


## Day 5: Hospital Sketches, Chapter III: "A Day"

---

### Begin lesson

Card 1 of 12

	<b>Teaching notes</b>
	Click the "Begin lesson" button to view this lesson. Teaching notes for each slide will appear in this box.

### Before the Lesson

Card 2 of 12

<b>Before the Lesson</b>	<b>Teaching notes</b>


## Anchor Text

Card 3 of 12

<div style="border: 1px solid orange; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;"> <p><i>This content is not available.</i></p> </div>	<p><b>Teaching notes</b></p>
	<p>Download and print copies of the anchor text for each student.</p>

## Student Notes Sheet

Card 4 of 12

	<p><b>Teaching notes</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ This guided notes sheet provides students with the text-dependent questions associated with this lesson, and relevant graphic organizers. You may modify these sheets as needed.</li> <li>■ During class, students can use these sheets to record their responses, notes, or ideas. Use the back to</li> </ul> <p>record responses to the focus question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Following class, collect student notes to use as a formative assessment.</li> </ul>

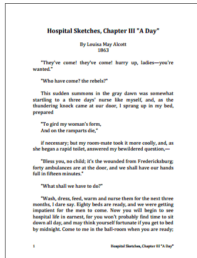
# Getting Started

Card 5 of 12

<h2>Getting Started</h2>	<b>Teaching notes</b>

# Introduction 1 of 3

Card 6 of 12



- Hospital Sketches, Chapter III: "A Day"
- Louisa May Alcott
- Published 1863 in the middle of the Civil War
- A semi-fictionalized account of being a Civil War hospital nurse, based on letters Alcott sent home as a nurse

## Teaching notes

**Pacing:** ~20 minutes

### Additional notes:

- Remind students that "Hospital Sketches Chapter III: A Day" is a heavily crafted account of working in a Civil War hospital. Alcott's choices show her views about gender and

service.

- Read the day's focus question, "How do Alcott's authorial choices develop the relationship between service and country?" Remind students that authorial choices include what is included and in what order, word choice, characterization, structure, and what information is revealed in each way -- all things we've looked at all week.
- Make sure that students have their copy of the text and their past student notes worksheet. Tell them that they should draw on their notes and answers to questions throughout the week to help them plan their written response. Suggest that some of their examples they used to answer one question, say, about nursing, might also tell them things about gender or sacrifice and they should look at them with fresh eyes.
- Tell students that they need to re-read the text one more time to prepare for writing, thinking about the prompt as they read. Tell them this read should be faster than a deep close-read but more substantive than a scan.
- If desired, discuss a few ways students could keep track of their thoughts as they read:
  - Annotations in multiple colors
  - Writing notes on another sheet of paper, then going back and drawing the connections between them. The comprehension skill video models this approach.
- Begin silent reading time. It is suggested that you not distribute the sheets for final responses until students have had some time to work through the text with the day's focus.

## Introduction 2 of 3

Card 7 of 12



Today you respond to the question, "How do Alcott's authorial choices develop the relationship between gender and service to country?" in a longer, written piece.

### Teaching notes

**Pacing:** ~20 minutes

#### Additional notes:

- Remind students that "Hospital Sketches Chapter III: A Day" is a heavily crafted account of working in a Civil War hospital. Alcott's choices show her views about gender and

service.

- Read the day's focus question, "How do Alcott's authorial choices develop the relationship between service and country?" Remind students that authorial choices include what is included and in what order, word choice, characterization, structure, and what information is revealed in each way -- all things we've looked at all week.
- Make sure that students have their copy of the text and their past student notes worksheet. Tell them that they should draw on their notes and answers to questions throughout the week to help them plan their written response. Suggest that some of their examples they used to answer one question, say, about nursing, might also tell them things about gender or sacrifice and they should look at them with fresh eyes.
- Tell students that they need to re-read the text one more time to prepare for writing, thinking about the prompt as they read. Tell them this read should be faster than a deep close-read but more substantive than a scan.
- If desired, discuss a few ways students could keep track of their thoughts as they read:
  - Annotations in multiple colors
  - Writing notes on another sheet of paper, then going back and drawing the connections between them. The comprehension skill video models this approach.
- Begin silent reading time. It is suggested that you not distribute the sheets for final responses until students have had some time to work through the text with the day's focus.



# Focus Question

Card 9 of 12

<h2>Focus Question</h2>	<b>Teaching notes</b>

## Focus Question

Card 10 of 12

How do Alcott's authorial choices develop the relationship between gender and service to country? Cite strong and thorough textual evidence in your answer.

### Teaching notes

**Pacing:** ~25 min

**Standard:** RL.11-12.2

**Purpose:** The purpose of this question is to guide students to recognize how Alcott's decisions in word choice, text structure, and choice of episodes shape what can seem like a straightforward account

of what happened. By doing so, they will be analyzing the interaction of different themes in this text.

