



Civil War Battles Reading Comprehension Bundle

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CRITICAL THOUGHT

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For Grades 5-8

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Siege at Vicksburg Reading Comprehension

Name: _____

The Gibraltar of the Confederacy

By 1863, Union forces had gained control over much of the Mississippi River. President Abraham Lincoln considered control of the nation's largest waterway crucial, but the fortified city of Vicksburg, Mississippi, located above a horseshoe-shaped bend in the river, stood in the way of Union success. As long as Vicksburg was controlled by the Confederacy, the Union could not navigate the river and the Confederacy could ship supplies and send communications between its parts east and west of the river. Located high on the bluffs overlooking the river, Vicksburg was referred to as "the Gibraltar of the Confederacy." Attacking Vicksburg was difficult. It was surrounded by swamps and poor country roads. Furthermore, there was a giant fortress atop the bluffs making a naval assault virtually impossible.

Direct Assault, Impossible. Preparing for a Siege

Prior to the Siege of Vicksburg, Union General Ulysses S. Grant had won control of Mississippi River ports in Louisiana, as well as Mississippi's capital, Jackson. Confederate forces, facing an overwhelming Union assault, were forced to withdraw to the fortifications of Vicksburg. Grant, fully cognizant of the difficulties of taking Vicksburg, ordered an immediate assault on the city before the Confederates could get fully organized and entrenched. Union forces would come under withering fire as they attempted to negotiate steep ravines, deep ditches, and the 17-foot-high walls of what was called the Stockade Redan. Their first assault, on May 19th, under the command of Major Generals William T. Sherman and Francis Blair, were summarily repulsed resulting in crushing casualties as Confederate forces fired on them from above. In a second series of assaults ordered by General Grant on May 22nd, Union forces suffered even greater casualties and made virtually no progress in advancing on the fortifications. Union losses totaled over 3,000 soldiers on May 22, compared to less than 500 in the Confederate ranks. It soon became apparent that Union success would rely on a prolonged siege, something that Grant hoped to avoid.

Misery on the Bluffs

Union forces began to build entrenchments in the hopes of gradually moving closer and closer to the fortifications and trapping Confederate forces and the population of Vicksburg. Over time, Grant moved 77,000 Union soldiers into positions completely encircling Vicksburg and eventually cutting off their supply line. Any chance of a Confederate escape was gone. By the end of June, many Confederate soldiers began suffering from malnutrition and scurvy, a condition which frequently afflicted sailors in the Age of Exploration, caused by an acute lack of Vitamin-C. Others suffered from unsanitary conditions and came down with diarrhea, dehydration, malaria, and dysentery. Confederate forces were forced to eat their horses, dogs, and to steal vegetables from the gardens of Vicksburg residents. Amidst the misery, Union gunboats and cannons continuously bombarded the city and fortifications, destroying suitable shelters. Residents and soldiers would dig over 500 caves into the hillside to escape the bombardment.

Surrender

By July, the situation had grown hopeless for the Confederates. Surrender negotiations began and Grant agreed to parole the remaining Confederate soldiers, rather than having to ship 30,000 to prison camps. On July 4, 1863, a day after Lee's defeat at Gettysburg, surrender terms were finalized and the Union gained total control of the Mississippi River (five days later Fort Hudson, Louisiana fell into Union hands as well). Confederate forces were forced to relinquish 172 cannons and over 50,000 rifles.

The 82 year-long Grudge

For the Confederacy, the Vicksburg defeat, combined with the Gettysburg defeat, is often considered the turning point in the Civil War. July 4th, America's birthday, would not be celebrated in Vicksburg again until World War II.

1. Which of the following best explains why control of the Mississippi River was advantageous for the Union?

- a) The river allowed for the transport of messages and supplies.
- b) It was the nation's largest waterway.
- c) The Confederacy was using the river to invade Union settlements.
- d) It was close to the Confederate capital of Richmond.

2. Which best describes the Union's battle plans at Vicksburg?

- a) Reckless, but isolated
- b) Careful, but unsuccessful
- c) Tactical, but close-minded
- d) Strategic, but flexible

3. Which statement about initial attacks on Vicksburg is supported by the passage?

- a) The first assault was led by only one Union general.
- b) Confederate casualties outweighed the Union ones.
- c) Grant waited too long to order the first attack.
- d) The city's high location gave the Union a disadvantage.

4. Which was not a struggle faced by the Confederates during the Union siege?

- a) Lack of food
- b) Illness
- c) Spies within the ranks
- d) Destruction from Union fire

5. Which statement about Vicksburg is false?

- a) The Confederacy lost cannons and rifles to the Union at the end of the battle.
- b) The battle would have been over more quickly had it been a naval assault.
- c) It ended with a Confederate surrender.
- d) The battle is considered a turning point in the Civil War.

6. Which is the best synonym for the word “parole” as it is used in the passage?

- a) Release
- b) Forgive
- c) Protect
- d) Kill

7. Which general did not fight with the Union at Vicksburg?

- a) William T. Sherman
- b) Francis Blair
- c) Abraham Lincoln
- d) Ulysses S. Grant

-----Key-----

1. (a)
2. (d)
3. (d)
4. (c)
5. (b)
6. (a)
7. (c)

Fact or Fiction?

Name: _____

Below is a passage on Fort Sumter. On the following page is a chart with ten statements. Indicate whether each statement is fact or fiction.

From Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter

The Battle of Fort Sumter marked the first exchange of fire in the Civil War. After seven southern states ratified their declarations of secession, the state of South Carolina demanded that Federal (United States) troops stationed at Fort Moultrie (in Charleston Harbor) abandon the fort. On December 26, 1860, however, Union Major General Richard Anderson moved his troops from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter, because he thought Fort Sumter was more easily defended. South Carolina subsequently seized all other Federal forts in South Carolina except for Fort Sumter. About two weeks later, U.S. president at the time James Buchanan authorized the delivery of reinforcements to Fort Sumter. The ship carrying the reinforcements was fired upon by batteries from the South Carolina shore and the reinforcements never made it.

The South is Serious!

Over the course of the next few months, Confederate forces strengthened batteries around Fort Sumter. Furthermore, the new president of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis, appointed his first military officer, P.G. T. Beauregard, to command forces in Charleston. Ironically, Anderson and Beauregard were close friends and Beauregard even served as Anderson's assistant after graduation from West Point.

The Bombardment and Siege

Inside the fort, Anderson and his troops were running short on food and supplies as a siege began to form. New president Abraham Lincoln again tried to resupply the fort and notified South Carolina Governor Francis Pickens that he was sending in ships. In response, Confederate forces demanded the immediate surrender of the fort. After General Anderson refused the demand, they began bombarding Fort Sumter at 4:30 in the morning on April 12, 1861.

Surrender

Confederate forces firing on Fort Sumter quickly took their toll. Badly outgunned and outmanned, Anderson's forces inside the fort initially returned fire, but were soon overwhelmed. After 34 hours, Major General Anderson agreed to evacuate the fort. No American or Confederate soldiers were killed during the battle, though two soldiers would die as a result of a gun explosion during the surrender ceremonies on April 14.

	FACT	FICTION
The Battle of Fort Sumter marked the first exchange of fire in the Civil War.		
The battle occurred before seven states seceded from the Union.		
Following the demand for surrender, Richard Anderson moved his soldiers from Fort Sumter to Fort Moultrie.		
Richard Anderson and P.G.T. Beauregard were actually close friends.		
After General Anderson refused the order to surrender, Confederate forces opened fire on Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861.		
Union forces inside Fort Sumter were no match of the Confederate firepower.		
One of the effects of the battle of Fort Sumter was President Lincoln's request for the mobilization of soldiers for the Union army.		
Two Union soldiers were killed during the fighting.		
P.G.T. Beauregard was the first military officer appointed in the Confederacy.		
Following Fort Sumter, four additional states seceded from the Union.		

Answers:

	FACT	FICTION
The Battle of Fort Sumter marked the first exchange of fire in the Civil War.	X	
The battle occurred before seven states seceded from the Union.		X
Following the demand for surrender, Richard Anderson moved his soldiers from Fort Sumter to Fort Moultrie.		X
Richard Anderson and P.G.T. Beauregard were actually close friends.	X	
After General Anderson refused the order to surrender, Confederate forces opened fire on Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861.	X	
Union forces inside Fort Sumter were no match of the Confederate firepower.	X	
One of the effects of the battle of Fort Sumter was President Lincoln's request for the mobilization of soldiers for the Union army.	X	
Two Union soldiers were killed during the fighting.		X
P.G.T. Beauregard was the first military officer appointed in the Confederacy.	X	
Following Fort Sumter, four additional state seceded from the Union.	X	

Battle Breakdown: Fort Sumter

Name _____

Instructions: Read the narrative and fill in the chart on the next page.

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Mobilizing for War

Both the North and the South became galvanized in their war efforts after Fort Sumter. President Lincoln's request for the mobilization of 75,000 additional troops prompted the secession of four other states.

What was the cause of the battle?	
What were the roles of each of the following players?	
Abraham Lincoln	
Richard Anderson	
P.G.T. Beauregard	
Jefferson Davis	
Francis Pickens	
Which side won the battle?	
What was the effect of the battle?	

