The American Red Cross

Grade: 2nd – 5th Grade

Summary: A coloring page of Clara Barton and a watercolor painting art project

Historical Figure: Clara Barton (1821 – 1912)

Objective: Learn about Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross

Level: Beginner /Intermediate

Art Project Time: 45 - 60 minutes

Coloring Page Time: 20 – 30 minutes

Meet the Historical Figure: Clara Barton was an American nurse who founded the American Red Cross. She had many careers in her lifetime, a teacher, a patent clerk and a hospital nurse in a number of different wars. She was a self-taught nurse as there was no formal nursing education at the time. Barton is also known for doing humanitarian work and civil rights advocacy for women before they were granted the right to vote in 1920.

After a number of years teaching, Barton moved to Washington D.C and began work as a clerk in the US Patent Office. While living in D.C the Baltimore riot of 1861 broke out. It was a civil conflict between antiwar Democrats and Southern Confederate sympathizers. The victims were transported to Washington D.C. where Barton volunteered to nurse injured men from the skirmish. For the duration of the Civil War she continued to help wounded soldiers and collect medical supplies that were badly needed. She used her own living quarters as a storeroom and distributed bandages, food and clothing to both Union and Confederate soldiers.

After the Civil War ended Barton delivered lectures about her experience in the war. She traveled around the country extensively from 1865 to 1868. She received widespread recognition for her service. Unfortunately, after three years of constantly traveling she became both mentally and physically exhausted. Under doctors' orders was told to take a break.

Late in 1868 Barton took a trip to Europe, while there she visited Geneva Switzerland and was introduced to **The Red Cross** organization. Soon after, she was invited to be a representative to try and establish the Red Cross in the United States. She stayed in Europe and assisted with the preparation of military hospitals during the Franco-Prussian War. For her efforts she received honorable decorations and awards. When Barton returned to the United States, she was instrumental in starting the American Red Cross. With the blessing of President Chester Arthur the first American Red Cross Society was finally founded on August 22, 1881.

The Red Cross: It is an international humanitarian network founded in 1863 in Switzerland, with chapters worldwide that aid victims in disasters, armed conflict and health crisis. The organization established national relief organizations around the world, made of up trained volunteers to help during times of tragedy.

Fun Facts

- When Clara Barton was only 10 years old, she decided to nurse her brother back to health after he received a severe head injury after falling from the roof of their barn.
- Before starting her nursing, career Clara Barton taught school for 12 years in Canada and West Georgia.
- During the Civil War supplies were not always available, so Barton improvised and used corn husks in place of bandages at one battle.

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Discussion Points: What do you think about Clara Barton's work during war? Do you think she is a hero? Do you think someone can help wounded soldiers without medical training? Have you heard of the Red Cross? Do you know what country's flag looks like the red cross logo? The answer is Switzerland.

Art Supplies:

- 8 ½ x 11 Watercolor paper or cardstock
- White cardstock
- Red Cross tent template
- Pencils
- Scissors
- Elmer's Glue
- Permanent black markers (or regular markers)

- White acrylic or tempera paint
- Q-tips
- Markers (variety of colors) or Watercolor paint
- Paintbrushes (small and medium)
- Risers (optional)
- Rulers (optional)

Art Prep: Print coloring page for younger students for a quick art project and/or print out the Red Cross tent template.

Risers: 1 x 1-inch pieces of cardboard glued to the paper so the Red Cross tent will "pop" off the screen. You can cut pieces of a cardboard box to create your own risers.

