

## *~Study Guide~*

### *The Ballad Of Dixie & Billy Yank*

**Abraham Lincoln**, the 16th president of the United States, guided his country through the most devastating experience in its national history--the CIVIL WAR. He is considered by many historians to have been the greatest American president.

In the presidential election of 1860 the Republican Party nominated Abraham Lincoln as its candidate. Lincoln won and became President. Many states were unhappy about his election, including South Carolina. They decided to secede (separate) from the Union. By February 1, 1861, six more Southern states seceded. Many people in the South believed that the North was trying to infringe on each state's right to govern itself. One of the issues the South wanted to maintain was the institution of slavery. On February 7, the seven states adopted a constitution for the Confederate States of America. Jefferson Davis became its new President. On April 12, Confederate guns opened fire on the federal troops stationed at Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina, and the Civil War began. Because of Ft. Sumter, Virginia seceded on April 17, and Arkansas, Tennessee and North Carolina seceded soon after.

Both the North and the South thought that they would win a quick and easy victory. The North felt like they had more industry, money, and manpower. Twenty-three states with a population of 22 million were fighting against 11 Confederate states that only had 9 million. The South thought they would win because of their advantages. The South was fighting a defensive war on its own territory. Plus the South had a great number of experienced military leaders on its side. Unfortunately the war would not be short, and the loss of life during the Civil War was devastating.

Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was given on January 1, 1863, stating that all slaves in states fighting against the Union were free. It also authorized the recruitment of black men into the Union Army, which abolitionist leaders such as Frederick Douglass had been urging Lincoln to do since the beginning of the war.

From 1861-1865 war raged on American soil- 'brother fighting his own brother'. Then on April 9, 1865, General Lee (South) surrendered to General Grant (North) at Appomattox Courthouse. Even though fighting continued for a few months, the Civil War was officially over.

On April 14, President Lincoln attended a performance at Ford's Theater. There, as he sat in the presidential box, he was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth, a Virginia actor who hated Lincoln and the North. Booth was killed in a shootout some days later in a barn in the Virginia countryside. His accomplices were captured and later executed.

**Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896)** is best known today as the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which helped stir up the abolitionist cause and contributed to the outbreak of the Civil War. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* sold over 10,000 copies in the first week and was a best seller of its day. After the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Stowe became an internationally acclaimed celebrity and an extremely popular author. In addition to novels, she wrote non-fiction books on a wide range of subjects including homemaking and the raising of children, and religion. She wrote in an informal conversational style, and presented herself as an average wife and mother.



According to legend, when Abraham Lincoln met Harriet Beecher Stowe in 1862 he said, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that started this Great War!"

The Civil War grew out of a mixture of causes including regional conflicts between North and South, economic trends, and humanitarian concerns for the welfare of enslaved people. This war, which pitted one section of the country against another, almost destroyed the United States. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* contributed to the outbreak of war because it brought the evils of slavery to the attention of Americans more vividly than any other book had done before. The book had a strong emotional appeal that moved and inspired people in a way that political speeches, tracts and newspapers accounts could not duplicate.

Immediately after its publication *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was both lauded as a tremendous achievement and attacked as one sided and inaccurate. Abolitionists and reformers praised the book for its compassionate portrayal of people held in slavery. At the same time, others, who claimed that slavery was justified, attacked Harriet and accused her of fabricating unrealistic images of slavery.

(Biography from: <http://www.harrietbeecherstowecenter.org>)

## A Basic Civil War Timeline

The American Civil War is an extensive time in history. This is only a small sampling of a timeline to help students understand the occurrences that happened during the war as a support to the play they will see.

January 1861	The South secedes
February 1861	The Confederate Constitution is adopted and Jefferson Davis is named President of the Confederacy
April 1861	Confederate attack on Ft. Sumter Civil War begins Richmond, VA becomes the capitol of the Confederacy after VA secedes
July 1861	1 <sup>st</sup> Battle of Bull Run
April 1862	Battle of Shiloh
December 1862	Battle of Fredericksburg
January 1863	President Lincoln Gives <u>The Emancipation Proclamation</u> - Stating that slaves were FREE in the eyes of the Federal Government
May 1863	Battle of Chancellorsville
July 1863	Battle of Gettysburg
November 1864	General William T. Sherman starts his famous 'March to the Sea'
April 1865	General Lee surrenders at Appomattox Courthouse
April 14, 1865	Assassination of President Lincoln
May 10, 1865	Jefferson Davis captured in GA