### Answer:

Louisa May Alcott's short "sketch" of working in a Civil War hospital shows the different types of service both genders can offer their country during wartime. Her choices about plot, characterization, structure, and word choice make it clear that the two themes are tied close together.

Alcott needs to "prove" that working as a nurse is acceptable for women. Many of the nurses are female, which is clearly a new role, and there are many examples of the unease this creates. Alcott even chooses to not address the claim that the hospital "isn't for you ladies" directly, perhaps implying agreement. However, she uses household metaphors to help show that this work isn't that different from what had come before. She also uses war metaphors to further demonstrate its value. Also, there are male doctors; while they have a different role from that of the nurses, they remind us that serving the men who are fighting is not just a "woman's job." Here, Alcott's choices show that both genders have something to offer the war effort.

The soldiers are the real heroes, not because they are men but because of their sacrifice & character. Alcott shows us that a good Union soldier is selfless, brave, and grateful. One way she does this is by what the men say; they are constantly cheerful, thankful, and never complain. The only way we learn of their struggles is through her descriptions of them. She also contrasts the American Union soldiers with the rebel soldier, who is "neither fiendish, romantic, pathetic, or anything interesting" and whose greatest fault might be his "ungraciousness." We meet him after we have met other Union soldiers, which further highlights the difference. The rebel, along with the Chaplain, also demonstrates that it is not enough to be a man to be a hero. The choices about order and the choices about what mode of writing to use to convey



information are the choices that Alcott uses here, and they show that the Union soldiers are heroes through their virtues, not their gender.

Nursing is valuable to the war because it serves heroes. The nurses care for the body but also the spirit, and Alcott repeatedly chooses to have the men thank the nurses. Alcott also makes it clear that the work of a hospital is difficult and worthwhile by her characterization. The nurse needs to learn how to best help the men, which involves both skills and dispositions. Alcott includes the characters of the matron and the Chaplain to show both the very good and the very bad in terms of approaches to caregiving.

Women serve, and women sacrifice. The nurse's sadness throughout the day and tiredness at the end of it prove this, though these . Alcott's decision here emphasizes the men, both because she seems to be writing to boost the war effort and because she wants to make the work of female nurses more acceptable.

Overall, Alcott implies service is more important than gender in determining the "goodness" of her characters. Because Alcott has multiple purposes and themes, it's not clear-cut whether she sees the men's war service as more significant or just different than women's, but her choices make it clear that she believes both genders have a serious role in the war effort, both on the front and at home.

#### **Look for students....**

- Explicitly referencing decisions Alcott makes to convey her message. Responses should include her name or "the author" and words like "choose" or "decide."
- Connecting gender and service rather than talking about them separately.
- Comparing the depiction of female service to male service, noting that the male service is much more directly celebrated and discussed in the text.
- Describing that female service through nursing is important but controversial as well as the tools Alcott uses to convey that point of view. .
- Explaining the virtues of the Union soldiers and their sacrifices as well as the tools Alcott uses to convey that point of view.

#### **Additional Notes:**

- Students should complete this writing task independently.

#### **Ideas for Culminating Projects, Cross-Curricular Connections, and Further Writing:**

- "Hospital Sketches Chapter III: A Day" touches on the major social history points of the Civil War: the growth of medicine, temporarily expanded roles for women, uncertainty about religious and ethnic diversity, changing perceptions of African-Americans, and even hints of opposition to the war with the word "Copperhead." All of these could be studied in more depth in a history class, or, in the case of medicine, as part of a "History of Medicine" unit.
- Students could also trace the use of religious reference, the relationship between the absurd and somber, or the line between life & death in the text and discuss the

authorial decisions involved in developing those themes and how they relate to gender.

- Students could analyze the poem, "Charge of the Light Brigade" and compare it to Alcott's version.

## After the Lesson

Card 11 of 12

<h1>After the Lesson</h1>	<p><b>Teaching notes</b></p>
---------------------------	------------------------------

## Comprehension Skill Video

Card 12 of 12

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>Core Lesson</b> Ask ourselves, "How do these details connect?" and record new thoughts.</p> <p>Men &amp; women work in the hospital.</p> <p>Working in a hospital is valuable and hard service.</p> <p>Soldiers are heroic, gracious, patient, and uncomplaining.</p> <p>Soldiers lose an eye &amp; limb</p> <p>Nurses sacrifice physically and emotionally</p> <p>Household metaphors "Weaker Vessel" "Isn't [jolly] for you ladies" as message about women</p> <p>Controversial → prove OK</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p> </div> <p>Visit <a href="https://haywood.lzill.co/r/45141">https://haywood.lzill.co/r/45141</a></p>	<p><b>Teaching notes</b></p> <p>Use this video as an intervention tool for students who struggle to answer the focus question. The video uses a metacognitive approach to model the targeted reading comprehension skills.</p>
---	--