congress* professional development course offered through [Teaching with Primary Sources at Waynesburg University](#). Many thanks to instructors Sue Wise and Jenn Hanson as well as the outstanding teacher participants who critiqued and improved this WebQuest.



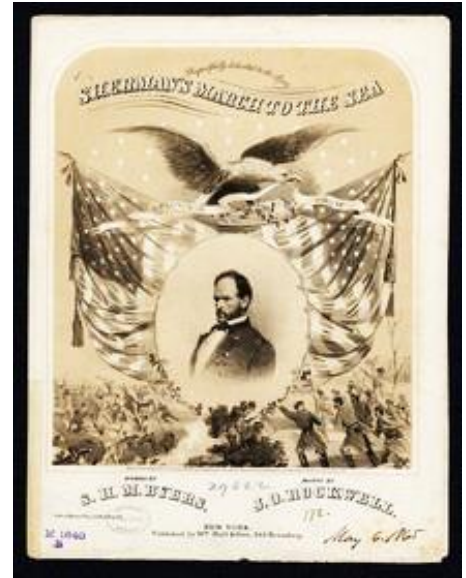
## Teacher Page

### Mapping Sherman's March

#### A WebQuest for 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies

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August 30, 2013



Before there were radios and digital tunes, Americans entertained themselves by making their own music. Popular pieces like this would be played on parlor pianos in family homes, at least in the Northern states.

<http://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.200001299>

| [Link to Student Page](#) |

#### Introduction for Teachers

Designed by [Beth Woodward](#). Last updated August 30, 2013.

“**Mapping Sherman’s March**” can be used within an overview unit on the Civil War or as part of an investigation of key campaigns. The Atlanta Campaign and the March to the Sea are the northern and southern segments of a nine month effort by General William Tecumseh Sherman (US Army) to reduce the military capacity of the Confederacy. For the first time in American warfare, an invasion force specifically targeted civilians, factories, farms and the resources which fed, clothed and armed the enemy fighting forces. Historians have called Sherman’s strategy an innovation, a “total war” against the population that fuels the gears of war. The March had dramatic effects on Georgia. General Sherman officers read the Emancipation Proclamation out loud at stops along the March to the Sea to underscore the fact that slavery was now null and void in Georgia as in other states that had seceded from the Union. Thousands of formerly enslaved people left their homes as a result. The general wrote that he could “make Georgia howl” and leave the morale of the Confederacy in tatters. Overall, he may have done that by destroying storehouses of supplies and miles of rail and road infrastructure. He did however instruct his soldiers to restrain from plundering individual families. The order was unevenly administered by the officers in charge of troops who had seen action fighting against Confederate soldiers for over a year. Individual choices and single handed actions made up what we call the “March to the Sea”.

This lesson attempts to give students familiarity with historical thinking, collecting many stories from differing viewpoints. Students will try to look through the eyes of people who lived long ago, to track causes and effects, to map events over time and identify changes wrought by war. In the process they may do some ‘myth busting’. Sherman’s troops marched through the heart of Georgia, leaving stories of theft and generosity, violence and hospitality. Years of local folklore have gathered around this incident in the Civil War. This lesson plan serves as an exercise in gathering evidence to support a reasoned opinion about an “inflammatory” issue.



## What was the most important result of the March to the Sea?

### About the Learners

This lesson plan aligns with Georgia's Common Core Performance Standards for 5<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies and Language Arts. Georgia 8<sup>th</sup> graders study the Civil War as part of their state history survey course. The lesson could be adapted to upper grades by extending the chronology to include the Atlanta Campaign in the research parameters. Additionally the lesson plans could be scaled up to meet the Common Core ELA standards for reading informational texts in middle school

**SS5H1** The student will explain the causes, major events, and consequences of the Civil War.

c. Identify major battles and campaigns: Fort Sumter, Gettysburg, the Atlanta Campaign, Sherman's March to the Sea, and Appomattox Court House.

e. Describe the effects of war on the North and South.

