

★

**GREAT WAR, FLAWED PEACE,
AND THE LASTING LEGACY
OF WORLD WAR I**

★



THE UNITED STATES
WORLD WAR ONE
CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

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NATIONAL
HISTORY DAY

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS OF WORLD WAR I



GUIDING QUESTION: How did dissenters choose to show support for their country during World War I and how were they treated because of their choices?

AUTHOR

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WHY?

I chose to focus on Americans who were against military service during wartime. I read an article about one of the Hutterite colonies in South Dakota, in which four of their members were drafted during World War I, but refused to serve. The U.S. government imprisoned them in Alcatraz prison. Two died after a transfer to the military prison at Fort Leavenworth.

OVERVIEW

In this lesson students will look at documents and images that represent both support for and opposition to dissenters of the war. Students will also examine how the public reacted to dissenters of the war.

OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Examine the reasons why people choose to be dissenters during wartime;
- > Identify how dissenters are treated by the government and public; and
- > Evaluate how the government treats conscientious objectors in different eras.

STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6 Evaluate author's' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

DOCUMENTS USED

PRIMARY SOURCES

Albert Piantadosi and Bryan Alfred, "I Didn't Raise My Boy To Be A Soldier," 1915

Library of Congress (ihas.100008457)
<https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.100008457/>

Morton Harvey (artist), "I Didn't Raise My Boy To Be A Soldier," January 8, 1915

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQwEqhtGcW0>

Photograph, Chris Huber, Michael Hoffer Grave Marker
Rockport Colony, near Mitchell, South Dakota

Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, South Dakota State University

<https://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/articles/newspapers/news/images/rockportcolony2.jpg>

SECONDARY SOURCES

Tom Lawrence, "Brothers' Deaths Made Rockport Colony 'Iconic,'" March 5, 2011

Daily Republic

Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, South Dakota State University

<https://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/articles/newspapers/news/rockportcolony.html>

MATERIALS

- > Conscientious Objector Poster Rubric
- > Computer with speakers and internet connection to listen to "I Didn't Raise My Boy to be a Soldier"
- > Poster paper
- > Markers/colored pencils/crayons

ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- > Set up projector with speakers to listen to audio file.
- > Make one copy of "I Didn't Raise My Boy to be a Soldier" lyrics and images for each student.
- > Divide students into groups of three or four students each.
- > Read the article, "Brothers' Deaths Made Rockport Colony 'Iconic,'" for background knowledge.

PROCEDURE

- > Project the photograph of Michael Hofer's grave.
- > Ask students, *What is a martyr? Can you give some examples of martyrs from history?* (Answers could include Nathan Hale, Joan of Arc, Jesus, Joseph Smith, Jr., Martin Luther King, Jr., etc.) Ask students to explain why we view these people as martyrs.
- > Explain that during World War I, men were required to register to be possibly selected for military service. Approximately 50% of those men who served in World War I were drafted. Fewer than 350,000 refused to register. This lesson will focus on those who refused active military service. Ask students, *why would some men refuse the draft?* Answers could include pacifists, religious and moral reasons, and recent immigrants.
- > Distribute the lyrics to "I Didn't Raise My Boy To Be A Soldier." Review the lyrics as a group, and ask students to analyze the language.
- > Play the 1915 recording of the song on YouTube.
 - » **Teacher Tip:** Minimize the browser window to encourage students to listen to the song and not be distracted by visual images.

ASSESSMENT

- > Divide students into groups of three or four students each.
- > Allow each group to select one of the following decisions that an individual who opposed the war could make:
 - » Support the war and go fight;
 - » Support the war, but serve in a non-combat position (i.e., medical corps, ambulance driver, quartermaster corps, etc.); or
 - » Refuse military service, but work at home in a position that supports the war effort (working on farms, working in factories producing items for soldiers).
- > Ask each group to brainstorm three to five reasons to support their group's selection.
- > Direct each group to create a poster or flyer explaining their decision and encouraging others to follow the same path.
- > The Conscientious Objector Poster Rubric can be used to score this assessment.

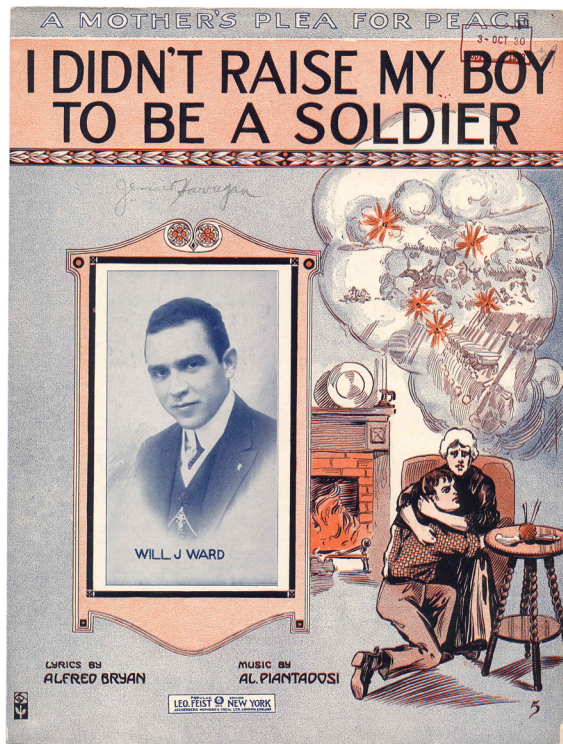
METHODS FOR EXTENSION

- > Students could research about other conscientious objectors in later wars and how they were treated, including Desmond Doss, Thomas Bennett, and Muhammad Ali.

PHOTOGRAPH, MICHAEL HOFFER GRAVE MARKER
CHRIS HUBER, ROCKPORT COLONY, NEAR MITCHELL, SOUTH DAKOTA



I DIDN'T RAISE MY BOY TO BE A SOLDIER (1915)



Words by Alfred Bryan

Music by Al Piantadosi

Ten million soldiers to the war have gone,
Who may never return again.
Ten million mothers' hearts must break
For the ones who died in vain.
Head bowed down in sorrow
in her lonely years,
I heard a mother murmur thro' her tears:

[Chorus]

"I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier,
I brought him up to be my pride and joy,
Who dares to place a musket on his shoulder,
To shoot some other mother's darling boy?"
Let nations arbitrate their future troubles,
It's time to lay the sword and gun away,
There'd be no war today,
If mothers all would say,
"I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier."

What victory can cheer a mother's heart,
When she looks at her blighted home?

What victory can bring her back

All she cared to call her own.

Let each mother answer in the years to be,
Remember that my boy belongs to me!

[Repeat Chorus]

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR POSTER RUBRIC

	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Emerging
Coverage of the Topic	Details on the poster capture the important information about the topic and increase the audience's understanding.	Details on the poster include important information, but the audience may need more information to understand fully.	Details on the poster relate to the topic, but are general or incomplete. The audience needs more information to understand.	Details on the poster have little or nothing to do with main topic.
Use of Graphics	All graphics are related to the topic and make it easier to understand.	All graphics are related to the topic and most make it easier to understand.	All graphics relate to the topic.	Graphics do not relate to the topic.
Organization	Information is very organized with clear titles and subheadings.	Information is organized with titles and subheadings.	Information is organized, but titles and subheadings are missing or do not help the reader understand.	The information appears to be disorganized.
Mechanics	No grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors.	Almost no grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.	A few grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.	Many grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.



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