Art Project Directions:
1. Cut the Red Cross tent out and set aside.
2. Use the ruler to make a 1-inch frame around the watercolor paper. This step is optional.
3. Draw a horizon line close to the middle of the paper.
4. Add some rolling hills a few inches above the horizon line.
5. Trace the tent template on the paper, make sure it overlaps the horizon line and the mountains. This is to let you know where to place the tent.
6. Add some trees along the horizon line and a bush on either side of the Red Cross tent. Set aside.
7. Take the Red Cross tent and draw a line across the rectangle shape.
8. On the left side of the tent draw a slight curved line that stops at the line you just drew. Next draw a vertical line from the same point down to the edge of the tent.
9. Draw two lines, close together for the stick that holds the tent up in the center of the triangle you just drew.
10. Add lines at slight of an angle so it looks like the tent is open.
11. On the top of the tent add a rectangle at a slight angle.
12. Add a cross to the center of the rectangle. Set the tent aside.
13. Paint the sky a shade of blue, the hills a light grey or brown and paint the trees a shade of green.
14. Paint the ground a shade of brown, tan or a lighter shade of green.
15. Paint the two bushes on either side of the tent with a few shades of green, yellow and brown. Set aside.
16. Paint the Red Cross tent a shade of tan, brown or green. Paint the inside of the tent a shade darker.
17. Paint the piece of wood holding the tent up dark brown or black. Paint the cross red.
18. Use the risers to glue the Red Cross tent to the background.
19. Use the white paint and Q-tips to add some fluffy clouds in the sky.
20. When the painting dries add some details and shading with a black marker to the trees, mountains, ground and shading to the Red Cross tent.
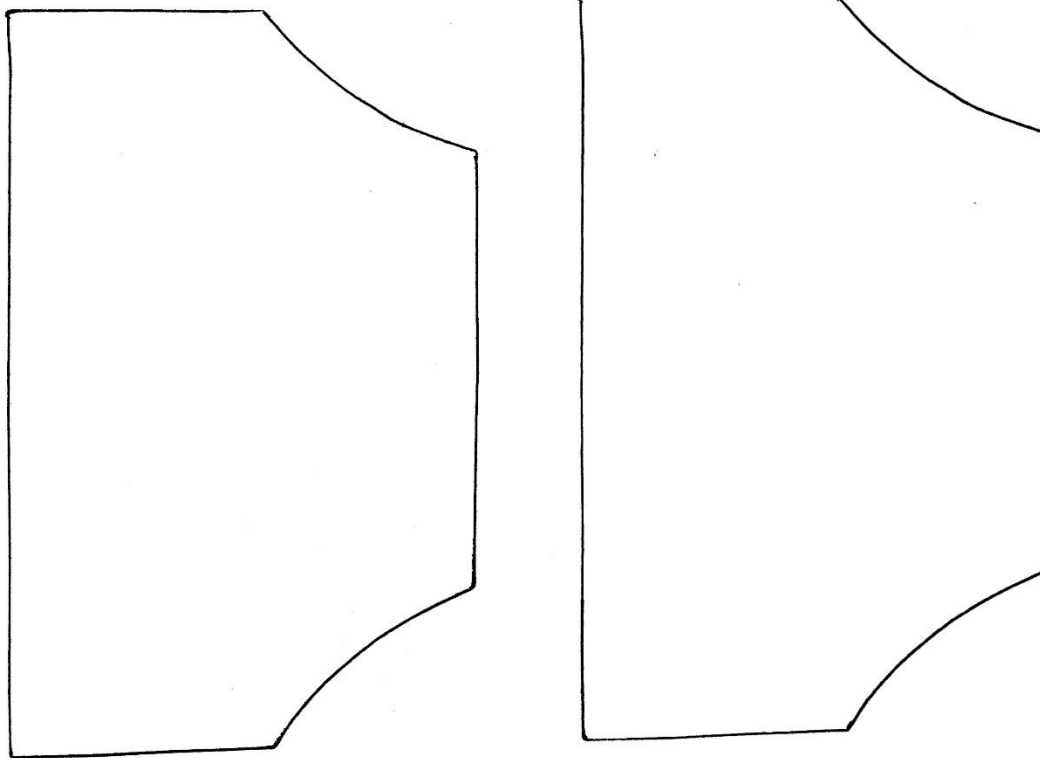
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Tips and Art Tricks

- Using the risers is optional, however making the Red Cross "pop off" the paper enhances the art project.
- If you do not have watercolor you can use colored markers and then use a little bit of water to blend the colors. Crayola Markers blend the best with a little bit of water.
- Cardstock is not necessary; however the sturdiness of the paper will hold up to cutting and/or watercolors.
- This art project could be done with a variety of different art mediums.
- Use small paint brushes instead of big paint brushes. Big paint brushes are like big dogs….they make big messes.
- Do not use a lot of water with watercolor paints.

Red Cross Templates

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Art Project in Progress: