



WALTON ARTS CENTER PRESENTS

# DIGGING UP ARKANSAS

AN ARKANSAS HISTORY PLAY

Written by Mike Thomas | Directed by Kassie Misiewicz  
Performed by Trike Theatre

## Courage – Post Performance

There's No Place Like Home

**In this activity, students will:**

- Have attended a performance of *Digging Up Arkansas*.
- View historic images and research information to build background information of Civil War Settings. Students will discuss historic images and ask corresponding questions to facilitate discussion about soldiers, families at home and the quality of courage.
- Show their thinking by using their knowledge of the play and individual research to answer questions created in the pre-lesson.
- Reflect by writing the “3 Things I’ve Learned” on an index card.
- Creatively assess by composing a friendly letter written from a soldier’s point of view to their families at home.

**Learning standards met:**

- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Common Core Standards
- 3.R.I.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of text.
- 3.R.I.2 Define main idea and key details.
- 3.R.I.3 Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

- 3.R.I.7 Use information gained from illustrations and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text. Ex. Where, when, why, and how
- 3.W.3 Write narrative to develop real or imaginary experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequence.
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade Common Core Standards:
- 4.R.I.2 Determine the main idea of the text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text
- 4.R.I.3 Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why based on specific information in the text.
- 4.R.I.7 Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
- 4.W.3 Write narrative to develop real or imaginary experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequence.
- 5<sup>th</sup> grade Common Core Standards:
- 5.R.I.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- 5.R.I.2 Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- 5.R.I.3 Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individual events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.
- 5.R.I.7 Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources; Demonstrate the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.
- 5.W.3 Write narrative to develop real or imaginary experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequence.

**The learning objectives for this lesson are:**

- We will gather meaning from visual images to improve comprehension of Arkansas History.
- We will interpret information, answer questions and facilitate discussions using visual images and response to live performance.
- We will compose a friendly letter, identifying point of view of different characters.

**Materials you will need to complete this lesson are:**

- Historical pictures for group viewing
- Questions to accompany pictures
- Index cards
- Pre-Lesson chart with questions
- Stationary for letter writing (notebook paper or brown butcher paper crinkled for authenticity)
- pencils

**Timeline for the lesson:**

- **Group Viewing Activity (20 minutes):** Divide students into groups of 4. Make enough copies of the historical pictures so that each group has one copy of each of the 4 pictures as well as the questions that accompany each picture. Each student in a group should have one picture and the accompanying questions. One by one each student will share his/her picture with their small group and ask the questions that go with the picture. Students practice listening and speaking so each member in the group answers and discusses each question. After one student has asked all accompanying questions for a given picture, the next student may share his/her picture and ask the questions that accompany that picture.
- **Answer questions written in pre-lesson (10 minutes):** Refer to the chart of questions students created in the pre-lesson. Allow time to discuss each question and see if they have gained enough information to answer it. Encourage students to use examples from the play to answer questions. If not information is available, as a class, research the answer. Chart each answer on the poster created in the pre-lesson.
- **3 things I've learned (10 minutes):** Each student receives an index card. Ask them to write three interesting facts they have learned about courage in the Civil War in Arkansas. After writing, pair/share with a partner their facts.
- **Model letter writing (10 minutes):** Ask students to imagine being a soldier in the Civil War. Guide them in a discussion about what they would be seeing, thinking, feeling, etc. Explain that they are going to write a friendly letter home from war. Model this letter writing process to help them understand point of view from a Civil War soldier.
- **Letter writing (20 minutes):** Students imagine they are soldiers during the Civil War and write their own letters home. Sentence starters might include:
  - > My name is . . .
  - > I come from . . .
  - > I'm wearing . . . (tell why)
  - > The person in my family I am writing to is . . . (describe relationship)

- > I like to . . .
- > I do not like . . .
- > The most important person in my life is . . .(tell why)
- > Something important to me is . . . (tell why)

**Students will show their thinking by:**

- Answering questions created in the pre-lesson as well as answering questions on index cards and discussion while viewing pictures.

**Prompts for reflecting on this lesson:**

- What words or phrases did we hear the character in *Digging Up Arkansas* repeat in the play?
- Why were they repeated?
- How well did we remember the events in the play?
- What 3 facts have you learned about courage in AR during the Civil War?
- What did you learn about the Civil War in Arkansas through this play?
- What moment in the play made you laugh or feel afraid?
- What did the actors do to make this happen?
- What did you learn about the Civil War from looking at the historic images?
- Who caught your attention in the photographs? What expression or body position did you notice? What did you imply from the picture?
- After you wrote your letter as a Civil War soldier, did you think about Courage in a new way?
- How will knowing this help us understand more about courage?
- How will knowing this help us understand Arkansas history?