Answers:

What was the cause of the battle?	
Union forces refused to abandon Forts Moultrie and Sumter in South Carolina after it seceded from the Union.	
What were the roles of each of the following players?	
Abraham Lincoln	Abraham Lincoln was the president of the United States at the time. He tried to send reinforcements to Fort Sumter, but the ship was fired upon by batteries on the South Carolina shore.
Richard Anderson	Richard Anderson was the Union general in charge of American soldiers at Fort Moultrie and Fort Sumter. He was forced to surrender the fort when the situation became hopeless inside of it.
P.G.T. Beauregard	P.G.T. Beauregard was a former assistant to Richard Anderson. Beauregard was in charge of military forces within Charleston and led the bombardment of Fort Sumter.
Jefferson Davis	Jefferson Davis was the president of the Confederate States of America, who made Beauregard his first military appointment.
Francis Pickens	Francis Pickens was the governor of South Carolina.
Which side won the battle? Confederacy	
What was the effect of the battle?	
Following the surrender of Fort Sumter, President Lincoln requested the mobilization of 75,000 troops for military service to the Union. This request prompted four additional states to secede from the Union and join the Confederacy. The states were: Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, and Arkansas.	

Battle of Shiloh Reading Comprehension

The Battle of Shiloh, sometimes referred to as the Battle of Pittsburg Landing (in the South), was a major engagement of the Western Theater of the American Civil War that occurred on April 6–7, 1862, in western Tennessee. The Union Army of the Tennessee, led by future president and hero of the Civil War, Ulysses S. Grant, had occupied much of Tennessee after winning the Battles at Forts Henry and Donelson. Confederate forces under Generals P.G.T. Beauregard and Albert Sidney Johnston launched a surprise attack on Grant's army of nearly 50,000, which was encamped on the west bank of the Tennessee River. The Confederates hoped to drive Grant's army into nearby swamps before reinforcements could arrive and prevent two major divisions of the Union army from uniting in Tennessee.

On the morning of April 6, Johnston's army launched a surprise attack on Grant. Confederate forces, however, proved inexperienced with inadequate weaponry. Furthermore, Johnston and Beauregard differed concerning attack strategy, which led to mass confusion amongst Confederate ranks. Nevertheless, the attack proved effective, as many shocked Union soldiers threw down their weapons and ran. Union Brigadier General William T. Sherman, however, rallied his troops, despite being wounded and having three horses shot out from under him. Confederate forces, however, continued to gain ground, and many acquired more effective weapons from those left behind by dead or fleeing Union soldiers. Meanwhile, Union forces had also been overrun at a portion of the battlefield known as the "Hornet's Nest." Confederate forces would ultimately capture as many as 2,400 Union soldiers after surrounding this position, but the brave Union stand allowed General Grant to establish a strong three-mile-long defense line with 50 cannons and several gunboats positioned in the Tennessee River at Pittsburg Landing. During this part of the battle, General Johnston was killed, adding even more confusion in the Confederate ranks. By the end of the day, Confederate forces had pushed the Union back along the river but not into the swamps. The Union Army of the Tennessee would fight another day. General Beauregard, however, believed he had Grant exactly where he wanted him, and celebrated a "complete" Confederate victory prematurely. By 4:00 in the morning of April 7, Grant's army received significant reinforcements, giving them a huge advantage in manpower. Beauregard ignored intelligence that suggested Union reinforcement.

On April 7, Beauregard ordered his army to attack Union ranks and drive them entirely into the river. Grant, now reinforced by Don Carlos Buell's Division of the Ohio and Lew Wallace's division, launched a devastating surprise counterattack from defensive positions along the river. Beauregard's Confederates fought bravely but were low on morale and supplies. They were forced to move to positions behind the Shiloh Church and eventually retreated to Corinth, Mississippi. Grant, knowing his soldiers were exhausted, failed to order pursuit of the fleeing Confederates. On April 8, Grant sent General Sherman on a mission to find out whether or not the Confederates had made a full retreat. In what came to be known as the Battle of Fallen Timbers, Union forces came upon a Confederate hospital camp. Confederate forces launched a wild attack under Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest that resulted in the capture of 100 or so Union soldiers before retreating at the sight of the larger Union force.

Despite the Union victory, General Grant was vilified in the Northern press for failing to pursue the Confederates. Many called for Grant, who had a reputation for being a drunk, to be removed from command. President Lincoln refused. The Battle of Shiloh left the Confederate strongholds of Memphis and Corinth, Mississippi, vulnerable to Union occupation. Both would fall into Union hands in 1862. The battle resulted in a staggering 24,000 combined casualties, by far the deadliest engagement in American history to that point.

1.) The Battle of Shiloh is considered...

- a.) a minor battle in the Western Theater of the Civil War.
- b.) a major Confederate victory in the Civil War.
- c.) an indecisive victory in the Civil War.
- d.) a major battle in the Western Theater of the Civil War.

2.) At Pittsburg Landing, Confederate forces hoped to...

- a.) drive the Union Army out of Tennessee.
- b.) drive the Union Army into nearby swamps.
- c.) win the American Civil War.
- d.) capture Union artillery firing at them from the Tennessee River.

3.) After the first day of the battle...

- a.) the Union Army seemed to have the advantage.
- b.) Confederate forces were pinned up against the river.
- c.) the Confederacy seemed to have the advantage.
- d.) General Grant was ready to surrender.

4.) General P.G.T. Beauregard's biggest mistake after the first day of the Battle of Shiloh was...

- a.) failing to counterattack
- b.) ignoring valuable intelligence
- c.) rejecting reinforcements
- d.) attacking the Union left flank

5.) Why did Beauregard celebrate prematurely?

- a.) General Johnston had been killed in battle.
- b.) General Sherman had been killed in battle.
- c.) He believed he had the Union Army in a position in which he could destroy them.
- d.) Confederate reinforcements arrived at 4:00 A.M.

6.) On April 7, the Union Army...

- a.) had been seriously weakened
- b.) had gained a tremendous advantage in manpower
- c.) had retreated into nearby swamps
- d.) had made plans to evacuate the area

7.) Which of the following WAS NOT true about the Confederate Army on April 7?

- a.) They were ready to fight another day.
- b.) They were exhausted.
- c.) They fought bravely.
- d.) They were outnumbered.

8.) After the Battle of Shiloh, General Grant was...

- a.) criticized deeply
- b.) considered a hero in the North
- c.) badly injured
- d.) promoted

9.) The Battle of Shiloh eventually resulted in...

- a.) The Union occupation of major Confederate strongholds.
- b.) The Union victory in the Civil War.
- c.) The reelection of Abraham Lincoln.
- d.) The freeing of slaves.

10.) What can you infer about how President Lincoln felt about General Grant?

- a.) He believed Grant should have been removed from command.
- b.) He believed Grant was a drunk.
- c.) He believed in Grant's military capabilities.
- d.) It is impossible to tell from the passage.

Prelude of Gettysburg Reading Comprehension

Name: _____

Read the passage and answer the questions.

Lee Intends to Invade Pennsylvania

Buoyed by confidence in his army after its decisive victory at Chancellorsville, Virginia, in May of 1863, Confederate Commander Robert E. Lee decided to make a second invasion in the North. Lee believed he could threaten the major cities of Harrisburg, Philadelphia, and even Washington, further eroding the dwindling support for the War in the North. Furthermore, Lee wanted to move hostilities to the North because Virginia had been ravaged by hundreds of battles. The land in the North was still unspoiled and Lee believed Confederate soldiers could subsist from the products from the pristine farms of Maryland and Pennsylvania.

The Forces

On June 3, 1863, Lee directed his Army of Northern Virginia to move north from Fredericksburg. He also organized his army into three corps, Corps I led by General James Longstreet, Corps II led by Richard Ewell, and Corps III led by A.P. Hill. Cavalry would be led by J.E.B. Stuart. Confederate manpower totaled about 72,000 soldiers, whereas Union forces totaled over 94,000 soldiers.

Where is Stuart? Meade Takes Command for the Army of the Potomac

On June 26, Major General Jubal Early's division from Ewell's Corps had reached the town of Gettysburg. Ewell's men burned railroad cars and a covered bridge, but at this point, there was no indication the largest battle in recorded history in the Western Hemisphere would occur in Gettysburg. In what would become a pivotal moment in Lee's campaign, he gave vague orders to Cavalry Commander J.E.B. Stuart to ride around the right flank of Union forces to determine exact locations and numbers. Stuart, who was indispensable to Lee in previous battles with his cavalry raids and intelligence gathering, failed to report back until the third and last day of the battle. Meanwhile, on the Union side, President Lincoln accepted the resignation of General Joseph Hooker, and replaced him with General George Meade, who would now be in charge of Union forces (the Army of the Potomac) at Gettysburg.

The Shoes Determine the Location of an Epic Battle

As Confederate forces concentrated in Cashtown, PA, about eight miles south of Gettysburg, Confederate Brigadier General Joseph Pettigrew was sent to Gettysburg to commandeer supplies, especially shoes, for the Confederate Army. Finding an enemy force at Gettysburg, Pettigrew withdrew to Cashtown, and Confederate forces began their advance.

1. Which statement is false?

- a) Corps I was led by James Longstreet.
- b) The Confederates had more manpower than the Union army as of June 1963.
- c) Lee led the Union army north on June 3, 1963.
- d) Lee divided his army into three groups.

