



Using Primary Sources to Help Us Understand History

Name _____ Class _____

I. Directions: As a group analyze the Civil War letter and record your responses.

1. Describe what you see.
2. What do you notice first?
3. Is there any text you can read? What does it say?
4. Describe anything on the page besides words, such as images or decorations.
5. How is the text and other information arranged on the page?
6. Describe anything about this text that looks strange or unfamiliar.
7. What other details can you see?

II. Directions: Complete the follow-up activity according to your assigned “letter.” When given time, share your response with your group.

A. Re-write the text in your own words.

B. Look for clues as to what point of view (perspective) the author of the letter had. Explain what someone with an opposing or differing point of view might say about the issues or events described in it. How would the information be presented differently?

C. Examine the text. Think about what you already know about this period in history. How does the text support or contradict your current understanding of this period? Can you see any clues as to what point of view (perspective) the author of the letter may have had?