**The final product facilitated by this lesson should be:**

- Model writing a friendly letter from a soldier's point of view home to his family using information they have learned about courage in Arkansas during the Civil War. Have students compose their own friendly letters from a soldier's point of view and share.

**Learn More at:**

*A Dramatic Approach to Reading Comprehension* by Lenore Blank Kelner and Rosalind M. Flynn,

Heinemann: Portsmouth, NH, 2006.

> Learn more about using drama in your classroom

[www.interactstory.com](http://www.interactstory.com)

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators.aspx>

> Learn more about *Digging Up Arkansas*

[www.waltonartscenter.org](http://www.waltonartscenter.org)

Learn more about engaging students and exploring documents at our National Archives

[www.archives.gov/nae](http://www.archives.gov/nae)

[www.DocsTeach.org](http://www.DocsTeach.org)

**Lessons created by:**

Jo Stevens, Literacy Facilitator  
Eastside Elementary School  
Rogers, AR

Della Hutcheson, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher  
Eastside Elementary School  
Rogers, AR

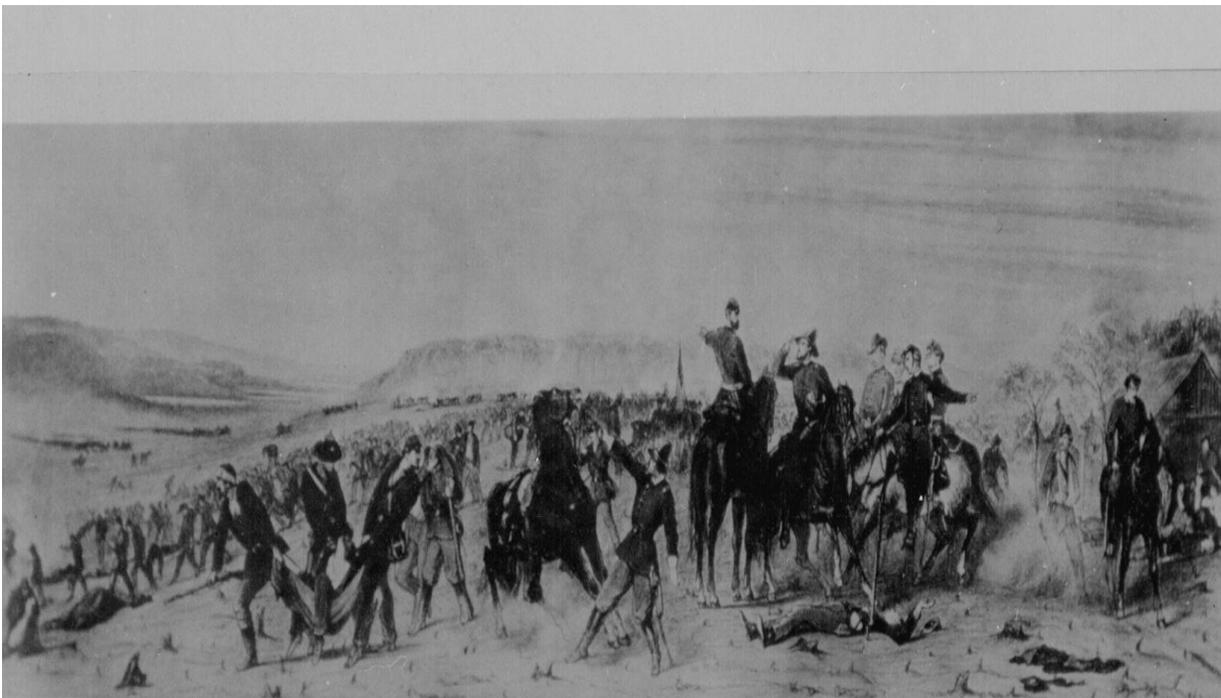
# Photos for Group Viewing in Post Lesson: Courage from Digging Up Arkansas

All images are domain free and taken from:

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

<http://www.archives.gov/research/military/civil-war/photos/index.html>

Picture I



Questions for Picture I

1. What are 2 actions that require courage?
2. Which soldier is hesitating? Why?

3. Who do you think has the best chance of winning and why?
4. How is war different today than it was in this picture?

Picture 2



Questions for Picture 2

1. What time of year was it? How do you know?
2. Where are these men coming from?
3. Why are they holding drums?
4. Do you think they are afraid? Why or why not?

Picture 3



Questions for Picture 3

1. What do you think these men are doing?
2. What words are written on the sign above the door? What do you think it means?
3. Do you think these men are getting ready for battle? Why or why not?
4. What is the man on the roof doing? What is he thinking?

Picture 4



#### Questions for Picture 4

1. What is happening in this picture?
2. Can you identify a doctor or nurse in this picture?
3. What do you think the patients were thinking?
4. Describe the sounds that were happening in this picture.