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# Lesson Plan

## *Whose Side Are You On?*

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### Grades

4, 5, 6

### Subjects

Language Arts, Social Studies, Tennessee History

### Time Allotted

45-60 minutes

### Setting

Classroom and optional trip to Oaklands mansion

### Group size

6 or more students

### Skills

Role play, writing, cooperative groups, persuasion, speaking and listening

### Methods

The students will discover the importance of maintaining a neutral role in a disagreement while listening to opposing viewpoints.

### Materials

Paper, pencil, and Oaklands brochure

### Keywords

Neutral  
Persuade  
Surrender

### Objectives

At the end of the activity, students will be able to:

- *Participate in a group discussion.*
- *Analyze viewpoints of an argument while maintaining a neutral position.*
- *Write a persuasive paragraph.*



### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**Note:** *Lewis Maney was a major from the Spanish–American war; he was not in the service in the Civil War.*

During the Civil War, Major Lewis Maney and his wife Adeline entertained both Union and Confederate soldiers at Oaklands, their 1500-acre plantation. In 1862, Col. William Duffield and his Union troops occupied Oaklands as their headquarters. On July 13, 1862, Confederate Cavalryman Nathan Bedford Forrest led a troop of 1400 soldiers into Murfreesboro from Woodbury at approximately 4:00 a.m. Their morning attack completely surprised the Union troops. Major Maney, Adeline, and their five children watched the battle occurring on their front lawn from an upstairs window. The family watched and waited, all the time wondering if their home would be raided and burned by one army or overtaken and utilized for a hospital by the other army. The battle ended by mid-afternoon with a Union surrender from an injured Col. Duffield in a room at Oaklands. The house and family survived the battle, and the family continued to maintain a neutral position, entertaining both Union and Confederate officers and dignitaries throughout the remainder of the Civil War.

### ACTIVITIES

- Ask the students about neutrality (what it means, how it is maintained, is it important?).
- Ask the students about persuasion (how it is done, what is its purpose, why it is done?).
- Discuss persuasion in today's society from media to politics to peer groups.
- Place topics to debate on separate pieces of paper inside an envelope (ei. Dogs are better than cats).
- Divide class into groups of three and scatter throughout work area. Assign roles to each person in group. Two persuaders and one audience member who will try to remain neutral. Have each group draw a topic from the envelope.
- Explain that the persuaders are working to gain the support of the neutral party and the neutral member is working to remain neutral without surrendering to a specific viewpoint.
- Once group roles have been established, allow five minutes to prepare arguments. Then groups have 15 minutes to work on persuading the neutral party.
- At end of time, discuss what happened, tactics, strategies, etc.
- Switch roles and repeat activity...continue until each member has had an opportunity to play the neutral role.
- End with a group discussion of strategies that were successful, unsuccessful, important, unimportant, influential, insignificant.

### FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

- Students create a multimedia presentation (TV commercial, brochure, poster, or radio ad, etc.) to persuade someone to join the Civil War effort.
- Recruiting a "Few Good Citizens" activity