2. Which of the following is not a reason why Lee wanted to advance battles into the North?

- a) He was more confident due to previous Southern victories.
- b) He wanted to decrease Northern morale and support for the war.
- c) Many battles had already destroyed the Southern lands, and Lee wanted to take the fight to the mostly intact Northern ones.
- d) Lee felt less sure leading the army during a battle on Confederate lands.

3. Which event happened first?

- a) Confederate forces gather in Cashtown, PA.
- b) Lincoln appoints General George Meade commander of Union forces.
- c) General Early's division reaches Gettysburg
- d) Confederate forces begin their advance on Gettysburg after Pettigrew retreats to Cashtown.

4. What inference can be made from the fact that Commander Stuart did not report back to Lee until the third day of the Battle of Gettysburg?

- a) Stuart's failure to report exact numbers of Union forces was disadvantageous to Confederate forces in battle.
- b) Stuart reported back to Lee just in time for the beginning of the Battle of Gettysburg.
- c) Stuart's failure to report exact numbers of Union forces meant that he was betraying the Confederate forces as a Union spy.
- d) Stuart had a history of being unreliable, so Lee was not waiting for Stuart's report anyway.

5. Which statement about the prelude to Gettysburg is true?

- a) The South chose to mobilize at Gettysburg as a last-ditch attempt to make its first victory of the war.
- b) The Union made a change in army leadership prior to the battle.
- c) Gettysburg, PA, was Confederate territory.
- d) Cashtown, PA, is north of Gettysburg.

6. What did General Joseph Pettigrew find when he was sent to Gettysburg?

- a) Confederate forces mobilizing.
- b) Union forces mobilizing.
- c) Union forces mobilizing, led by Joseph Hooker.
- d) A storage unit of supplies and shoes, open for the taking

7. Infer why shoes were an important commodity desired for soldiers fighting in the war.

- a) Soldiers did a lot of marching and marching in different terrains, which wore out their shoes frequently.
- b) Soldiers fought most of their battles barefoot, hence, they did not need shoes very often.
- c) Shoes were sold in the Northern states, but not the Southern ones
- d) The material from shoes could be used to make ammunition.

-----Key-----

1. (c)
2. (d)
3. (c)
4. (a)
5. (b)
6. (b)
7. (a)

Battle of Gettysburg Day 1 Reading Comprehension

Name: _____

Read the passage and answer the questions.

The Ridges of Gettysburg

Anticipating a Confederate assault, Union Brigadier General John Buford and his soldiers would produce the first line of defense. Buford positioned his defenses along three ridges west of the town. Buford's goal was simply to delay the Confederate advance with his small cavalry unit until greater Union forces could assemble their defenses on the three storied ridges south of town known as Cemetery Ridge, Cemetery Hill, and Culp's Hill's. These ridges were crucial to control of Gettysburg. Whichever army could successfully occupy these heights would have superior position and would be difficult to dislodge.

The Death of Major General Reynolds

The first of the Confederate forces to engage at Gettysburg, under the Command of Major General Henry Heth, succeeded in advancing forward despite Buford's defenses. Soon, battles erupted in several locations, and Union forces would suffer severe casualties. Union Major General John Reynolds would be killed in battle while positioning his troops. Major General Abner Doubleday, the man eventually credited with inventing the formal game of baseball, would assume command. Fighting would intensify on a road known as the Chambersburg Pike, as Confederate forces continued to advance.

Jubal Early's Successful Assault

Meanwhile, Union defenses positioned north and northwest of town would soon be outflanked by Confederates under the command of Jubal Early and Robert Rodes. Despite suffering severe casualties, Early's soldiers would break through the line under the command of Union General Francis Barlow, attacking them from multiple sides and completely overwhelming them. Barlow would be wounded and captured. Union forces were forced to retreat to Cemetery Hill, west of town, to regroup. Here, command of the battlefield was turned over to Major General Winfield Hancock. Hancock made the decision that the bulk of his forces would be deployed at Gettysburg, ensuring it would be the scene of the largest battle of the War.

Confusing Orders

On the Confederate side, Lee instructed Major General Richard Ewell to take Cemetery Ridge "if practical." Ewell determined such an assault to be impractical leaving Union forces to form defenses on the ridge. Ewell's decision not to assault Cemetery Ridge and the reeling Union forces has been viewed as a major mistake and missed opportunity for the Confederacy. At the end of the first day of Gettysburg, only a little more than 1/4 of the total number of troops for the two sides combined had been engaged in battle.

1. Infer the meaning of the prefix dis- given the way the word “dislodge” is used in context in the passage.

- a) (move) away
- b) (move) towards
- c) With
- d) Across

2. By the end of the first day of the Battle of Gettysburg, what approximate ratio of the total number of Union and Confederate armies combined had fought?

- a) 3/5
- b) 33%
- c) 0.25
- d) 20%

3. Put the following events in order.

- I. Major General John Reynolds is killed.
- II. General Francis Barlow is captured.
- III. General Lee tells Ewell to take Cemetery Ridge if possible.
- IV. General Abner Doubleday assumes command.

- a) I, II, III, IV
- b) II, I, IV, III
- c) II, I, IV, III
- d) I, IV, II, III

4. Which statement about the Union forces on the first day of battle is false?

- a) Their defenses, set up by Buford, were broken down.
- b) One of their generals was killed, and one captured.
- c) They crumbled when attacked from multiple sides by Early.
- d) They retreated to Chambersburg Pike.

5. Which statement can be inferred only from the information given in the passage?

- a) An attack on Union forces on Cemetery Ridge could have been a major Confederate victory.
- b) More than half of the troops on both sides fought on the first day at Gettysburg.
- c) The low ground was most advantageous to seize control of during the battle.
- d) The low ground was somewhat advantageous to seize control of during the battle.

6. Who was not a significant Union general during the first day of battle at Gettysburg?

- a) Winfield Hancock
- b) Richard Ewell
- c) Henry Heth
- d) Two of the above

7. Which statement is an effect of Hancock sending most of his army to fight at Gettysburg, according to the passage?

- a) The battle became one of the most significant of the war.
- b) The Union was ambushed at Cemetery Ridge.
- c) Lee cut back on his troops at Gettysburg.
- d) The Confederate soldiers returned Barlow to the Union.

-----Key-----

- 1. (a)
- 2. (c)
- 3. (d)
- 4. (d)
- 5. (a)
- 6. (d)
- 7. (a)

Battle of Gettysburg Day 2 Reading Comprehension

Name: _____

Read the passage and answer the questions.

The Fishhook

During the night of July 1st, most of the remaining Union and Confederate forces arrived in Gettysburg. The Union army was able to establish a strong line in the shape of a fishhook running over two miles from Cemetery Hill, along Cemetery Ridge and terminating at Culp's Hill. Confederate lines ran the length of Seminary Ridge, through the town of Gettysburg and terminated at a location opposite of Culp's Hill. In all, Confederate lines stretched for more than five miles. The stage was set for a massive battle.

Missing Intelligence

Without intelligence from J.E.B. Stuart's cavalry, however, Lee could not be certain of the exact positioning of Union forces, thus, his battle strategy for the second day of Gettysburg was somewhat flawed. Lee planned to launch a series of successive attacks with Longstreet's Corps on the Union left flank. The series of attacks and the diagonal formation of the attackers, would, theoretically, prevent the shifting of Union troops to reinforce the left flank. Meanwhile, other divisions would attack Union positions at Culp's Hill and Cemetery Hill. Lee did not know, however, that Union Major General Daniel Sickles and his troops were positioned in between Confederate forces and the Union left flank.

Attacks on Devil's Den and Little Round Top

On the sweltering afternoon of July 2nd, General Longstreet's soldiers engaged Sickles' III Union Corps, driving them back and forcing Union Commander Meade to send 20,000 reinforcements. Confederate Major General John Bell Hood launched attacks on Union divisions positioned at a location known as Devil's Den and a hill called Little Round Top. Sickles' III Corps was driven into a nearby wheatfield by Confederate forces under Lafayette McClaws before being thoroughly routed in a peach orchard. Pennsylvania Reserve soldiers eventually repulsed McClaws' assaults on Little Round Top, an important hill on the extreme Union left flank. Meanwhile, a division of McClaws' Army under the command of Richard Anderson led an assault on Cemetery Ridge that would have been successful if not for a desperate bayonet charge by the 1st Minnesota Regiment. The assaults on Little Round Top, however, were far from over. Positioned at the extreme left flank of the Union line, it represented

a major prize for the Confederacy if it could gain control of the hill. If Little Round Top could be occupied, Rebel forces could outflank the Union and attack the line from two directions.

Chamberlain's Stand

The Union position at Little Round Top was precarious, but their small forces fought valiantly and repulsed numerous assaults by Confederate divisions. Just before Rebel soldiers under the command of John Bell Hood arrived at Little Round Top, Union reinforcements reached the scene and repulsed additional assaults. In the battle, the 20th Maine Regiment under the Command of Colonel Joshua Chamberlain, ran out of ammunition after fighting for four hours. Facing yet another Rebel charge from up the hill, the soldiers responded with a vicious bayonet charge, scattering the exhausted Confederates, and ending the assault on Little Round Top, preventing the Confederates from flanking the Union Army.