# Vocabulary Words

<b><u>Civil War</u></b>	The war between the Union and the Confederacy from 1861-1865 fought in the United States Of America- Also called the War Between The States
<b><u>Emancipation</u></b>	The act of freeing someone from oppression- The Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves in the eyes of the Federal Government
<b><u>Federal</u></b>	Of, relating to, or loyal to the Union cause during the American Civil War
<b><u>Union</u></b>	The United States Of America regarded as a national unit, especially during the Civil War
<b><u>Confederate</u></b>	A supporter of the Confederate States Of America
<b><u>Confederate States Of America</u></b>	A republic formed in 1861 and composed of the 11 Southern states that seceded from the United States in order to preserve slavery and states rights- It was dissolved in 1865 after being defeated in the American Civil War
<b><u>Militia</u></b>	An army composed of ordinary citizens rather than professional soldiers
<b><u>Abolitionist</u></b>	A person who believes in getting rid of the institution of slavery
<b><u>Slavery</u></b>	The state of being bound in servitude as the property of a slave owner or household
<b><u>Yankee</u></b>	A native or inhabitant of a Northern US state, especially a Union soldier during the Civil War
<b><u>Johnny Reb</u></b>	A nickname for a Confederate soldier- also called a rebel or a reb
<b><u>Billy Yank</u></b>	A nickname for a Union soldier
<b><u>Dixie</u></b>	A region of the southern and eastern US usually comprising the states that joined the Confederacy during the Civil War

# *The Ballad Of* *Dixie & Billy Yank*

## PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

(TEACHERS: Your students will be seeing an original play based on the Civil War. Due to the historical nature of the piece, it is very important to prepare your students for the show. Please participate in these pre-show activities to help your children become ready to see this performance.)

- You will be seeing a live theatrical performance. How is theatre different from television, movies, or concerts? What kinds of audience manners are appropriate when watching theatre?
- There are several vocabulary words to be familiar with before seeing the show. Please look over the Vocabulary List and discuss the meanings of these vocabulary words.
- As a class, brainstorm what you know about the American Civil War. Fill in the gaps with historical facts found in books, online, or in your textbooks.
- The show is set in Chancellorsville, VA, a small area near Fredericksburg, VA. Find Fredericksburg, VA on a map.
- The clothing during the Civil War was very different than what we wear now. Do some research to see some of the different styles of clothing worn during that period of history. Do you think they were comfortable?

## After The Show Activities

(After seeing the show, these activities can enhance the educational value of the performance)

1. Dixie and Billy write journal entries and letters during the show. During the Civil War, letter and journal writing was very important to soldiers and to their loved ones back home. Imagine that you are a soldier or a family member of a soldier. Write a journal entry and a letter as if you were that person
2. The book Uncle Tom's Cabin inspired Billy to be an abolitionist. Have you ever read a book that inspired you or made you 'think'? Tell your classmates about this special book that influenced you.
3. Billy plays the harmonica during the show. Many soldiers would bring small musical instruments with them for entertainment. Try playing the harmonica! Research some songs from the Civil War. Learn to sing them or play them.
4. Photography was very important during the Civil War. It was the first war in American history to be photographed with such detail. Soldiers would have portraits taken in their uniforms to send back to loved ones. Do some research about how people would pose for these formal portraits. How are they different than the way we pose for pictures now? Set up a digital camera in your classroom and take a variety of Civil War 'type' portraits. Try changing the color to 'sepia' on your computer or camera before printing them out to get an authentic look!
5. Dixie and Billy had many conflicts or problems to resolve during the show. Unfortunately the problems between the North and the South caused a war. We all have conflicts in real life. We should all learn to solve those problems positively before they turn into a 'fight'. What are some positive ways we can solve problems? Use role-playing as a class to find some creative ways to solve conflicts in a constructive way.
6. Slavery is an issue that is discussed a great deal in the play. It was an institution that was wrong and needed to be changed. Billy believed that he needed to make a difference and tell others why he thought that slavery was evil. What are some things in life that you would like to change and why? How do you think that you could make a difference?
7. Participate in the "Follow The Ohio 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry" Activity

## FOLLOW THE OHIO 5<sup>th</sup> INFANTRY ACTIVITY

*Materials Needed- An Atlas or a Map of the United States*

The fictional character Jeremiah McPherson (Billy Yank) in this play is part of the Ohio 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment. Here is a timeline of a few of the places the real Ohio 5<sup>th</sup> regiment traveled to. See if you can find some of these spots on a map! Imagine if you were a soldier during the Civil War and were traveling to all of these places by foot or horse! What do you think it was like?

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|---------------------------------|--|
| <u>April 20, 1861</u>           | The 5 <sup>th</sup> Regiment Infantry organized at Camp Harrison near <b>Cincinnati, Ohio</b>  |
| <u>June 20, 1861</u>            | The 5 <sup>th</sup> Regiment Infantry reorganized to set men out for a three year service  |
| <u>July 10, 1861</u>            | The men left Ohio for <b>Buckhannon, West Virginia</b>   |
| <u>November 3, 1861</u>         | The 5 <sup>th</sup> Regiment Infantry started to travel more often to various locations and battle locations   |
| <u>May 12-21, 1862</u>          | The men marched to <b>Fredericksburg, VA</b>   |
| <u>August 28-30, 1862</u>       | The 5 <sup>th</sup> Infantry guarded trains during the Battle of Bull Run in <b>Manassas, VA</b>   |
| <u>September 16-17, 1862</u>    | Fought in the Battle of Antietam in <b>Antietam, MD</b>  |
| <u>May 1-5, 1863</u>            | Battle Of Chancellorsville- a small area near <b>Fredericksburg, VA</b><br>(It is at the Battle of Chancellorsville where Jeremiah was wounded. There he is nursed back to health by a confederate girl named Sarah Foster (Dixie). The rest of his regiment continues to travel and fight (including fighting at the Battle of Gettysburg in <b>Gettysburg, PA</b> during his recovery time.) |
| <u>August 15- Sept. 8, 1863</u> | Assisted to try to calm the riots in <b>New York City, NY</b> caused by the draft  |
| <u>Sept. 24-Oct. 3, 1863</u>    | The soldiers moved to <b>Bridgeport, AL</b>  |
| <u>October 26-29, 1863</u>      | The 5 <sup>th</sup> Regiment Infantry reopened the <b>Tennessee River in Tennessee</b> for boat transport for the Union  |
| <u>November 23-24, 1863</u>     | The 5 <sup>th</sup> Regiment Infantry traveled to <b>Lookout Mountain, TN</b>  |

