

Slavery, the Civil War & Reconstruction Surrender at Appomattox

On April 9, 1865, General Robert E. Lee and the Confederate Army **surrendered**.¹ All fighting stopped. Lee met General Ulysses S. Grant at the McLean House in Appomattox, Virginia. There the two generals discussed the terms.

One of the men who witnessed the scene was a general in the Union army. His words show some of the most striking differences between the two men. What can you tell about the character of the two generals from reading the passage?

“The contrast between the two commanders was striking and could not fail to attract marked attention as they sat ten feet apart facing each other. General Grant, then nearly forty-three years of age, was five feet eight inches in height, with shoulders slightly stooped. His hair and full beard were a nutbrown, without a trace of gray in them. He had on a...blouse...unbuttoned in front.... He wore an ordinary pair of top-boots.... The boots and portions of his clothes were spattered with mud.... His felt “sugar-loaf” stiff-brimmed hat was thrown on the table beside him. He had no sword, and a pair of shoulder straps was all there was about him to **designate**² his rank....

Lee, on the other hand, was fully six feet in height, and quite erect for one of his age, for he was Grant’s senior by sixteen years. His hair and full beard were a silver-gray, and quite thick, except that the hair had become a little thin in front. He wore a new uniform of Confederate gray, buttoned up to the throat, and at his side he carried a long sword of exceedingly fine workmanship, the **hilt**³ studded with jewels.... His boots were

¹ **surrender** – to give in

² **designate** – to show

³ **hilt** – the handle of a sword or a dagger

comparatively new, and seemed to have on them some **ornamental**¹ stitching of red silk. Like his uniform, they were singularly clean....”

From *The Surrender at Appomattox Court House*. By Horace Porter, Brevet Brigadier General, U.S.A

¹ **ornamental** - decorative

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. One similarity between General Grant and General Lee was that
 - a. they were both generals.
 - b. they were the same age.
 - c. they both fought for the Confederacy.
 - d. they were the same height.

2. What was the reason for the meeting between Lee and Grant at McClean House in Appomattox?
 - a. Lee wanted to show Grant his jewel-studded sword.
 - b. Grant needed to discuss the Battle of Gettysburg with Lee.
 - c. Lee and Grant needed to decide on how the Confederate Army would surrender.
 - d. Lee and Grant needed to show the witnesses how different they were.

3. What kind of person does General Lee seem to be, based on the description by the witness?
 - a. He does not care about his appearance.
 - b. He is proud of being a Confederate general.
 - c. He is not a friendly or caring person.
 - d. He enjoys spending time with his family.

4. What kind of person does General Grant seem to be, based on the description by the witness?
 - a. He does not care about his appearance.
 - b. He is proud of being a Confederate general.
 - c. He is not a friendly or caring person.
 - d. He enjoys spending time with his family.

5. The passage “Surrender at Appomattox” is mostly about
 - a. why General Lee surrendered and why he chose Appomattox
 - b. the difference between the two generals who met at Appomattox
 - c. how Robert E. Lee’s uniform and sword were made
 - d. the witnesses at Appomattox and the different ways they tell the story

6. Describe at least 2 differences between General Grant and General Lee.

7. How did General Robert E. Lee probably want people to feel when they saw him?

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

General Grant was dressed plainly, _____ General Lee was dressed in fancy clothes.

- a. although
- b. whereas
- c. also
- d. because

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

When he surrendered in Virginia at age 59, Robert E. Lee had a thick, silver beard.

Who? Robert E. Lee

(had) What? _____

When? _____

Where? _____

10. **Vocabulary Word:** surrender: to give in and stop fighting.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: _____

Teacher Guide and Answers

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 970

Featured Text Structure: Compare/Contrast – the writer presents similarities and differences between two or more objects, places, events or ideas

Passage Summary: The Civil War ended when General Robert E. Lee surrendered to General Ulysses S. Grant in Appomattox, Virginia. Grant and Lee looked very different at that meeting – Grant was average height and dressed modestly, while Lee was much taller and was dressed formally.

1. One similarity between General Grant and General Lee was that
 - a. **they were both generals.**
 - b. they were the same age.
 - c. they both fought for the Confederacy.
 - d. they were the same height.

2. What was the reason for the meeting between Lee and Grant at McClean House in Appomattox?
 - a. Lee wanted to show Grant his jewel-studded sword.
 - b. Grant needed to discuss the Battle of Gettysburg with Lee.
 - c. **Lee and Grant needed to decide on how the Confederate Army would surrender.**
 - d. Lee and Grant needed to show the witnesses how different they were.

3. What kind of person does General Lee seem to be, based on the description by the witness?
 - a. He does not care about his appearance.
 - b. **He is proud of being a Confederate general.**
 - c. He is not a friendly or caring person.
 - d. He enjoys spending time with his family.

4. What kind of person does General Grant seem to be, based on the description by the witness?
 - a. **He does not care about his appearance.**
 - b. He is proud of being a Confederate general.
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5. The passage “Surrender at Appomattox” is mostly about
 - a. why General Lee surrendered and why he chose Appomattox
 - b. **the difference between the two generals who met at Appomattox**
 - c. how Robert E. Lee’s uniform and sword were made
 - d. the witnesses at Appomattox and the different ways they tell the story

6. Describe at least 2 differences between General Grant and General Lee.

Suggested answer: Answers will vary but could include that Lee was older and taller than Grant, or that Lee was dressed well while Grant was dressed in a more casual manner.

7. How did General Robert E. Lee probably want people to feel when they saw him?

Suggested answer: General Robert E. Lee probably wanted people to feel respectful toward him and the Confederacy even though the Confederacy was defeated in the war.

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

General Grant was dressed plainly, _____ General Lee was dressed in formal clothes.

- a. although
- b. whereas**
- c. also
- d. because

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

When he surrendered in Virginia at age 59, Robert E. Lee had a thick, silver beard.

Who? Robert E. Lee

(had) What? **a thick, silver beard**

When? **when he surrendered, at age 59,**

Where? **Virginia**

10. **Vocabulary Word:** surrender: to give in and stop fighting.

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