

## **Slavery, the Civil War & Reconstruction The Generals of the Civil War**

These are the four main Civil War Generals.

### **Robert E. Lee** (Confederate)

General Lee was the top General of the Confederacy, but he went to war with a heavy heart. He loved the United States. In fact, before Virginia left the Union, President Lincoln asked Lee to command the army of the North! Lee had fought in earlier wars and had gone to the best military school in the country, West Point. But he was loyal to Virginia. He told President Lincoln:

“With all my devotion to the Union and the feeling of loyalty and duty of an American citizen, I have not been able to make up my mind to raise my hand against my home. I have therefore **resigned**<sup>1</sup> my commission in the Army. Save in the defense of my native State, with the sincere hope that my poor services may never be needed, I hope I may never be called upon to draw my sword.”

### **Ulysses S. Grant** (Union)

General Grant fought alongside General Lee in the Mexican-American War. He also attended West Point. While Lee was elegant and **refined**,<sup>2</sup> Grant was awkward and reserved. But he was a brilliant and fearless soldier. He was not afraid to march his troops into battle. Out of all the Northern generals, Grant had the most success defeating Lee.

### **Stonewall Jackson** (Confederate)

General Jackson earned his nickname “Stonewall” because it was said that he held his position in battle like a stone wall. He would not let the Northern army advance on his Confederate troops. At the Battle of Antietam, the single bloodiest day of the entire war, Stonewall Jackson was shot, and his arm was **amputated**.<sup>3</sup> When Lee found this out he said, “He has lost his left arm but I

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<sup>1</sup> **resign** - to give up or to quit

<sup>2</sup> **refined** - sophisticated, extremely polite

<sup>3</sup> **amputate** - to cut off all or some of a body part, usually a leg, arm, or finger

have lost my right arm.” Jackson was that important to General Lee. Sadly, Jackson’s wound did not heal, and he died shortly after the battle.

**William Tecumseh Sherman (Union)**

The Northern General Sherman is most famous for his “March to the Sea.” At the end of the war, Sherman started in Tennessee. He marched his troops all the way through the southern countryside to the coast. He destroyed farms, fields, and people along the way. When Sherman reached Atlanta, one of the South’s largest cities, he told everyone to leave. Then he burned the entire city to the ground. Sherman hated war. He wanted the Southerners to feel the consequences of a war they had started. He said the famous words, “War is cruelty, and you cannot refine it; and those who brought war into our country deserve all of the curses and **maledictions**<sup>1</sup> a people can pour out.”

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<sup>1</sup> **maledictions** - insults or curses

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Why did General Lee fight for the Confederacy “with a heavy heart”?
  - a. He felt he was not a very good soldier.
  - b. He loved the Union.
  - c. He had gone to West Point.
  - d. He was the top General of the Confederacy.
  
2. When General Lee said, “He has lost his left arm but I have lost my right arm” this tells you that
  - a. Jackson was a very important person to Lee.
  - b. General Lee was injured in his right arm.
  - c. Jackson was not an important person to General Lee.
  - d. the Union had been injured.
  
3. General Sherman could be best described as
  - a. funny and timid
  - b. nervous and shy
  - c. brusque and friendly
  - d. angry and determined
  
4. According to this passage, the following generals both went to West Point.
  - a. William Sherman and Stonewall Jackson
  - b. Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson
  - c. William Sherman and Ulysses S. Grant
  - d. Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee
  
5. The generals were important in the Civil War because
  - a. they got to vote on the laws.
  - b. they used the biggest guns.
  - c. they controlled the armies.
  - d. they all fought for Virginia.

6. Describe one similarity and one difference between General Grant and General Jackson.

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7. Using evidence from the passage what characteristics seem important for a successful general to have?

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8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word or phrase that best completes the sentence.

William Tecumseh Sherman was a general, \_\_\_\_\_ he hated war.

- a. because
- b. so
- c. especially when
- d. even though

9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

When General Sherman reached Atlanta, he burned it to the ground.

Who? \_\_\_\_\_

(did) What? burned it to the ground

Where? \_\_\_\_\_

10. **Vocabulary Word:** resign: to give up or quit.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Teacher Guide and Answers

**Passage Reading Level:** Lexile 870

**Featured Text Structure:** Enumerative – the writer includes a list, giving examples of something. This text structure is often combined with cause/effect or problem/solution.

**Passage Summary:** The passage is a summary of the four most important generals of the Civil War: Ulysses Grant and William Sherman for the Union, and Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson for the Confederacy.

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  - b. He loved the Union.**
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  - a. they got to vote on the laws.
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  - d. they all fought for Virginia.

6. Describe one similarity and one difference between General Grant and General Jackson.

**Suggested answer:** Answers will vary. Similarities could include that both generals were brave and determined fighters. Differences could be that Jackson was killed during the war while Grant was not or that Grant fought for the Union while Jackson fought for the Confederacy.

7. Using evidence from the passage, what characteristics seem important for a successful general to have?

**Suggested answer:** Answers may vary but may include: bravery, loyalty, a military education, determination, ruthlessness.

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word or phrase that best completes the sentence.

William Tecumseh Sherman was a general, \_\_\_\_\_ he hated war.

- a. because
- b. so
- c. especially when
- d. even though**

9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

When General Sherman reached Atlanta, he burned it to the ground.

Who? **General Sherman**

(did) What? burned it to the ground

Where? **Atlanta**

10. **Vocabulary Word:** resign: to give up or quit.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: answers may vary.