This WebQuest also provides students with primary source learning that serves Common Core ELA goals:

### COMMON CORE - FIFTH GRADE READING INFORMATIONAL (RI)

**ELACC5RI1:** Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing **inferences** from the text.

**ELACC5RI2:** Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; **summarize** the text.

**ELACC5RI6:** Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.

**ELACC5RI7:** Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

**ELACC5RI9:** Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

### Differentiation/Modification

#### ELL: Vocabulary Challenge

Before assigning the WebQuest, time should be spent in small groups working with the vocabulary list (below) drawn from primary sources used in this lesson. Students can complete Frayer models for each concept or word. This four part graphic organizer supports students in defining the term, using it in a sentence, illustrating it with a drawing, and giving examples of the synonyms or antonyms ("non-examples"). The finished Frayers can be used to study for quizzes or exhibited as part of a word wall.

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/strategybank/FrayerModel.html>

<http://www.worksheetworks.com/miscellanea/graphic-organizers/frayer.html>

#### LD: Before/During/After Reading Strategies

Integrate opportunities for students to talk about their reading process, generate questions and engage with the primary sources. Using a B/D/A reading strategy for each chunk of text allows students to make connections between their own experiences and the experiences of people who lived long ago.

#### Gifted: Library of Congress sources for extending the lesson

After completing the WebQuest, students can work individually or in small groups to continue building their knowledge of the Civil War homefront. The Library of Congress Teacher Resource pages are a good place to look for enrichment opportunities.

The Civil War Through a Child's Eye Lesson Plan:

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/childs-eye/>

Another suggested activity guides students to investigate primary sources and respond by taking on a point of view from the Civil War.

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/journal/civilwar/pdf/SecondaryLevelLearningActivity.pdf>

## Key Vocabulary words

Command	Campaign	Destruction	Strategy
Home Front	Obscurity	Accusation	Feud
Hamstrung	Resign	Tactics	Exasperate
Opposition	Sustain	Forage	Fodder

## Dealing with challenging concepts:

The Library of Congress has archived interviews with people who are known to have been slaves. One example is an interview with Atlanta bricklayer W.E. Evans. He was a child when Sherman marched through Georgia. He also witnessed the 1906 race riot in Atlanta and reports its horrific outcomes. Should your students read the entire interview with its verifiable details of Jim Crow violence? Only you know what will serve your students' learning goals. One method of incorporating challenging primary sources is to print selections and make the printouts available. It is advisable to **review all sources** before guiding students to them in this lesson.

W.E. Evans interview: <http://www.loc.gov/resource/wpalh1.13070608/seq-2#seq-1>

## Process for Teachers

Suggested pacing is for 50 minute classes, including one day of direct instruction and one day for group presentation and writing.

**Day 1)** Present/review “big picture” of Civil War events through December 1864. Use whole class instruction incorporating images, video, read-alouds and vocabulary terms as needed. Draw or post a timeline to emphasize cause and effect sequencing. If the teacher has access to 3-D artifacts, reference books and other printed documents that can support the WebQuest, these can be introduced now. At conclusion of lesson, present the WebQuest introduction and task to the class, explaining that they will be looking closely at one event during the war.

**Day 2)** Whole class: Teacher ‘think talks’ the Sherman Campaign map from Library of Congress website; defines map elements such as compass rose and legend; reviews concept of scale. Compare and contrast a modern day map of Georgia to the 1864 map. Ask what has changed over time and what has not. Look for evidence of railroads on map, identify major cities and estimate the distance soldiers could travel in a day. Assign groups, provide working copies of Sherman campaign map for each group. These will serve as both visual organizers during the research stage and guide for the final presentation map.

Using an “Explain, Demonstrate, Guide” sequence, model the process of research by focusing on one location. For example, indicate Atlanta on the map. Demonstrate a search for images of Atlanta during the Civil War at the Library of Congress website. Show the similar process for finding newspaper accounts or official documents such as Sherman’s orders to his troops to “forage liberally on the countryside.” Guide students as they begin their research to establish dates and locations of significant events on the March to the Sea. Each location on the map should be supported with at least one form of primary source documentation. It may be a letter written by a person who was in that place and saw the effects of the March to the Sea, or an image of soldiers on the March. It can be a newspaper report of an event at a location that is on the map.

