

The Civil War

Lesson 4 The Strain of War

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Why does conflict develop?

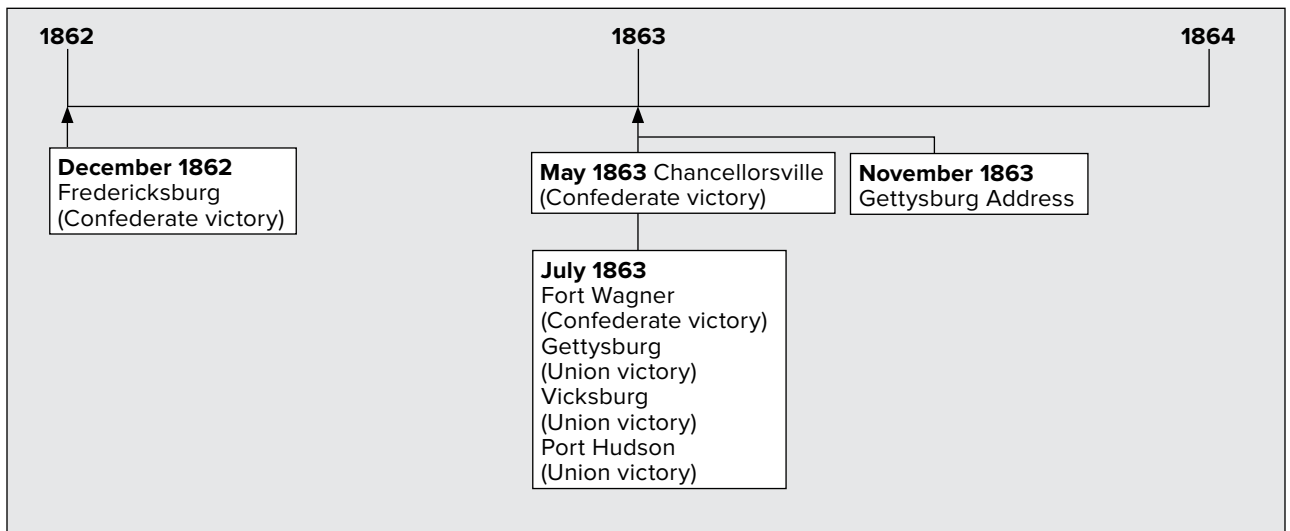
GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *What factors contributed to the early success of the Confederate forces?*
2. *What role did African Americans play in military efforts?*
3. *How was the battle of Gettysburg a turning point in the war?*

Terms to Know

entrench to place within a trench, or ditch, for defense; to place in a strong defensive position
flank the side or edge of a military formation

When did it happen?



What do you know?

Before reading the text, decide whether these statements are true or false. Write a T or an F in front of each. After reading, check your answers. Were they correct?

- _____ 1. The Union had excellent generals throughout the war.
- _____ 2. “Stonewall” Jackson was an important Confederate general.
- _____ 3. African Americans enlisted in both the Union and the Confederate armies.
- _____ 4. The battle at Gettysburg was an important win for the Confederacy.
- _____ 5. President Lincoln’s famous speech at Gettysburg was very short.

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Lesson 4 The Strain of War, *Continued*

Southern Victories

After Antietam, the Confederacy won a number of battles in the East because Generals Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson were so good at their jobs. They knew the land. They knew how to inspire the soldiers. They often defeated the Union armies in battle, even though they had fewer soldiers.

The first victory was the Battle of Fredericksburg. The Union leader, General Ambrose Burnside, began to march toward Richmond, Virginia. Richmond was the capital of the Confederacy. Lee moved his forces to Fredericksburg. They dug trenches in the hills and waited for the Union troops.

When the Union soldiers arrived, Lee’s **entrenched** forces fired down on them and pushed them back. Burnside’s troops lost. He resigned, or quit, his job.

The second Confederate victory was the Battle of Chancellorsville. The Union army had a new leader. His name was General Joseph Hooker. Hooker had twice as many soldiers as Lee.

Even though his army was outnumbered, Lee decided to divide his troops. One group met the main Union force. The other group, led by Stonewall Jackson, attacked the Union **flank**, or side. The Union soldiers were caught by surprise. Eventually, they had to retreat.

Again, the Confederates won the battle. This time, though, Jackson was wounded. Doctors had to cut off his arm. Jackson got pneumonia, and died a week later. One of the South’s two great leaders was dead.