Attacks on Culp's Hill

Attacks on the Union right flank began around 7:00 P.M. Because the majority of Union defenders on Culp's Hill had been moved to reinforce the left flank, Confederate forces under Edward Johnson attempted to exploit the vulnerability there. Union forces remaining on the hill, however, had constructed strong defensive works and were able to repulse most of the attacks. The Rebels did succeed in gaining control of a portion of the lower slope of Culp's Hill. By the end of the second day of fighting, it was still unclear who would ultimately prevail.

1. Which statement about the second day of fighting at Gettysburg is supported by the passage?

- a) The Union and Confederate forces were positioned in differently-shaped arrangements prior to the second day of fighting.
- b) Prior to the battle, Robert E. Lee had gained intelligence regarding the size and distribution of the Union forces.
- c) There were far more Union troops in Gettysburg than Confederate troops.
- d) Confederate battle lines stretched for eight miles prior to the second day of fighting.

2. Which of the following was not part of Lee's strategy going into the second day of fighting?

- a) Multiple attacks one after the other
- b) A slanted attack formation
- c) Use of different types of weaponry
- d) Besieging the enemy

3. Which inference can be made from the passage?

- a) The 1st Minnesota Regiment did nothing to stop the assault on Cemetery Ridge.
- b) The Union forces retained control of Little Round Top without needing to call for any reinforcements.
- c) If the Confederate forces took control of Little Round Top, they could have outnumbered and conquered the Union soldiers.
- d) Ulysses S. Grant led the Union troops fighting to secure control of Little Round Top.

4. Which event happened first?

- a) John Bell Hood attacks Little Round Top and Devil's Den.
- b) Richard Anderson leads an assault on Cemetery Ridge.
- c) Sickles' III Corps is driven into a wheatfield during battle.
- d) Commander Meade sends reinforcements to the III Union Corps.

5. Which was not an advantage experienced by the Union during the battle?

- a) Reinforcements arriving at Little Round Top
- b) A bayonet charge from the 1st Minnesota Regiment
- c) The sudden death of a prominent Confederate general
- d) Lee's lack of knowledge of the Union force positioning

6. Where were Confederate forces stationed prior to the second day of fighting?

- a) Seminary Ridge
- b) Cemetery Hill
- c) Both of the above
- d) None of the above

7. Which statement about the end of the second day is true?

- a) It was clear the Union would win the overall battle.
- b) The Union retained control of most of its ground.
- c) The Confederacy was unable to gain control of any of major Union positions.
- d) The Confederacy easily broke through the Union's feeble defenses.

-----Key-----

1. (a)
2. (c)
3. (c)
4. (d)
5. (c)
6. (a)
7. (b)

Battle of Gettysburg Day 3 Reading Comprehension

Name: _____

Read the passage and answer the questions.

On the third and final day of fighting, Confederate General Robert E. Lee wished to maintain the offensive and crush the Union Army. His plan was nearly identical to the day before - Longstreet would attack the Union left flank and Ewell would assault and occupy Culp's Hill on the Union right flank.

Failure at Culp's Hill

At around 4:00 A.M. on the 3rd, however, Lee's plans were foiled when Union forces launched an artillery bombardment on the lower portion of Culp's Hill that the Confederates had occupied the day before, forcing the Confederates there into battle. By 11:00 A.M., Confederate forces had gained little, if any, ground and suffered significant casualties. The failure at Culp's Hill required Lee to change his plans. He decided on an artillery bombardment on the Union line at Cemetery Ridge, before sending a massive infantry charge, which came to be known as Pickett's Charge.

Preparing for a Massive Assault

The artillery bombardment, however, proved relatively ineffective, even though the 150 guns used represented the largest such bombardment in the entire war. The massive amounts of smoke produced from the thundering cannons obscured targets, causing gunners to overshoot. Union forces eventually countered with 80 cannon of their own, adding to the chaos and confusion. To save ammunition, Union Brigadier General Henry Hunt ordered cannon fire to be gradually phased out, confusing Confederate gunners into believing they had been destroyed. The Confederate artillery bombardment was totally unsuccessful, and failed in its objective to soften Union defenses before the ill-fated infantry assault.

Pickett's Charge up Cemetery Ridge

At 3:00 in the afternoon, some 12,500 Confederate soldiers under the command of James Longstreet started their nearly mile-long uphill march to Union positions on Cemetery Ridge behind a stone wall. Interestingly, Longstreet had desperately tried to convince Lee to abandon the assault, believing it to be the equivalent of suicide, but Lee refused, intent on piercing the center of the Union line. Major General George Pickett's brigade was chosen to lead the charge, giving rise to the event's popular name: Pickett's Charge.

Unimaginable Carnage

The Confederates marching through the open fields were easy targets for Union guns and cannons, which fired from all directions on the nine brigades of Rebel soldiers. Huge gaps quickly formed in the Confederate lines from devastating artillery fire that killed or wounded groups of soldiers in a single blast. The carnage quickly demoralized the Confederate soldiers, many of whom turned around and ran. Others were gunned down by musket fire as they neared the stone wall. "Pickett's Charge" was a massacre. Of the 12,500 soldiers who advanced upon Cemetery Ridge, over half were killed or wounded. Union forces suffered about 1,500 casualties. Between 3,000 and 4,000 Confederate soldiers were reportedly captured. Lee, fully aware of the massacre, and worried about a Union counterattack, attempted to rally his soldiers crying out "it's all my fault," but there would be no rally, nor would there be a serious counterattack against the retreating Rebels.

A Decisive Union Victory in the Largest Battle in American History

On July 4, a truce was called so each side could collect their dead and wounded. In the July heat, the stench of the decomposing bodies which littered the fields caused many in Gettysburg to become violently ill.

As many as 51,000 casualties were documented at the end of the Battle of Gettysburg, with the Confederacy suffering as many as 28,000, and the Union about 23,000. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia retreated back to Virginia and would never fight again on Union soil. President Abraham Lincoln urged General Meade to pursue and attack the reeling Confederates, but the half-hearted pursuit proved ineffective and the Confederates escaped to Virginia. Meade would be soundly criticized for failing to deliver a decisive blow to the Confederates in their retreat.

1. Which of the following was NOT a disadvantage the Confederate forces during the third day of fighting?

- a) The Union's surprise attack on Culp's Hill
- b) The Confederates' failed artillery bombardment
- c) The capture of Lee at Cemetery Ridge
- d) The massacre of Pickett's Charge

2. Which strategy was used by the Union during the third day of fighting?

- a) Creating the illusion of destroyed cannons
- b) A combined bayonet and musket attack
- c) Seizing the low ground for an advantage
- d) A raid on the Confederate artillery base

3. Why did Lee cry out “it’s all my fault” to his soldiers?

- a) To reveal his part in causing the Civil War
- b) To take responsibility for sending soldiers on a suicide mission
- c) To encourage them to retreat from the battle and fight another day
- d) To punish the soldiers deserting the army

4. Which statement is true?

- a) Pickett’s Charge began at sunrise.
- b) More Union soldiers died in the Battle of Gettysburg than Confederate soldiers.
- c) The Union had fewer cannons than the Confederates at Cemetery Ridge.
- d) Less than 30,000 people total died at Gettysburg.

5. Which statement about Pickett’s Charge is true?

- a) It was ultimately unsuccessful
- b) The massacre scared many Confederates into running from the scene.
- c) Over half of the Confederate soldiers died or were injured.
- d) All of the above

6. Which of the following is the best synonym for “reeling” as used in the passage?

- a) Revolving
- b) Vulnerable
- c) Steady
- d) Approaching

7. Why was Meade criticized at the end of the Battle of Gettysburg?

- a) For failing to defeat Pickett’s Charge
- b) For failing to prevent the Confederates from regrouping in Virginia
- c) For disobeying Lincoln’s direct orders to attack the retreating Confederates
- d) For acting cowardly during the Battle of Gettysburg

-----Key-----

1. (c)
2. (a)
3. (b)
4. (c)
5. (d)
6. (b)
7. (b)

Battle of the Ironclads Reading Comprehension

The Battle of the Ironclads, also known as the Battle of Hampton Roads, was likely the most important naval battle of the American Civil War. On March 8–9, 1862, Confederate forces attempted to break a powerful Union naval blockade that had isolated Norfolk and Richmond from international trade by deploying their ironclad warship, the CSS Virginia, which was originally the USS Merrimack.

After the secession of the Southern states, the Confederacy had gained control of the Gosport Navy Yard and all of its ships formerly under Union control. Nevertheless, Union naval forces remained in control of several forts in the region and staged a powerful blockade that the Confederacy was initially powerless to break. Because of the Union's naval and industrial superiority, Confederate engineers were forced to think of new ways to combat the Union advantage. The world's first ironclad ship had set sail in France in 1860, and Southern engineers believed they could duplicate the idea. Work began in 1861 on the Merrimack, which had been partially destroyed and which was recently raised from the bed of the Elizabeth River. The plan was to build an iron shell around the ship and to outfit it with an iron ram. It took seven months to complete. When it was done, the armor encasing the Virginia was two inches thick backed by two feet of iron and pine. It was equipped with ten guns and fourteen gun ports and was ready for action by February of 1862.

