

William Child, Major and Surgeon with the 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment New Hampshire Volunteers  
September 22, 1862 (Battlefield Hospital near Sharpsburg)

*My Dear Wife;*

*Day before yesterday I dressed the wounds of 64 different men - some having two or three each. Yesterday I was at work from daylight till dark - today I am completely exhausted - but shall soon be able to go at it again.*

*The days after the battle are a thousand times worse than the day of the battle - and the physical pain is not the greatest pain suffered. How awful it is - you have not can have until you see it any idea of affairs after a battle. The dead appear sickening but they suffer no pain. But the poor wounded mutilated soldiers that yet have life and sensation make a most horrid picture. I pray God may stop such infernal work - through perhaps he has sent it upon us for our sins. Great indeed must have been our sins if such is our punishment.*

*Our Reg. Started this morning for Harpers Ferry - 14 miles. I am detailed with others to remain here until the wounded are removed - then join the Reg. With my nurses. I expect there will be another great fight at Harpers Ferry.*

*Carrie I dreamed of home night before last. I love to dream of home it seems so much like really being there. I dreamed that I was passing Hibbards house and saw you and Lud. in the window. After then I saw you in some place I cannot really know where -you kissed me - and told me you loved me - though you did not the first time you saw me. Was not that quite a soldier dream? That night had been away to a hospital to see some wounded men - returned late. I fastened my horse to a peach tree - fed him with wheat and hay from a barn near by - then I slept and dreamed of my loved ones away in N.H.*

*Write soon as you can. Tell me all you can about my business affairs and prospects for the future in Bath. Will Dr. Boynton be likely to get a strong hold there. One thing sure Cad, I shall return to Bath - if I live - and spend my days there. I feel so in that way now. Give me all news you can. Tell Parker and John and the girls to write although I can not answer them all. Tell Parker I will answer his as soon as I can.*

*In this letter I send you a bit of gold lace such as the rebel officers have. This I cut from a rebel officers coat on the battlefield. He was a Lieut.*

*I have made the acquaintance of two rebel officers - prisoners in our hands. One is a physician - both are masons - both very intelligent, gentlemanly men. Each is wounded in the leg. They are great favorites with our officers. One of them was brought off the field in the hottest of the fight by our 5<sup>th</sup> N.H. officers - he giving them evidence of his being a mason.*

*Now do write soon. Kisses to you Clint & Kate. Love to all.*

*Yours as ever, W.C.*

# TEACHER'S GUIDE ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES



Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.

## OBSERVE

**Have students identify and note details.**

Sample Questions:

- What do you notice first? · Find something small but interesting.
- What do you notice that you didn't expect? · What do you notice that you can't explain? · What do you notice now that you didn't earlier?

## REFLECT

**Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the source.**

- Where do you think this came from? · Why do you think somebody made this? · What do you think was happening when this was made? · Who do you think was the audience for this item? · What tool was used to create this? · Why do you think this item is important? · If someone made this today, what would be different? · What can you learn from examining this?

## QUESTION

**Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.**

- What do you wonder about... who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

## FURTHER INVESTIGATION

**Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.**

Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

- A few follow-up activity ideas:**
  - Beginning**
    - Have students compare two related primary source items
  - Intermediate**
    - Have students expand or alter textbook explanations of history based on primary sources they study.

- Advanced**
    - Ask students to consider how a series of primary sources support or challenge information and understanding on a particular topic.
    - Have students refine or revise conclusions based on their study of each subsequent primary source.
- For more tips on using primary sources, go to <http://www.loc.gov/teachers>