

ESSENTIAL CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM

Washington Capital of the Union

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Resources

If you can read only one book

Author	<i>Title</i> . City: Publisher, Year.
Winkle, Kenneth J.	<i>Lincoln's Citadel: The Civil War in Washington, DC</i> . New York: W. W. Norton, 2013.

Books and Articles

Author	<i>Title</i> . City: Publisher, Year. "Title," in <i>Journal</i> ##, no. # (Date): #.
Brownstein, Elizabeth Smith	<i>Lincoln's Other White House: The Untold Story of the Man and His Presidency</i> . New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2005.
Gibbs, C. R.	<i>Black, Copper, and Bright: The District of Columbia's Black Civil War Regiment</i> . Silver Spring, MD: Three-Dimensional Publishing, 2002.
Harrison, Robert	<i>Washington During Civil War and Reconstruction: Race and Radicalism</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
Hay, John	<i>Lincoln and the Civil War in the Diaries and Letters of John Hay</i> . New York: Dodd, Mead, 1939.
Kurtz, Michael J.	"Emancipation in the Federal City," <i>Civil War History</i> , 24 (September 1978): 250-67.
Lee, Richard M.	<i>Mr. Lincoln's City: An Illustrated Guide to the Civil War Sites of Washington</i> . McLean, VA: EPM Publications, 1981.

Leech, Margaret	<i>Reveille in Washington, 1860-1865</i> . New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941.
Masur, Kate	<i>An Example for All the Land: Emancipation and the Struggle for Equality in Washington, D.C.</i> Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010.
Melder, Keith	<i>City of Magnificent Intentions: A History of Washington, District of Columbia</i> . Washington: Intac, 1997.
Pinsker, Matthew	<i>Lincoln's Sanctuary: Abraham Lincoln and the Soldiers' Home</i> . New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Organizations

Web Resources

URL	Name and description
http://civilwardc.org	Civil War Washington is a website that examines the U.S. national capital from multiple perspectives as a case study of social, political, cultural, and medical/scientific transitions provoked or accelerated by the Civil War.

Other Sources

Name	Description, Contact information including address, email
<i>Lincoln</i>	Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment DVD, 2013.
<i>Lincoln's Washington at War</i>	Smithsonian Channel DVD, 2013.

Scholars

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Topic Précis

Washington, DC, was the most strategic and vulnerable city in the Union during the Civil War. Sandwiched between the Confederate state of Virginia to the west and the border slave state of Maryland to the east, Washington sat astride the Civil War's most critical and active military front, the Eastern Theater. The Union army used the city to mobilize and supply the Army of the Potomac, defend the eastern seaboard, and launch military thrusts toward Richmond. Believing that the loss of the Union's capital would lead to immediate defeat, the Confederacy targeted Washington throughout the war. From the First Battle of Bull Run onward, Confederate armies repeatedly threatened Washington as part of General Robert E. Lee's strategy of "taking the war to the enemy." The tripling of the city's population during the war produced a public health crisis that promoted epidemic diseases, including smallpox. Turning Washington into the central site of medical treatment for sick and wounded soldiers in the Eastern Theater, the army established more than one hundred military hospitals in the capital, innovating new approaches to medical care and hospital design. Forty thousand fugitive slaves, primarily from Virginia and Maryland, sought refuge in the national capital. Through its proximity to the front, Washington assumed the role of "grand depot of supplies" for the Eastern Theater. The war also flooded the capital with hundreds of thousands of sick and wounded soldiers. President Lincoln and his wife Mary visited the hospitals frequently, extending both personal and symbolic comfort to the wounded. Outside of the hospitals, Washington remained an unsanitary and disease-ridden city. In the absence of modern water and sewage systems, infectious diseases were endemic in antebellum Washington. The human toll was heartrending and included the Lincolns' 11-year-old son Willie, who succumbed to typhoid fever early in 1862. Lincoln himself nearly died from smallpox in the weeks that followed his Gettysburg Address. Overall, the Civil War took an extraordinary toll on Washington's permanent and temporary residents, but their struggles and sacrifices helped to win the war, preserve the Union, end slavery, and transform the city into a larger and more modern national capital.