When Union intelligence learned of the construction of the Virginia, they scrambled to make their own ironclad war ship. Union naval officials commissioned Swedish architect John Ericsson to design what would be called the Monitor, an ironclad warship to equal the Virginia. Even though Ericsson actually completed the Monitor before the Virginia was finalized, the Virginia would be activated first and would wreak havoc in Hampton Roads before the Monitor could arrive. On the morning of March 8, 1862, the CSS Virginia stormed into the waters of Hampton Roads where it immediately engaged the Union fleet, utterly destroying the USS Cumberland with the ram, sinking the ship, and killing 120 sailors. The Virginia next destroyed the USS Congress, resulting in its surrender. Union attempts to shoot at the Virginia proved completely useless. Only darkness saved the remainder of the Union fleet. Naval officers aboard the Virginia and its support fleet planned to finish the job on the morning of March 9.

The next morning, much to the surprise of the Confederates, the Union ironclad Monitor met the Merrimack on her way to dispatching the remainder of the Union fleet. The two ironclads fired at each other at close range for hours, neither side able to sink the other. Eventually, each ship withdrew, prompting both sides to proclaim victory. Surprisingly, neither ship would ever fight again. The Virginia was set afire by the Confederacy after she became stuck in the shallow water of the James River. The Monitor would sink en route to North Carolina on December 31, 1861.

Today, most historians believe the Battle of the Ironclads was a draw, even though the Confederates failed to break the Union blockade. One thing is for sure—the ironclad warships used in this battle influenced navies around the world to abandon the construction of wooden war ships in favor of iron ones.

1.) Why did the Confederacy decide to build the CSS Virginia?

- a.) For naval superiority over the Union.
- b.) To capture as many Union sailors as possible.
- c.) To intimidate the Union.
- d.) To break the Union blockade.

2.) Why was the Union blockade so harmful to the Confederacy?

- a.) It prevented them from building ships.
- b.) It prevented major cities in Virginia from trading with foreign countries.
- c.) Thousands of sailors were captured or killed.
- d.) It threatened Washington DC.

3.) Union forces...

- a.) had completely evacuated Hampton Roads.
- b.) were in control of all of the Hampton Roads.
- c.) were destroying southern port cities.
- d.) were in control of some Hampton Roads forts.

4.) What does an engineer do?

- a.) Figure out ways to build things
- b.) Sails ships
- c.) Figures out how to buy things
- d.) Decides what military tactics to use

5.) Which of the following is true about ironclad ships?

- a.) The CSS Virginia was the world's first.
- b.) The Monitor was the world's first.
- c.) The idea was first thought of by the Confederacy.
- d.) The first ironclad ship sailed in France.

6.) The CSS Virginia...

- a.) was equipped with 24 guns.
- b.) was equipped with iron plates four feet thick.
- c.) was equipped with 14 gun ports.
- d.) was ready for action in 1861.

7.) In its first combat, the CSS Virginia...

- a.) was destroyed by Union warships.
- b.) destroyed several Union warships.
- c.) was badly damaged.
- d.) broke the naval blockade.

8.) Who won the Battle of the Ironclads?

- a.) The Confederacy
- b.) The Union
- c.) Neither side
- d.) The Monitor

9.) Which of the following phrases best explains what happened to the CSS Virginia and the USS Monitor after the Battle of the Ironclads?

- a.) They both played an important part in the war after their initial battle.
- b.) They were both used after the war.
- c.) They both played no role in the remainder of the war.
- d.) They were both sold to other countries to improve their respective navies.

10.) The main effect of the Battle of the Ironclads was...

- a.) the devastation of the Confederate fleet.
- b.) the withdrawal of Union forces from their naval blockade.
- c.) an increase in iron manufacturing in the Confederacy.
- d.) a worldwide conversion of wooden naval ships to iron naval ships.

The Battle of Chancellorsville

Name _____

Yet, Another Union Commander

The Battle of Chancellorsville was fought between April 30th and May 6th, 1863, near the city of Fredericksburg, Virginia, where the Confederates had scored a major victory in December. Union General Joseph Hooker, recently named Commander of the Army of Potomac, planned to launch a massive assault against Lee's Army of Northern Virginia by attacking them at the front and the rear. Hooker's Army was roughly twice the size of Lee's and was well rested and provisioned.

Lee Outsmarts Hooker

On May 1, 1863, Hooker launched his attack on Lee's Army at Chancellorsville. Lee, in an unconventional military move, decided to split his smaller army into two parts, leaving a small force at nearby Fredericksburg, Virginia, and confronting Hooker's assault with roughly 80% of his army. Union General Hooker, inexperienced and perhaps unconfident in handling such a massive force, ordered his forces to withdraw to defensive positions in the nearby forests around Chancellorsville in the wake of Lee's assaults.

Jackson Crushes the Union Right; but is Shot by Friendly Fire

On May 2, 1863, Confederate General Stonewall Jackson attacked the right flank of the Union Army entrenched around Chancellorsville. Jackson marched his forces of 28,000 men 12 miles undetected to reach the Union right flank. At dinnertime, Confederate forces screaming their "rebel yell" stormed out of the forest and attacked the Union right flank. Union forces were totally unprepared and many were eating dinner. Within an hour, the right flank was totally disintegrated and was in full retreat. They suffered at least 2,500 casualties. Later that evening, however, General Stonewall Jackson was mistaken for Union cavalry and was shot in the arm as he rode out to investigate the feasibility of launching a nighttime attack on the Federals. Jackson contracted pneumonia and died on May 10th. Jackson's death was devastating to the Confederate cause and to Lee's battle strategies through the remainder of the war.

Hooker's Incompetence

Despite the initial setback, Union forces were still in control. Nearly 76,000 Union soldiers were still in positions defending Chancellorsville compared to 43,000 soldiers available to the Confederacy. The two largest parts of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia were positioned on either side of Union forces that occupied an area of high ground known as Hazel's Grove. Luckily for the Confederacy, General Hooker ordered those soldiers, under the command of General Sickles, to a different position on a local road called the Plank Road. Confederate forces proceed to occupy the high ground, where they placed thirty heavy guns. At 5:30 in the morning on May 3, Confederate forces now under the leadership of J.E.B. Stuart (after Jackson was wounded and after the next in command, A.P. Hill, was also wounded) launched a massive attack on the Federal positions around Chancellorsville, aided by the newly installed guns. Fires were sparked in the woods around Chancellorsville, confusing soldiers and killing wounded soldiers rendered immobile. Confederate forces overwhelmed their Union counterparts and Hooker ordered a retreat. Hooker was wounded in the fighting, but refused to turn over command, despite being rendered unconscious for over an hour. Meanwhile, Union forces under

John Sedgwick were defeated in their attempts to salvage the battle and the Union Army ultimately withdrew across the Rappahannock River on May 6.

Lee's Greatest Victory; Time to Invade the North

In what is considered one of the most decisive Confederate victories of the Civil War, Confederate forces suffered over 13,000 casualties, while Union forces suffered over 17,000. Confederate forces, however, suffered a much greater percentage of casualties. Hooker's reputation was forever tarnished in his handling of the battle. After the battle, he blamed the "incompetence" of his subordinate generals despite the fact that over half of his available soldiers were never deployed into combat. On the Confederate side, the battle is often called "Lee's greatest victory," and gave him the feeling his army was destined to win the war. The victory at Chancellorsville gave Lee the confidence that his army could win in the North and resulted in his invasion of Pennsylvania and ultimately the Battle of Gettysburg.

1. Which statement about the Battle of Chancellorsville is false?

- a) Stonewall Jackson was shot by Union forces during the battle.
- b) The battle was a Confederate victory.
- c) The Union suffered a greater number of casualties than the Confederacy.
- d) The battle was fought in less than two weeks.

2. What can be inferred about General Joseph Hooker from the passage?

- a) Hooker was renowned as a great general after the battle.
- b) Hooker was weak-willed and dropped out of leadership as soon as he was injured.
- c) His lack of experience caused him to lead his side to defeat.
- d) He was highly assertive and confident about leading his army.

3. Which event happened first?

- a) Stonewall Jackson leads an attack on the right side of the Union army in Chancellorsville.
- b) Union forces retreat along the Rappahannock River.
- c) Hooker attacks Confederate forces at Chancellorsville, and Lee splits his forces into two parts.
- d) The Confederates experience one of their greatest victories of the war.

4. Who did not lead the Confederate army at some point during the Battle of Chancellorsville?

- a) Stonewall Jackson
- b) J.E.B. Stuart
- c) John Sedgwick
- d) A.P. Hill

5. Which of the following was a consequence of the Battle of Chancellorsville?

- a) The Confederate army was forced to retreat and regroup.
- b) Hooker solidified his position as leader of the Union forces.
- c) The Union forces are decimated to a point where they can no longer fight.
- d) Lee begins his invasion of the North.

6. Fill in the blank.

CAUSE: _____

EFFECT: The Confederate forces catch the Union by surprise and cause them to suffer at least 2,500 casualties.

- a) Lee leads his full army to an assault on Chancellorsville.
- b) Jackson surprises the Union forces with an attack while they are still eating dinner.

- c) Union forces scream their rebel yell, revealing their presence to the Confederates.
- d) Hooker betrays the Union's location to the Confederate army.

7. Which was not a strategy used by the Confederate army during the battle?

- a) Surprise ambush
- b) Army splitting
- c) Heavy weaponry
- d) Bayonet attack

-----Key-----

1. (a)
2. (c)
3. (c)
4. (c)
5. (d)
6. (b)
7. (d)

Battle Breakdown: Bull Run I

Name _____

Instructions: Read the narrative and fill in the chart on the next page.

