

Brian Busker, Southwest Minnesota Christian High School, Edgerton, Minnesota

This set of lessons for high school social studies classes focuses on the Dakota War of 1862 in Minnesota. It leads students to consider the conflicting motives that led to this violent confrontation between Native Americans and settlers during the Civil War. It can also help teachers see how including local history in American history can help students understand how their particular region's development reflects broader patterns.

The Sioux Uprising of 1862

Objectives

1. Students Will Be Able To (SWBAT) better understand the complexities of Sioux life with all of its groups, customs and ways of life (Santee/Dakota Sioux vs. Yankton/Teton Sioux).
2. SWBAT recognize tensions within the Santee Sioux themselves between various bands/factions (i.e. farmers vs. traditionalists, peace vs. war).
3. SWBAT identify all of the various causes that led to the conflict.
4. SWBAT give a general overview of the war and its outcome.
5. SWBAT learn the stories of Little Crow and Mrs. Eastlick as tangible examples from both sides of the conflict.
6. SWBAT visit a local site where some fighting occurred to make more real the impact of the overall story.
7. SWBAT see the importance of monuments and what they say for the collective mind of history and how we interpret it.

Resources

Best resource for this subject is located online with maps, timelines, articles, etc. at the Minnesota Historical Society website: www.mnhs.org www.usdakotawar.org

- General Overview
- Carley, Kenneth, *The Dakota War of 1862* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Press, 1976).
- Gilman, Rhoda R., *The Story of Minnesota's Past* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Press, 1991). Chapter 11
- Babcock, Willoughby M. "Minnesota's Indian War," *Minnesota History*, Vol. 38, No. 3, Special Sioux War Issue, (Sep., 1962), pp. 93-8.
- Lake Shetek Settlers
- "In Commemoration of the Sioux Uprising," (Murray County Historical Society, 1962).
- Eastlick, Mrs. L., "A Personal Narrative of Indian Massacres 1862" (Murray County Historical Museum, 2010).
- Gray, John S., "The Santee Sioux and the Settlers at Lake Shetek: Capture Rescue", *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Winter, 1975), pp. 42-54.

- Indian Accounts of the War
- Anderson, Gary Clayton and Alan R. Woolworth, Ed., *Through Dakota Eyes*. (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988).
- Brown, Dee, *Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee*. (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2007). Chapter 3.
- Carley, Kenneth, "As Red Men Viewed It: Three Indian Accounts of the Uprising," *Minnesota History*. Vol. 38, No. 3, Special Sioux War Issue, (Sep., 1962), pp. 126-49.
- Other Sources
- Anderson, Gary Clayton, "Myrick's Insult: A Fresh Look at Myth and Reality", *Minnesota History*, Vol. 48, No. 5, (Spring, 1983), pp. 198-206.

- Henig, Gerald S. and Gerald T. Henig, "A Neglected Cause of the Sioux Uprising", Minnesota History. Vol. 45, No. 3, Sioux Uprising Issue (Fall, 1976), pp. 107-10.
- Nichols, David A., "The Other Civil War: Lincoln and the Indians", Minnesota History. Vol. 44, No. 1 (Spring, 1974), pp. 2-15.
- Russo, Priscilla Ann, "The Time to Speak Is Over: The Onset of the Sioux Uprising", Minnesota History. Vol. 45, No. 3, Sioux Uprising Issue (Fall, 1976), pp. 97-106.
- www.newsinhistory.com/blog/editorials-speculate-cause-dakota-war-minnesota
- Anderson, Julie A., "Reconciling Memory: Landscapes, commemorations, and enduring conflicts of the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862", Dissertation for Georgia State University, 2011. (digitalarchive.gsu.edu)
- Video: "The Dakota Conflict" http://www.mnvideovault.org/index.php?id=8011&select_index=0&popup=yes

Procedures

1. Day One--The Introduction (Primary Readings)

One Half of Class receives excerpts of Indians' stories of the conflict (i.e. Big Eagle)

One Half of Class receives excerpts of White settlers' stories and local newspapers' articles about the conflict

Questions to Consider: What happened?

Who's at fault?

Why did it happen? (causes)

What else do you need to know?

What assumptions are made by the author?

Is it truthful?

Bring them back as a whole to discuss the readings

Begin reading Babcock's article, "Minnesota's Indian War", together and finish as homework for tomorrow for a general overview

2. Day Two--The Overview (Video)

Begin by discussing what we learned from the Babcock article that puts the other readings into perspective.

Watch "The Dakota Conflict"

3. Day Three--The Details (Notes)

Finish "The Dakota Conflict"

Pass out map of Upper and Lower Agencies and map of MN in 1862

Go through PowerPoint presentation with details about the war and pictures of the people for student notes

4. Day Four(maybe Five)--Field Trip

Travel to Lake Shetek to see the site of the original and refurbished cabins

Tell the story of Mrs. Eastlick and her family in stages

Visit "Slaughter Slough" where most of the settlers were murdered

Possibly visit other sites: Fort Snelling, Reconciliation Park in Mankato, long forgotten monuments, etc.

- **Dakota War of 1862 Monument Extra Credit Assignment

Assessment

The above information will certainly be included in the next chapter test. A summative essay concerning the causes of conflict and comparing accounts will probably be a part of it.