**Day 3)** During this session groups should finalize the locations, in addition to Atlanta and Savannah, that will be on their finished map. Teacher will review their choices of significant events to be placed on the map, and check that citations for each source have been recorded.

**Day 4)** Map construction continues. Before the class ends, groups should review their presentation and assign speaking/support roles.

Each group turns in their list of sites and events with links to the sources they used.

**Day 5) Presentations:** Each group is given 5 minutes for their presentation and Q/A from the class and teacher. At conclusion, teacher reviews written reflection rubric. Students draft their individual reflection on importance of the March to the Sea. Homework is rewriting and completing the letter.

**NOTES:** Placing the web links on an Edmodo site or making them available through secure school internet channels allows students to work independently or together outside class. Additional time or independent assignments will be required if students need to fill in gaps in their background knowledge.

If your school's technology supports multiple groups using Google Earth applications, students can build their map digitally.

Some classes prefer paper. Speed things along by Xeroxing copies of the Sherman Campaign map before the class. Make extras!

Have a stash of materials such as photographs of wartime Savannah and Atlanta already printed in a Resource Folder. Once students have identified a location or event that they want to document on the map, they can use one of those images and spare the toner cartridge.

### **Materials Needed:**

- Copies of Sherman's Campaign map, printed on 11x17 paper.
- One piece of poster board, construction paper (or foam core tri-fold board) per group for map presentation
- Glue sticks, colored pencils, scissors, paper
- Access to computers and printer

### **Additional Resources:**

[TED-Ed flipped lesson using Ken Burns' talk on the importance of archives](#)

Ken Burns celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his award winning documentary on the Civil War by speaking at the National Archives. How did he learn about his family's Civil War connections? It took an archivist.

[NARA DocsTeach Lesson Plan](#)

A National Archives lesson plan that asks students to answer the question, "To what extent was the Civil War caused by slavery?"

[Civil War Interactive Poster](#)

As explorers of the past, we can look at a variety of sources—maps, letters, diaries, objects, music, images, and more—to piece together a sense of the Civil War's complexity. The images and related resources from this poster are designed to get students thinking about how primary sources can help uncover stories about the past. As the poster illustrates, it takes many sources to create a more complete picture of the Civil War.

### **Conclusion for Teachers**

**Students should conclude this lesson realizing that there are many perspectives on the March to the Sea.** Historians still debate the results of the March. Sherman's campaign certainly destroyed food and fodder that could have supported many more months of warfare by the Confederacy. But did the March achieve Sherman's goals of destroying the Confederate army, reducing Atlanta's role as a major transportation hub and making Georgia "howl"?

Was the March a necessary part of the Union victory in the Civil War? Were Georgians ready to accept surrender after the March or did they redouble their support for a negotiated armistice with the North? Did Sherman's incursion really set the state of Georgia back economically for generations?

Encourage students to think beyond battles. Did the migration of former slaves to cities set the stage for a new urban life? What happened to soldiers who returned to find their homes destroyed? Did the March have any lasting effects for women and girls in Georgia?

There are teachable moments for modern day kids in this story. Students can reflect, some from personal experience, on the resilience of a state, a country or a family that experiences tragic loss. Have students heard any familiar echoes in the voices of people who faced the whirlwind of war over a century ago? Do they see any traces of this event in modern day Georgia? What is left of the March to Sea besides a catchy tune and bad jokes about real estate developers in Atlanta "finishing the job that Sherman started"? The story of the March has

often been reduced to a litmus test for Southern identity in some quarters. It's a complete mystery to students who have arrived in this state recently from other continents. Students who participate in this lesson however will discover that evidence to support a reasoned opinion about the March to the Sea is within their grasp. They have the skills to build a new story, of their own making. They can join the constructive conversation we call history.

**What was the most important result of General Sherman's "March to the Sea"?**

| [Link to Student Page](#) |

### **Credits and References**

Designed in August 2013 by [Beth Woodward](#), a graduate student at Mercer University's Tift College of Education, Atlanta, GA. This project is part of the *WebQuesting at the Library of Congress* professional development course offered through [Teaching with Primary Sources at Waynesburg University](#).