A Nice Day at the Battlefield!

The first major battle of the American Civil War occurred on July 21, 1861, in Manassas, Virginia. The Battle is known both as the First Battle of Bull Run, after the creek that ran through the battlefield, or, the First Battle of Manassas. Union forces under General Irvin McDowell, hoping for a decisive blow against the newly formed Confederacy, planned a surprise attack against the left flank of Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard's forces at the railroad junction of Manassas. Both sides were unseasoned and unprepared for the carnage that would ensue. Hundreds of spectators from Washington lined the hills of the battlefield to cheer on the Union. McDowell, who was skeptical of the Union plan, amassed 35,000 soldiers - the largest land army ever assembled in America at the time, to attack the Confederate positions.

"Stonewall" Saves the Day

At 2:30 in the morning on July 21, McDowell sent two detachments from nearby Centreville toward Confederate positions. By 5:15, the first shots had been fired. Through the morning, Union forces had slowly pushed Confederate forces back until they broke through the Confederate right flank at about 11:30, sending them into a disorganized retreat. Gen McDowell elected not to pursue the retreating Confederates, who were able to regroup at the Henry Hill House. At 12:00, Confederate reinforcements under General Thomas J. Jackson arrived on the battlefield. It was at this moment, when Confederate General Bernard Bee is said to have uttered the timeless words "There is Jackson standing like a stone wall." From that point on Thomas J. Jackson would be known as Stonewall Jackson. Some historians believe Bee was actually angry at Jackson for not sending his troops directly into battle. The tide of the battle soon changed when Confederate forces under Jackson and Calvary Commander J.E.B. Stuart captured Union artillery around 3:00. Jackson commanded his soldiers to press on and for the first time in the war, Union forces would be horrified by the "rebel yells" screamed by Confederate soldiers on the attack. At 4:00, more Confederate reinforcements led by Kirby Smith and Jubal Early crushed a Union brigade and caused the collapse of McDowell's Union Army. Union forces began a disorderly and poorly managed retreat, accompanied by screaming spectators who clogged the retreat path. Confederate forces, also in a state of disarray, captured several hundred Union soldiers but failed to pursue the remaining forces back to Washington.

A Grim Reality

The First Battle of Bull Run proved to be the deadliest battle in American history to that point. Nearly 5,000 total casualties were recorded, with Union forces suffering roughly 1,000 more than the Confederates. The North was shocked and dismayed at the Union defeat and many feared the Confederacy would move immediately on Washington. At the very least, the First Battle of Bull Run proved the war would be long and violent. President Lincoln was forced to sign a bill that allowed for the enlistment of up to 500,000 additional soldiers.

What was the cause of the battle?	
What were the roles of each of the following players?	
Irvin McDowell	
P.G.T. Beauregard	
Stonewall Jackson	
Jeb Stuart	
Jubal Early and Kirby Smith	
Which side won the battle?	
What was the effect of the battle?	

Answers:

What was the cause of the battle?	
Union Forces wanted to deliver a decisive blow against the newly formed Confederacy with a surprise attack at Manassas – an important railroad center in the Confederacy.	
What were the roles of each of the following players?	
Irvin McDowell	Irvin McDowell was the Union General in command at the First Battle of Bull Run. McDowell was in charge of the largest land force ever assembled in American history.
P.G.T. Beauregard	P.G.T. Beauregard was one of the Confederate generals at Manassas. Union General Irvin McDowell first planned to attack Beauregard's Army.
Stonewall Jackson	Stonewall Jackson was a Confederate general at the Battle of Bull Run. The momentum of the battle shifted toward the Confederacy when he came with reinforcements around noon. Jackson also received his nickname "Stonewall" during the battle.
Jeb Stuart	Jeb Stuart was the cavalry commander for the Confederate Army at the First Battle of Bull Run.
Jubal Early and Kirby Smith	Smith and Early were Confederate generals that led the attack that ultimately crushed a Union brigade and sent the army into a disorganized retreat.
Which side won the battle? Confederacy	
What was the effect of the battle?	
The First Battle of Bull Run proved the war would be long and deadly. It forced President Lincoln to call for 500,000 additional soldiers.	

Battle Breakdown: Antietam

Name _____

Instructions: Read the narrative and fill in the chart on the next page.

The Liberators

The Battle of Antietam occurred on September 17, 1862, in Sharpsburg Maryland. The battle was named after a creek in the region. It was the bloodiest one-day battle in American history. As Robert E. Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia attempted to assert the will of the Confederacy in the North, they were followed by Union General George B. McClellan and the Army of the Potomac into Maryland. Lee, believing the majority of Marylanders were being held in the Union against their will, thought he and his army would be regarded as heroes or liberators as he entered the border state. In reality, however, the sentiments of western Marylanders had turned toward the Union, and Lee's Army was regarded with suspicion.

Serendipity Wasted

Before the battle began, Union forces had serendipitously found a copy of Lee's battle plan wrapped around three cigars. The plans indicated that Lee had divided his army and sent brigades to Harper's Ferry, Virginia, and Hagerstown, Maryland. This allowed for Union forces to attack each brigade in isolation, but General McClellan failed to act quickly enough and the opportunity was lost.

McClellan's Indecision is Costly

On September 15, General Robert E. Lee positioned his army of 18,000 in a defensive position behind Antietam Creek in the town of Sharpsburg. McClellan's Army arrived in town the same night with over four times the number of soldiers as Lee's Army. McClellan, however, overestimated the strength of the Confederates, causing him to delay an attack. During the delay, Lee was reinforced by the corps of General Longstreet and Jackson.

Control of the High Ground near the Dunker Church



The Dunker Church today at Antietam National Battlefield

On the morning of September 17th, General McClellan ordered General Joseph Hooker to attack the Confederate left flank for the purposes of occupying the high ground near the Dunker Church. A vicious and violent battle ensued in the cornfield adjacent to the church featuring bayonet charges, hand-to-hand combat, and gun battles at close range. Hundreds of soldiers were killed in this initial combat, and neither side had gained a clear advantage. One brigade, known as the Louisiana Tiger Brigade lost 323 out of 500 men when they were isolated. Hooker's brigade lost 2,500 men in a matter of two hours and historians believe the cornfield at the Antietam Battlefield changed hands at least fifteen times during the morning and afternoon. By the end of the morning, casualties for both sides numbered over 13,000.

Bloody Lane



In the afternoon, Union forces struck the center of the Confederate line in an attempt to divert some of their forces from a patch of forest known as the West Woods. Confederate forces were in a good defensive position atop a hill in an old, sunken road. From the Sunken Road, Confederate forces fired withering rounds into the Union brigades, inflicting terrible casualties. Union forces

eventually exploited a weakness in the Confederate defenses and began to break through. Amidst growing confusion, the Confederates along the Sunken Road fled toward Sharpsburg. Union forces, however, were violently driven back during their pursuit by Longstreet's Brigade. All told, over 5,600 total casualties were recorded along the Sunken Road, which would eventually be called Bloody Lane.

Burnside's Bridge and the Confederate Retreat



Burnside's Bridge Overlooking Antietam Creek

Toward the later afternoon, the battle moved to the southern end of the battlefield, particularly for control of a bridge spanning Antietam Creek that would come to be known as Burnside's Bridge. Union Major General Ambrose Burnside ordered his soldiers to storm the bridge, where they took heavy fire from Confederate gunners. It took three separate attempts before Union soldiers successfully crossed. While Burnside's men crossed the narrow bridge with their artillery and wagons, General Robert E. Lee took the time to reinforce the right flank of his army. Numerous assaults and repulsions marked the remainder of the afternoon. By 5:30 p.m., it was clear there would be no winner. In total, the two sides suffered almost 23,000 casualties, making it the single bloodiest day in American military history. Although Lee expected another Union assault on the 18th, it never came, and an informal truce was established so each side could collect and tend to the injured and dead. On the night of the 18th, Confederate forces left Sharpsburg, crossing the Potomac River back to Virginia.

A Devastating Turn of Events for Robert E. Lee

Despite the fact that neither army was victorious, Union soldiers paraded through the streets of Frederick, Maryland, after the battle. The Confederate foray into Northern territory ultimately proved unsuccessful, delivering a crushing blow to its hope for foreign recognition. President Lincoln, meanwhile, saw Antietam as enough of a Northern victory to have the confidence to issue

the Emancipation Proclamation five days after the battle. This landmark proclamation freed all slaves in “enemy territory” and ensured that slavery would cease to exist if the North were to win the war.

What was the cause of the battle?	
What were the roles of each of the following players?	
General McClellan	
Robert E. Lee	
Joseph Hooker	
Ambrose Burnside	
Abraham Lincoln	
Which side won the battle?	
What was the effect of the battle?	

