cobblestone

SPY STORIES

Discover the importance of spies in the Revolutionary War, Civil War, and World War II. Explore how spies, and the information they provided, influenced the outcome of these wars.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

How has the need to gather and communicate information shaped historical events?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

• Students will learn about the role spies have played in various military conflicts.
• Students will use evidence to develop a claim about the past.
• Students will explain probable effects of historical events and developments.
• Students will analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.
• Students will conduct research.
• Students will create a timeline.
• Students will create a coded message.

In addition to supplemental materials focused on core Social Studies skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

SELECTIONS

• **The Culper Spy Ring: Covers, Codes, and Coves**
Expository Nonfiction, ~850L
• **Civil War Deception**
Expository Nonfiction, ~850L
• **Code Talkers and Con Men**
Expository Nonfiction, ~750L

The Culper Spy Ring: Covers, Codes, and Coves

pp. 4–7, Expository Nonfiction

During the Revolutionary War, both British and Colonial forces used spies to gather information and gain an edge in the conflict.

Lexile Score: ~850

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article.
- Students will learn about the role spies have played in various military conflicts.
- Students will use evidence to develop a claim about the past.
- Students will conduct research.

KEY VOCABULARY

- *intelligence* **(p. 4)** secret information that a government collects about an enemy or possible enemy
- *network* **(p. 5)** a group of people or organizations that are closely connected and that work with each other
- *exposure* **(p. 7)** the act of revealing secrets about someone or something

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How has the need to gather and communicate information shaped historical events?

Have students draw conclusions about the importance of communicating information during military conflicts. Then discuss how spying—gathering and communicating information in secret—could benefit either side in a conflict. Discuss the kinds of information spies might gather during a war.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. Then have students work in pairs to discuss how the vocabulary words are connected to the topic of spying. Invite students to share their ideas. Then remind students to look for these words as they read.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

- What information did Washington want to learn about British troops?
- What methods did people use to transmit secret information through Washington's spy network?
- How did Washington's spy network affect the course of the Revolutionary War?

SKILL FOCUS: Use Evidence

INSTRUCT: Remind students that evidence means facts and information that show whether something is true or not. Then display and read aloud this statement: *George Washington's spy network affected his awareness of British intentions.* Ask a few volunteers to identify evidence from the article that supports this statement.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to find and list at least three pieces of evidence in the article that support the statement. Then have them draw a conclusion about how one event in the article might have happened differently without the insights gained from spying. Invite students to share their ideas.

EXTEND

Social Studies Have students consult online and print resources to learn how spies were used in World War II by different governments. Invite students to give a short presentation to their classmates about what they discover.

Civil War Deception

pp. 8–11, Expository Nonfiction

During the Civil War, the Union and Confederate armies used spies to gather information about each other's activities.
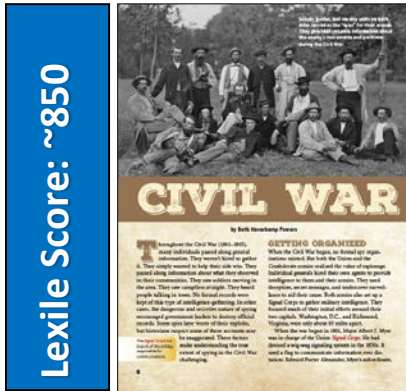
Lexile Score: ~850

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article.
- Students will learn about the role spies have played in various military conflicts.
- Students will explain probable effects of historical events and developments.
- Students will create a timeline.

KEY VOCABULARY

- *exploits* **(p. 8)** bold or daring acts
- *deception* **(p. 8)** the act of making someone believe something that is not true
- *surveillance* **(p. 8)** the act of carefully watching someone, especially a suspected criminal or spy

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How has the need to gather and communicate information shaped historical events?

Have students predict what might happen if both sides in a military conflict used the same code to communicate secret information about their armies. Then explain that during the Civil War, the Union and Confederate armies came up with different ways to secretly gather and communicate military intelligence.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the vocabulary words and read them aloud. Ask volunteers to explain the meanings of familiar words. Acknowledge correct meanings and then read the definitions aloud. Briefly discuss books or movies that include exploits, deception, and surveillance. Finally, remind students to look for these words as they read the article.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

- What happened as a result of the Union and Confederate armies using the same wig-wag system to send secret information?
- Identify an advantage the Confederate intelligence network had.
- Identify an advantage the Union intelligence network had.

SKILL FOCUS: Identify Effects

INSTRUCT: Review with students the different intelligence-gathering techniques used by the Union and Confederate armies (*South: hiding identity to gather information in DC and border states, costumes, horses, balloons; North: Pinkerton's Secret Service, Bureau of Military Information, Union Balloon Corps*). List techniques on the board. Explain that each technique had different effects—both positive and negative.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to choose two intelligence-gathering techniques—one Union and one Confederate technique. Then have them list the effects these techniques had on the side that used them to spy and on the side that was spied on.

EXTEND

Social Studies Have students find at least five events in the text associated with specific dates. Tell students to use the events to create a timeline of spying in the Civil War. Encourage students to add illustrations and descriptions to their timelines. Have students post their timelines in the classroom.

Code Talkers and Con Men

pp. 19–23, Expository Nonfiction

How could a Native American language help the Allied forces during World War II? Learn about the impact of code talkers as well as armies that fought fake battles on the course of World War II.

Lexile Score: ~750

RESOURCES

- Analyze Historical Context

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article.
- Students will learn about the role spies have played in various military conflicts.
- Students will analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.
- Students will create a coded message.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **espionage (p. 19)** the act of using spies to find out secret political or military information
- **deciphered (p. 21)** decoded, or changed something written in code into ordinary language
- **deception (p. 23)** the act of making someone believe something that is not true

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How has the need to gather and communicate information shaped historical events?

Have students discuss how messages can be coded so that others cannot read them. Then have them hypothesize why coding messages was important for the Allied forces during World War II.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Review the vocabulary words and definitions. Then write the following paragraph frame on the board and have students use the vocabulary words to complete it. Go over correct answers. Then remind students to look for these words as they read.

The spy conducted _____ to learn the enemy's secrets. After the spy _____ the message, she learned that the enemy was planning to attack. The army used _____ to trick the enemy.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

- How did President Roosevelt change the way information was gathered by the military?
- Why was the Navajo language selected to send encoded messages?
- What goal did the code breakers and the ghost army share?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Context

INSTRUCT: Explain to students that historical context refers to the conditions that existed in the time and place of a particular event in history. Tell students that analyzing historical context can help them understand why events and developments occurred. Remind students that "Code Talkers and Con Men" describes two military experiments used during World War II. Distribute the *Analyze Historical Context* organizer and tell students that they will use it to help them analyze the conditions that surrounded the development of these experiments.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to complete the graphic organizers. Then go over responses as a class.

EXTEND

Science Have students conduct research to learn about different methods of encryption. Then challenge them to create their own codes and encrypt a message for their classmates to decipher.

Analyze Historical Context

Complete the two charts below to analyze each military experiment and its historical context.

Code Talkers

Who were they?	What did they do?	What specific events led to the development of the code talkers?

Ghost Army

What was it?	How did it work?	What specific events led to the development of the ghost army?

Complete the sentences to explain each development and its historical context. If you need more room to write, use the back of this page.

1. Code talkers were used to _____

during World War II because _____.

2. The ghost army was used to _____

during World War II because _____.