What?
You will be working with the personal writings (i.e. letters, diary or journal entries, etc) from an online Civil War archive. From the writings, you will find a topic/issue that interests you. You will both explain and question observations you make from the primary source materials, using secondary sources to draw some conclusions.

Why?
The purpose of this paper is for you to explore personal writings of those living through the American Civil War in order to understand the experiences of Americans during that time period. As a writer, you will be working with exposition and inquiry-based writing, which enables you to evaluate and draw sound inferences from evidence gathered from non-fiction library, electronic, and web resources.

Who?
The audience for this analysis paper is your fellow students, yourself, and your instructor.

Reflective Research Essay

How?
MLA format: one inch margins, double-spaced, and five to six pages in length (this means a full five pages is the minimum). Also, include a works cited page with citations for your primary and secondary sources.

As inquiry based writing, your paper genuinely explore something of interest from the Civil War archives. It is important to have enough to work with, so if you choose from the letters, please find a set with at least 3. Likewise, if you use a diary/journal choose a few of the entries to work with.

- Situate your sources in their contexts. Temporal and genre.
- Identify the topic or feature from your primary source that most interests you as your focus. “Thesis statement” (perhaps, but not necessarily, in the form of a question)
- Provide examples that shed light on the idea you are working through with the documents. This evidence could be to show why it is raising specific questions for you, or this evidence could be working towards an answer to your questions.
- Incorporate secondary source material that also helps you work through your ideas (minimum of 3 scholarly sources). What have others said about the topic/feature you are interested in? How do they help you make sense of it?