Answers:

What was the cause of the battle?	
The Battle of Antietam was the first attempt of Robert E. Lee and the Confederate Army to invade the North and bring the fighting there. In addition, Lee believed a victory in Northern territory would secure foreign recognition from England and France.	
What were the roles of each of the following players?	
General McClellan	George McClellan was the Commander of the Union Army, known as the Army of the Potomac at Antietam. His indecision at Antietam proved costly and likely prevented a decisive victory against Lee.
Robert E. Lee	Lee was the Commander of the Army of Northern Virginia. He mistakenly believed that upon entering Maryland, his army would swell with eager Maryland farm boys.
Joseph Hooker	Joseph Hooker commanded a Union brigade that was involved in heavy and violent fighting at the Dunker Church.
Ambrose Burnside	Ambrose Burnside was in command of a unit that finally took a crucial bridge (that would later become known as Burnside's Bridge) after several violent and unsuccessful attempts.
Abraham Lincoln	Abraham Lincoln was the President of the United States. Five days after the battle, he issued the landmark Emancipation Proclamation.
Which side won the battle? It was a draw; although the Confederates were unsuccessful in their objective to win a battle in the North.	
What was the effect of the battle?	
There were several effects of the battle: 1. Abraham Lincoln saw the Union stand at Antietam as a victory of sorts; at least enough of a victory to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. 2. Because of the defeat (or at least lack of victory), Lee was unable to achieve foreign recognition of the Confederacy and was unable to bring suffering to the people of the North.	

Fact or Fiction?

Name: _____

Below is a passage on the First Battle of Bull Run. On the following page is a chart with ten statements. Indicate whether each statement is fact or fiction.

A Nice Day at the Battlefield!

The first major battle of the American Civil War occurred on July 21, 1861, in Manassas, Virginia. The Battle is known both as the First Battle of Bull Run, after the creek that ran through the battlefield, or, the First Battle of Manassas. Union forces under General Irvin McDowell, hoping for a decisive blow against the newly formed Confederacy, planned a surprise attack against the left flank of Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard's forces at the railroad junction of Manassas. Both sides were unseasoned and unprepared for the carnage that would ensue. Hundreds of spectators from Washington lined the hills of the battlefield to cheer on the Union. McDowell, who was skeptical of the Union plan, amassed 35,000 soldiers - the largest land army ever assembled in America at the time, to attack the Confederate positions.

"Stonewall" Saves the Day

At 2:30 in the morning on July 21, McDowell sent two detachments from nearby Centreville toward Confederate positions. By 5:15, the first shots had been fired. Through the morning, Union forces had slowly pushed Confederate forces back until they broke through the Confederate right flank at about 11:30, sending them into a disorganized retreat. Gen McDowell elected not to pursue the retreating Confederates, who were able to regroup at the Henry Hill House. At 12:00, Confederate reinforcements under General Thomas J. Jackson arrived on the battlefield. It was at this moment, when Confederate General Bernard Bee is said to have uttered the timeless words "There is Jackson standing like a stone wall." From that point on Thomas J. Jackson would be known as Stonewall Jackson. Some historians believe Bee was actually angry at Jackson for not sending his troops directly into battle. The tide of the battle soon changed when Confederate forces under Jackson and Calvary Commander J.E.B. Stuart captured Union artillery around 3:00. Jackson commanded his soldiers to press on and for the first time in the war, Union forces would be horrified by the "rebel yells" screamed by Confederate soldiers on the attack. At 4:00, more Confederate reinforcements led by Kirby Smith and Jubal Early crushed a Union brigade and caused the collapse of McDowell's Union Army. Union forces began a disorderly and poorly managed retreat, accompanied by screaming spectators who clogged the retreat path. Confederate forces, also in a state of disarray, captured several hundred Union soldiers but failed to pursue the remaining forces back to Washington.

A Grim Reality

The First Battle of Bull Run proved to be the deadliest battle in American history to that point. Nearly 5,000 total casualties were recorded, with Union forces suffering roughly 1,000 more than the Confederates. The North was shocked and dismayed at the Union defeat and many feared the Confederacy would move immediately on Washington. At the very least, the First Battle of Bull Run proved the war would be long and violent. President Lincoln was forced to sign a bill that allowed for the enlistment of up to 500,000 additional soldiers.

	FACT	FICTION
The First Battle of Bull Run and the First Battle of Manassas actually refer to the same battle.		
Union General P.G.T. Beauregard was hoping to deliver a decisive blow to Confederate forces.		
The battlefield hills were full on spectators who came to watch the battle and cheer for the Union soldiers.		
The Union army that assembled at Manassas was the largest land army in American history.		
From the start, the battle looked grim for the Union army.		
The tide (or momentum) of the battle changed around 3:00 P.M.		
Confederate forces pursued Union soldiers all the way to Washington.		
Combined, there just over 1,000 total casualties at the First Battle of Bull Run.		
The battle caused President Lincoln to call for hundreds of thousands of soldiers to serve in the Union army.		
For the Union army, the defeat at Bull Run was a small setback.		

Answers:

	FACT	FICTION
The First Battle of Bull Run and the First Battle of Manassas actually refer to the same battle.	X	
Union General P.G.T. Beauregard was hoping to deliver a decisive blow to Confederate forces.		X
The battlefield hills were full on spectators who came to watch the battle and cheer for the Union soldiers.	X	
The Union army that assembled at Manassas was the largest land army in American history.	X	
From the start, the battle looked grim for the Union army.		X
The tide (or momentum) of the battle changed around 3:00 P.M.	X	
Confederate forces pursued Union soldiers all the way to Washington.		X
Combined, there just over 1,000 total casualties at the First Battle of Bull Run.		X
The battle caused President Lincoln to call for hundreds of thousands of soldiers to serve in the Union army.	X	
For the Union army, the defeat at Bull Run was a small setback.		X

Fact or Fiction?

Name: _____

Below is a passage on the First Battle of Bull Run. On the following page is a chart with ten statements. Indicate whether each statement is fact or fiction.

The Liberators

The Battle of Antietam occurred on September 17, 1862, in Sharpsburg Maryland. The battle was named after a creek in the region. It was the bloodiest one-day battle in American history. As Robert E. Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia attempted to assert the will of the Confederacy in the North, they were followed by Union General George B. McClellan and the Army of the Potomac into Maryland. Lee, believing the majority of Marylanders were being held in the Union against their will, thought he and his army would be regarded as heroes or liberators as he entered the border state. In reality, however, the sentiments of western Marylanders had turned toward the Union, and Lee's Army was regarded with suspicion.

Serendipity Wasted

Before the battle began, Union forces had serendipitously found a copy of Lee's battle plan wrapped around three cigars. The plans indicated that Lee had divided his army and sent brigades to Harper's Ferry, Virginia, and Hagerstown, Maryland. This allowed for Union forces to attack each brigade in isolation, but General McClellan failed to act quickly enough and the opportunity was lost.

McClellan's Indecision is Costly

On September 15, General Robert E. Lee positioned his army of 18,000 in a defensive position behind Antietam Creek in the town of Sharpsburg. McClellan's Army arrived in town the same night with over four times the number of soldiers as Lee's Army. McClellan, however, overestimated the strength of the Confederates, causing him to delay an attack. During the delay, Lee was reinforced by the corps of General Longstreet and Jackson.

Control of the High Ground near the Dunker Church



The Dunker Church today at Antietam National Battlefield

On the morning of September 17th, General McClellan ordered General Joseph Hooker to attack the Confederate left flank for the purposes of occupying the high ground near the Dunker Church. A vicious and violent battle ensued in the cornfield adjacent to the church featuring bayonet charges, hand-to-hand combat, and gun battles at close range. Hundreds of soldiers were killed in this initial combat, and neither side had gained a clear advantage. One brigade, known as the Louisiana Tiger Brigade lost 323 out of 500 men when they were isolated. Hooker's brigade lost 2,500 men in a matter of two hours and historians believe the cornfield at the Antietam Battlefield changed hands at least fifteen times during the morning and afternoon. By the end of the morning, casualties for both sides numbered over 13,000.

Bloody Lane



In the afternoon, Union forces struck the center of the Confederate line in an attempt to divert some of their forces from a patch of forest known as the West Woods. Confederate forces were in a good defensive position atop a hill in an old, sunken road. From the Sunken Road, Confederate forces fired withering rounds into the Union brigades, inflicting terrible casualties. Union forces eventually exploited a weakness in the Confederate defenses and began to break through. Amidst growing confusion, the Confederates along the Sunken Road fled toward Sharpsburg. Union forces, however, were violently driven back during their pursuit by Longstreet's Brigade. All told, over 5,600 total casualties were recorded along the Sunken Road, which would eventually be called Bloody Lane.

Burnside's Bridge and the Confederate Retreat



Burnside's Bridge Overlooking Antietam Creek

Toward the later afternoon, the battle moved to the southern end of the battlefield, particularly for control of a bridge spanning Antietam Creek that would come to be known as Burnside's Bridge. Union Major General Ambrose Burnside ordered his soldiers to storm the bridge, where they took heavy fire from Confederate gunners. It took three separate attempts before Union soldiers successfully crossed. While Burnside's men crossed the narrow bridge with their artillery and wagons, General Robert E. Lee took the time to reinforce the right flank of his army. Numerous assaults and repulsions marked the remainder of the afternoon. By 5:30 p.m., it was clear there would be no winner. In total, the two sides suffered almost 23,000 casualties, making it the single bloodiest day in American military history. Although Lee expected another Union assault on the 18th, it never came, and an informal truce was established so each side could collect and tend to the injured and dead. On the night of the 18th, Confederate forces left Sharpsburg, crossing the Potomac River back to Virginia.

