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DSST Civil War and Reconstruction

<http://collegiatehomeschooling.blogspot.com/2009/08/dsst-civil-war-and-reconstruction.html>

This 3 credit, upper level history exam is exactly what it claims to be, upper level and specific to the Civil war and Reconstruction. If your college requires a certain number of upper level exams, you are a student of the Civil War already or if you are an advanced student 17 or older this is an enjoyable study of a difficult period in US History. The materials are plentiful and interesting, the study guide is wonderfully accurate and what you learn will stay with you. Get ready for a powerful topic. Finding materials for this test is not difficult as the library and bookstore shelves are full of biographies and literature from or about this period. Here are the materials we found most helpful or enjoyable: The Civil War - A Film by Ken Burns The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Civil War, 2nd Edition (a good read) Sparks Notes Civil War and Sparks Notes Reconstruction (Small, concise, inexpensive and including short tests in the back) InstantCert Wikipedia - The American Civil War (we used Wikipedia more for this exam than any so far) The Dantes Official Fact Sheet (more on this great source later) Civil War Flash Cards Gettysburg (Widescreen Edition) (optional, but so helpful to put the pieces of this battle together) Gods & Generals (optional but wonderful, Lee and Jackson are must knows as are their impacts) Our method for this exam was new. As we had few official practice tests to gauge readiness we created a question sheet from the InstantCert forum feedback and started researching. Daily we searched for answers to questions from causes of the war to reconstruction policies. The students watched the Ken Burns Videos 2-5 times to get the most out of the visuals. Daily they used the InstantCert flashcards and did assignments from me based on the DSST Fact sheet. If a student knows the what, who, where and why of the DSST fact sheet they should be able to do well on this one. I broke the sections into 6 or so assignments with them filling in the outline percentage sections with research and answers. We spent evenings with Gettysburg and Gods and Generals DVDs. What you must know: Andersonville Battles, major and secondary (outcomes, stats, first, last, bloodiest, political and tactical impacts, Generals of each side) Government structure on each side, weakness of each Lifestyles of each side (women, poor, slaves, soldiers, POWs) Foreign affairs Slavery (conditions, abolitionists, emancipation) Literature of the time (Uncle Tom's Cabin and more) Weapons and their impacts Political Parties Reconstruction plans and failures Dred Scott decision, impact and implication A detailed exam description can be found here. My students recommend this test for an older student as it is very deep and detailed. Not many years are covered so each takes on more importance. This one is a challenge but my students were able to concentrate on this one subject (day and night some days) and do quite well. The 4 option multiple choice of a DSST exam is another blessing. If you choose this one we are sure you will discover much about a difficult time in our nation's history.

Date created: 2009/08/28