(After this play ends in the Spring of 1864, the Ohio 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment Infantry followed General Sherman to the famous "March To The Sea" which included the siege of **Atlanta, GA** and march to **Savannah, GA**)

Atlantic Coast Theatre For Youth

www.atlantic-coast-theatre.com

# The Ballad Of Dixie And Billy Yank

## National Standards: 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

(By participating in the Study Guide activities, watching the performance, and encouraging classroom discussion of the play, your students can meet aspects of several National Education Standards)

### NA-T.K-4.6

COMPARING AND CONNECTING ART FORMS BY DESCRIBING THEATRE, DRAMATIC MEDIA, AND OTHER ART FORMS

- Students describe visual, aural, oral, and kinetic elements in theatre, dramatic media, dance, music, and visual arts
- Students compare how ideas and emotions are expressed in theatre, dramatic media, dance, music, and visual arts

### **NA-T.K-4.7**

ANALYZING AND EXPLAINING PERSONAL PREFERENCES AND CONSTRUCTING MEANINGS FROM CLASSROOM DRAMATIZATIONS AND FROM THEATRE, FILM, TELEVISION, AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA PRODUCTIONS

- Students explain how the wants and needs of characters are similar to and different from their own
- Students articulate emotional responses to and explain personal preferences about the whole as well as the parts of dramatic performances

### **NA-T.K-4.8**

UNDERSTANDING CONTEXT BY RECOGNIZING THE ROLE OF THEATRE, FILM, TELEVISION, AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA IN DAILY LIFE

- Students identify and compare similar characters and situations in stories and dramas from and about various cultures, illustrate with classroom dramatizations, and discuss how theatre reflects life
- Students identify and compare the various settings and reasons for creating dramas and attending theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions

### **NA-M.K-4.9**

UNDERSTANDING MUSIC IN RELATION TO HISTORY AND CULTURE

- Students demonstrate audience behavior appropriate for the context and style of music performed

### **NSS-USH.K-4.1**

LIVING AND WORKING TOGETHER IN FAMILIES AND COMMUNITITES, NOW AND LONG AGO

- Understands the history of the community and how communities in North America varied long ago

### **NSS-USH.K-4.3**

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES: DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES AND VALUES AND THE PEOPLE FROM MANY CULTURES WHO CONTRIBUTED TO ITS CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL HERITAGE

- Understands the folklore and other cultural contributions from various regions of the United States and how they helped to form a national heritage.

# The Ballad Of Dixie And Billy Yank

## National Standards: 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grades

(By participating in the Study Guide activities, watching the performance, and encouraging classroom discussion of the play your students can meet aspects of several National Education Standards)

### **NA-T.5-8.6**

COMPARING AND CONNECTING ART FORMS BY DESCRIBING THEATRE, DRAMATIC MEDIA, AND OTHER ART FORMS

- Students describe characteristics and compare the presentation of characters, environments, and actions in theatre, musical theatre, dramatic media, dance, and visual arts
- Students express and compare personal reactions to several art forms
- Students describe and compare the functions and interaction of performing and visual artists and audience members in theatre, dramatic media, musical theatre, dance, music, and visual arts

### **NA-T.5-8.7**

ANALYZING AND EXPLAINING PERSONAL PREFERENCES AND CONSTRUCTING MEANINGS FROM CLASSROOM DRAMATIZATIONS AND FROM THEATRE, FILM, TELEVISION, AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA PRODUCTIONS

- Students describe and analyze the effect for publicity, study guides, programs, and physical environments on audience response and appreciation of dramatic performances

### **NA-T.5-8.8**

UNDERSTANDING CONTEXT BY RECOGNIZING THE ROLE OF THEATRE, FILM, TELEVISION, AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA IN DAILY LIFE

- Students describe and compare universal characters and situations in dramas from and about various cultures and historical periods, illustrate in improvised and scripted scenes, and discuss how theatre reflects a culture

### **NSS-USH.5-12.5**

ERA 5: CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION (1850-1877)

- Understands the causes of the Civil War
- Understands the course and character of the Civil War and its effects on the American people