I. Union Strategy

Soon after Ft. Sumter, the Union developed their military strategy against the Confederacy. They called it the Anaconda Plan.

Why did they call it that?

It was designed to strangle the life out of its victim, the Confederacy. It would cut off transportation of soldiers and necessary wartime supplies which would make it difficult for the Confederacy to survive.

There were three parts to the Anaconda Plan.

1. naval blockade all along the Confederate coast
2. Union occupation of the Mississippi River
3. capture Confederate capital, Richmond

Some of the early battles of the Civil War, such as First Bull Run (First Manassas) and Antietam (Sharpsburg), illustrate part of this plan.

**Many battles of the Civil War actually have TWO names! That’s because the Confederates often named battles for geographic features while the Union often named them for the towns in which they were fought.**

At this point, show students some of the interactive maps on the Valley of the Shadow site, such as the Staunton Artillery mentioned in the lesson plan. Ask the students why the battles happened where they happened. They should connect their locations with the Anaconda Plan. You could also use this opportunity to briefly discuss how soldiers moved from place to place and the time such travel would take.

You will be reading some letters written by Confederate and Union soldiers. Use them to answer the questions below. Then we’ll discuss what you learned and see how the information in these letters compare with the facts of the battles.

Bull Run Letter One, Confederate Perspective

1. How does he describe the battlefield after the battle?

2. Who had the advantage in this battle according to this letter?

3. According to the letter, who won the Battle of Bull Run?
**Bull Run Letter Two - Union Perspective:**
1. According to this Union soldier, who won the battle?

2. What is the mindset of the author of this letter?

**Antietam Letter One - Confederate Perspective:**
1. Who were some of the Union and Confederate military leaders there?

2. What are the estimates of casualties this letter provides?

3. How does the author say the Union soldiers (Yankees) fell about Jackson?

4. What does he think about the way Mr. Baylor died?

5. According to this author, who won at Antietam?

**Antietam Letter Two - Union Perspective:**
1. What was the number of casualties for the author’s regiment?

2. What happened to some of the rebel flags in this battle?

3. Who won the battle of Antietam according to this author?

Let’s compare this information with some of the facts of the battle:

**Bull Run:**
When?

Where?

What happened?

Who were some of the military leaders?

Who won?

**Antietam:**
When?

Where?

What happened?

Who were some of the military leaders?

Who won?