The army leaders in the East frustrated President Lincoln. In less than a year three different generals tried and failed to win the Civil War for the Union. The army’s leadership was weak.

- **General McClellan** did not seem to want to do battle. He did not obey Lincoln’s order to follow the Confederate troops after the Union’s victory at Antietam.
- **General Burnside** lost at Fredericksburg. Lincoln replaced him with General Joseph Hooker.
- **General Hooker** lost at Chancellorsville. Within two months, Hooker resigned, too.



Explaining

1. What was Lee’s strategy at Chancellorsville?



Reading Check

2. Why was Lincoln frustrated with the Union generals?



Evaluating

3. What made Lee’s strategy at Chancellorsville “brilliant”?

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Determining Cause

4. Why would African Americans have been eager to enlist and fight for the Union?
- _____

Mark the Text

5. In one color, highlight adjectives and phrases that describe what African Americans faced in the military. In another color, highlight phrases that describe African American soldiers' conduct in war.

Identifying

6. What was the result of Pickett's Charge?
- _____
- _____

African Americans in the Civil War

The Confederate army never accepted African American soldiers. Confederate officials believed that African Americans might attack their fellow troops or begin a revolt if they were armed.

Many enslaved African Americans were forced to go to war with their white owners. They were forced to help the Confederate army in many ways, like building fortifications.

At first, the Union army did not accept African American soldiers, either. Lincoln feared that allowing them to enlist would anger people in the border states.

By 1862, though, the North needed more soldiers. So Congress created all-black regiments. By the end of the war, about 10 percent of Union soldiers were African American. Some were freed people from the North. Others had run away from enslavement in the South.

It was not easy for African American soldiers in the Union army. Other Union soldiers resented them or thought they could not fight well. In battles, Southern troops, who hated them, fired at them the most.

Despite this, African Americans fought bravely and well. For example, in July 1863, the 54th Massachusetts Regiment served in the front lines of a battle to take Fort Wagner in South Carolina. The regiment suffered nearly 300 casualties. Their sacrifice made the 54th famous for its courage.

The Tide Turns

After the Confederate victory at Chancellorsville, Lee decided to invade the North. He hoped victories there would convince Britain and France to help the Confederacy.

On July 1, 1863, his forces went looking for supplies in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. There, they encountered, or met, Union troops. Outnumbered, the Union troops fell back to higher ground on Cemetery Ridge.

On July 2, Southern troops tried and failed to force the Union troops from their positions on the hills.

On July 3, Lee ordered an all-out attack. Thousands of Confederate troops, led by General George Pickett, attacked Union forces on Cemetery Ridge. Half of those in Pickett's Charge were wounded or killed.

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On July 4, Lee retreated. His army had suffered 25,000 casualties. Union troops had suffered almost as many.

Losing at Gettysburg ended Confederate hopes of getting help from Britain and France.

The Confederacy lost two other critical battles in July 1863:

- **Vicksburg** In April, Ulysses S. Grant laid siege to Vicksburg, Mississippi. A siege means surrounding a place to keep it from receiving food or supplies. The siege lasted 47 days. Many soldiers died—not only from wounds, but also from sickness and hunger. Vicksburg finally fell on the same day Lee retreated from Gettysburg.
- **Port Hudson** The Confederacy lost Port Hudson, its last stronghold on the Mississippi River. The Union had cut off Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas from the rest of the Confederacy.

On November 19, 1863, the Soldiers' National Cemetery opened at Gettysburg, and people gathered there to dedicate it. First, the former governor of Massachusetts gave a two-hour speech. Then President Lincoln spoke for just two minutes. He finished by saying, "[T]hese dead shall not have died in vain. ... [G]overnment of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth." His powerful words became known as the Gettysburg Address.

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Check for Understanding

Why did Union leaders call for African Americans to be allowed to fight in the Civil War?

Why was the battle of Gettysburg a turning point in the war?

Reading Check

7. How did the events at Vicksburg and Port Hudson help change the tide of the war?



8. Use a two-tab Foldable and cut the tabs in half to make four tabs. Place it along the dotted line to cover Check for Understanding. Write the title *Turning Points in 1863* on the anchor tab. Label the tabs *African Americans Enter the War, Battle of Vicksburg, Battle of Port Hudson, and Robert E. Lee Retreats*. Use both sides of the tabs to list facts about the people and events of 1863.