A Devastating Turn of Events for Robert E. Lee

Despite the fact that neither army was victorious, Union soldiers paraded through the streets of Frederick, Maryland, after the battle. The Confederate foray into Northern territory ultimately proved unsuccessful, delivering a crushing blow to its hope for foreign recognition. President Lincoln, meanwhile, saw Antietam as enough of a Northern victory to have the confidence to issue the Emancipation Proclamation five days after the battle. This landmark proclamation freed all slaves in “enemy territory” and ensured that slavery would cease to exist if the North were to win the war.

	FACT	FICTION
The Battle of Antietam was named after a nearby creek that flowed through the region.		
The Battle of Antietam was the deadliest battle in American history.		
Robert E. Lee's men were hailed as heroes as they marched into Maryland.		
Union General George McClellan acted quickly and decisively from the onset of the battle as is regarded as the hero of Antietam.		
Lee's army and McClellan's army had amount the same number of soldiers.		
The Confederacy failed in its objective to win an important battle on Northern soil.		
The Sunken Road and Bloody Lane referred to the same place.		
One of the effects of the battle was Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.		
Although the battle was technically a draw, it served a more positive purpose for the Confederacy.		
At the end of the battle, an informal truce was called so that each side could tend to its dead and wounded.		

Answers:

	FACT	FICTION
The Battle of Antietam was named after a nearby creek that flowed through the region.	X	
The Battle of Antietam was the deadliest battle in American history.		X
Robert E. Lee's men were hailed as heroes as they marched into Maryland.		X
Union General George McClellan acted quickly and decisively from the onset of the battle as is regarded as the hero of Antietam.		X
Lee's army and McClellan's army had amount the same number of soldiers.		X
The Confederacy failed in its objective to win an important battle on Northern soil.	X	
The Sunken Road and Bloody Lane referred to the same place.	X	
One of the effects of the battle was Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.	X	
Although the battle was technically a draw, it served a more positive purpose for the Confederacy.		X
At the end of the battle, an informal truce was called so that each side could tend to its dead and wounded.	X	

First Battle of Bull Run Reading Comprehension

The first major battle of the American Civil War occurred on July 21, 1861, in Manassas, Virginia. The battle is known both as the First Battle of Bull Run, after the creek that ran through the battlefield, or the First Battle of Manassas. Union forces under General Irvin McDowell, hoping for a decisive blow against the newly formed Confederacy, planned a surprise attack against the left flank of Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard's forces at the railroad junction of Manassas. Both sides were unseasoned and unprepared for the carnage that would ensue. Hundreds of spectators from Washington lined the hills of the battlefield to cheer on the Union. McDowell, who was skeptical of the Union plan, amassed 35,000 soldiers—the largest land army ever assembled in America at the time—to attack the Confederate positions.

At 2:30 in the morning on July 21, McDowell sent two detachments from nearby Centreville toward Confederate positions. By 5:15, the first shots had been fired. Through the morning, Union forces had slowly pushed Confederate forces back until they broke through the Confederate right flank at about 11:30, sending them into a disorganized retreat. General McDowell elected not to pursue the retreating Confederates, who were able to regroup at the Henry Hill House. At 12:00, Confederate reinforcements under General Thomas J. Jackson arrived on the battlefield. It was at this moment when Confederate General Bernard Bee is said to have uttered the timeless words, "There is Jackson standing like a stone wall." From that point on, Thomas J. Jackson would be known as Stonewall Jackson. Some historians believe Bee was actually angry at Jackson for not sending his troops directly into battle. The tide of the battle soon changed when Confederate forces under Jackson and Cavalry Commander J.E.B. Stuart captured Union artillery around 3:00. Jackson commanded his soldiers to press on, and for the first time in the war, Union forces would be horrified by the "rebel yells" screamed by Confederate soldiers on the attack. At 4:00, more Confederate reinforcements led by Kirby Smith and Jubal Early crushed a Union brigade and caused the collapse of McDowell's Union Army. Union forces began a disorderly and poorly managed retreat, accompanied by screaming spectators who clogged the retreat path. Confederate forces, also in a state of disarray, captured several hundred Union soldiers but failed to pursue the remaining forces back to Washington.

The First Battle of Bull Run proved to be the deadliest battle in American history to that point. Nearly 5,000 total casualties were recorded, with Union forces suffering roughly 1,000 more than the Confederates. The North was shocked and dismayed at the Union defeat, and many feared the Confederacy would move immediately on Washington. At the very least, the First Battle of Bull Run proved the war would be long and violent. President Lincoln was forced to sign a bill that allowed for the enlistment of up to 500,000 additional soldiers.

<p>1.) Why did the Union Army attack at Bull Run?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) They were hoping to end the war as quickly as it started. b.) They were hoping to prolong the war. c.) They had better generals. d.) They wanted to capture Confederate soldiers. <p>2.) At Bull Run, both the Union and Confederate Armies were...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) battle tested. b.) ready for a long, violent war. c.) Inexperienced. d.) tired from fighting many battles. <p>3.) McDowell's army was...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) small in comparison to other armies. b.) the largest ever assembled in America at the time. c.) fighting for the Confederacy. d.) smaller than Beauregard's. <p>4.) If the Battle of Bull Run had ended at 11:30 A.M., then...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) the Confederacy would have been destroyed. b.) Washington DC would have been attacked. c.) the Union would have been considered victorious. d.) the Confederacy would have been considered victorious. <p>5.) Who coined the nickname “Stonewall” Jackson”?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) Bernard Bee b.) Union soldiers c.) Thomas J. Jackson d.) Confederate prisoners 	<p>6.) When was the turning point in the First Battle of Bull Run?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) 2:30 A.M. b.) 11:30 A.M. c.) When Stonewall Jackson arrived d.) About 3:00 P.M. <p>7.) Which of the following do you think is a major reason why the Confederates won the First Battle of Bull Run?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) They received many reinforcements. b.) They had many more soldiers. c.) Their soldiers were more experienced. d.) They had better weapons. <p>8.) The First Battle of Bull Run proved...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) the Confederacy would ultimately win. b.) the Civil War would be long and violent. c.) President Lincoln would ultimately be assassinated. d.) the Union would lose the will to fight. <p>9.) What happened first?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) 4:00 P.M. b.) Stonewall Jackson arrived with reinforcements. c.) Kirby Smith arrived with reinforcements. d.) Spectators from Washington lined the hills to view the battle. <p>10.) Which of the following is NOT TRUE about the First Battle of Bull Run?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) It is also called the Battle of Manassas. b.) It was the Civil War's first major battle. c.) It featured Stonewall Jackson, P.T. Beauregard, and Irvin McDowell as military officers. d.) Lincoln became reluctant to request mobilization of more soldiers for the Union cause.
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Battles of Bull Run Text Structure

Read the paragraphs below and identify the text structure:

Compare and Contrast | Problem-Solution | Chronological | Cause-Effect

1. The first and second battles of Bull Run were two of the most important battles of the Civil War. Both battles took place in Manassas, Virginia, and both were decisive Confederate victories. Although the result of each battle was the same, the second battle proved far more deadly with over 17,000 combined casualties. Furthermore, it proved of greater importance from a tactical perspective and the Confederate victory prompted Robert E. Lee's first invasion of the North.

2. Because the Union government wanted to bring a quick end to what was becoming the Civil War, and because a large Confederate force was encamped at the critical railroad junction of Manassas, Virginia, only 35 miles from Washington, President Lincoln ordered Union Commander Irvin McDowell to conduct a massive strike on the Confederates. On July 21, 1861, McDowell attacked. While the battle started out well for the Union Army, the Confederates would gain the advantage when thousands of reinforcements began arriving in the early afternoon. Soon, the Confederates broke through Union lines, sending them fleeing back to Washington by the thousands. The Confederate victory at Manassas proved a crushing blow to Lincoln and the Union and proved the war would be long and violent. As a result, Lincoln requested the mobilization of 500,000 additional soldiers for the purposes of subduing the South.

3. The first battle of the Civil War occurred on April 12, 1861, at Fort Sumter, South Carolina. Although not a major battle, it set the stage for the violence and carnage to come. Just a little more than two months later, on July 21, 1861, the first major battle of the Civil War occurred at a small railroad junction near Manassas, Virginia. Known as the First Battle of Manassas, or, the First Battle of Bull Run, the Confederate victory crushed any hope of a short, protracted war. On August 28, 1862, Manassas would be the site of the much larger and bloodier Second Battle of Bull Run, which resulted in more than four times the casualty numbers as the first battle.

4. In the Second Battle of Bull Run, Robert E. Lee found himself and his Army of Northern Virginia in a precarious position. Union General George B. McClellan and his Army of Virginia was recalled from its Peninsula Campaign to combine with the newly formed Army of Virginia under John Pope. The goal was for the new colossal army to strike at the Confederate capital at Richmond, Virginia. Lee knew that both his army and capital would be vulnerable to such an overwhelming force. Luckily, he had an idea. Lee called a preemptive strike on Pope's army before it could combine with McClellan. Lee split his army into two divisions, which confused Union generals, leading to poor communication, poor decisions, faulty intelligence, and ultimately, the defeat of the Union Army (again) at Manassas.

Answers:

1. Compare-Contrast
2. Cause-Effect
3. Chronological
4. Problem-Solution