

Alabama Men's Hall of Fame

4th Grade Lesson Plans- Alabama History (50 minute lesson)

Raphael Semmes

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Graduate Students- Fifth-Year Alternative ECE/Elem Programs

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Standards

Alabama State Social Studies Standard: Recognizing Alabamians who have made significant contributions to society in Alabama:

Raphael Semmes

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of a Jeopardy Game based on Raphael Semmes, fourth grade students will be able to identify 5 facts that describe why Raphael Semmes was a famous Alabamian.

Evaluation of Learning

Students will be evaluated (using a rubric included at the end of the lesson plan) on their ability to report four out of five correct facts in paragraph form that highlight the historical accomplishments of Raphael Semmes.

Engagement

- Remind students that they have been learning about famous Alabamians this month: examples Sequoyah, William Wyatt Bibb, William Rufus King, etc.
- Ask them to list 2 of their favorite famous Alabamians previously studied and specific things they remember about each person.
- When they are finished reviewing, ask them if any of them have parents who serve or have served in the military.
- Have each child tell what branch of the military his or her parent(s) serve/served.
- Then tell them today we are going to be learning about a famous man who served in the navy which is one of the branches of the military.
- The person we will be learning about today is Raphael Semmes.

- Has anyone heard of him?
- Have any of you ever visited the Alabama town of Semmes?
- Show on Google maps:
<http://www.mapquest.com/maps?city=Semmes&state=AL> or show the area on a map of Alabama in your room

Learning Design

- I. Teaching-give each student a paper handout of the factual information (not the questions) as stated below (a copy of this handout is at the end of the lesson plan).
 - a. Raphael Semmes was born on September 27, 1809 in Charles County, Maryland
 - i. What is something interesting you all can tell me about his birth place?
 1. He was not born in Alabama but is being inducted into the hall of fame
 2. Why do you think he is listed as a famous Alabamian? Can you think of something he might have done that would lead him to be inducted into the Alabama Men's hall of Fame?
 - b. He graduated from Charlotte Hall Military Academy
 - c. He entered the Navy as midshipman in 1826, when he was only 17 years old.
 - i. Can anyone tell me what a midshipman is?
 1. If no one knows you could have them look it up on their computers or other technology sources
 2. If not, you can tell them- a midshipman is the lowest ranking officer in the navy
 - d. After he served in the navy, he studied law
 - e. During the Mexican-American War (1846 to 1848) he was a commander on the ship the *USS Somers* (<http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/images/h51000/h51922.jpg>) in the Gulf of Mexico. The ship was lost in a storm in December of 1846 but Semmes was commended for his actions during the loss of the ship.
 - i. How do you think the ship was lost?
 1. It was lost in a storm that came upon them with little warning
 - ii. What acts do you think led to Semmes being commended?
 1. Helped save the seven people who were rescued from the wreckage
 - iii. What would you do in that situation?
 - f. During his shore leave, he practiced law in Mobile, Al and was so popular there that the town of Semmes, Al was named after him.
 - g. In 1855, he returned to the Navy and was promoted to the rank of commander.

- h. When Alabama seceded from the Union in January, 1861, Semmes resigned from the United States Navy and joined the Confederate States Navy which he was a part of from 1860 to 1865.
 - i. During the Civil War he was the captain of the *CSS Alabama* (<http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/images/h85000/h85593k.jpg>). His ship took a record of sixty-nine prizes
 - i. What do you think prizes means in this situation?
 - 1. It is the capture of an enemy ship and its cargo
 - j. After the war, Semmes was arrested for treason on December 15, 1865
 - i. What is treason?
 - 1. Disloyalty to your country
 - ii. Why do you think he was arrested for it?
 - 1. Served the Confederacy during the Civil War
 - iii. Do you think that was fair?
 - k. He was released from prison on April 7, 1866. After his release he worked for a while at what is now Louisiana State University before returning to Mobile to resume his legal career until his death on August 30, 1877
 - i. Does anyone have anything they would like to reflect on or any questions?
- II. Opportunity for Practice
- a. Divide class in to teams of four or five to play jeopardy game (see attached)
 - b. If computer is not working, ask the questions and have students raise hands and keep score
- III. Assessment
- a. Good job on Jeopardy, the scores are- (read the scores for the team)
 - b. For final jeopardy we will be doing something different- I want every person to respond by themselves; your response can earn your team up to ten points. I will let you know the final scores for Jeopardy later today or tomorrow when I have looked over your responses
 - c. On the final Jeopardy response page, put the final scores in so the class can see the winner later that day or the next day
- IV. Closure
- a. Have students orally share their favorite thing about Raphael Semmes from the lesson

Content and Resources

- Google map showing Semmes, AL
(<http://www.mapquest.com/maps?city=Semmes&state=AL>)
- Picture of the *USS Somers*
(<http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/images/h51000/h51922.jpg>)

- Picture of the *CSS Alabama*
(<http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/images/h85000/h85593k.jpg>)
- Handout on Raphael Semmes
- Jeopardy game (attached)
- Rubric for Final Jeopardy

Handout on Raphael Semmes

- Raphael Semmes was born on September 27, 1809 in Charles County, Maryland
- He graduated from Charlotte Hall Military Academy
- He entered the Navy as midshipman in 1826, when he was only 17 years old.
- After he served in the navy, he studied law
- During the Mexican-American War (1846 to 1848) he was a commander on the ship the USS *Somers* in the Gulf of Mexico. The ship was lost in a storm in December of 1846 but Semmes was commended for his actions during the loss of the ship.
- During his shore leave, he practiced law in Mobile, Al and was so popular there that the town of Semmes, Al was named after him.
- In 1855, he returned to the Navy and was promoted to the rank of commander.
- When Alabama seceded from the Union in January, 1861, Semmes resigned from the United States Navy and joined the Confederate States Navy which he was a part of from 1860 to 1865.
- During the Civil War he was the captain of the *CSS Alabama*. His ship took a record of sixty-nine prizes
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- He was released from prison on April 7, 1866. After his release he worked for a while at what is now Louisiana State University before returning to Mobile to resume his legal career until his death on August 30, 1877

Raphael Semmes Rubric

Teacher Name: **Fourth Grade Teacher**

Student Name: _____

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Historical Accuracy	All historical information appeared to be accurate.	Almost all historical information appeared to be accurate.	Most of the historical information was accurate.	Very little of the historical information was accurate.
Knowledge Gained	Can clearly report 4 or 5 facts about Raphael Semmes.	Can clearly report 2 or 3 facts about Raphael Semmes.	Can clearly report 1 fact about Raphael Semmes.	Cannot report any facts about Raphael Semmes.