

War Decisions Matter

Trace how leaders, geography, battles, and change shaped the Civil War.

7.8d "The course and outcome of the Civil War were influenced by strategic leaders from both the North and South, decisive battles, and military strategy and technology that utilized the region's geography."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one leader's decision, circle one geography detail, and mark one technology detail with T.

Turning Points in the War

- ① In 1862, Confederate General Robert E. Lee invaded Maryland, hoping victory on Union soil would win foreign support and weaken Northern support for the war. Union soldiers found Lee's plans and passed them to General George B. McClellan. At Antietam, Lee used ridges and a sunken road for defense. McClellan held some troops in reserve. The battle had no clear tactical winner, but Lee retreated to Virginia.
- ② At Gettysburg in July 1863, Union General George G. Meade held high ground, including Cemetery Ridge. Confederate attackers crossed open fields under rifle and artillery fire. Pickett's Charge failed on the third day, costing Lee many soldiers. That month, Vicksburg surrendered to General Ulysses S. Grant, helping the Union control the Mississippi River. Railroads moved troops and supplies; telegraphs carried orders and news quickly.
- ③ After Antietam, President Abraham Lincoln announced a preliminary emancipation proclamation. His final proclamation took effect January 1, 1863. It declared freedom in designated rebellious areas, excluding loyal border states and certain Union-held regions. Freedom there depended on Union victory. It linked victory to ending slavery and announced acceptance of Black men into Union military service, expanding recruitment. Nearly 180,000 Black soldiers served in the Union Army, fighting for freedom and preservation of the United States.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What was Lee's goal in Maryland, and what information did McClellan receive?

2 How did Gettysburg's terrain help Union defenders? Give two details.

3 How did railroads and telegraphs help armies conduct the war?

4 How did the Emancipation Proclamation change the Union's war effort? Give two effects.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write four sentences about Antietam's influence: explain Lee's goal, a geography detail, the battle's result, and a change that followed.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline one leader's decision, circle one geography detail, and mark one technology detail with T. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What was Lee's goal in Maryland, and what information did McClellan receive?	Lee hoped a victory on Union soil would weaken Northern support and win foreign support. McClellan received a copy of Lee's plans that Union soldiers had found.
2	How did Gettysburg's terrain help Union defenders? Give two details.	Meade held high ground, including Cemetery Ridge. Confederate soldiers had to cross open fields under rifle and artillery fire.
3	How did railroads and telegraphs help armies conduct the war?	Railroads moved soldiers and supplies. Telegraphs carried orders and news quickly over long distances.
4	How did the Emancipation Proclamation change the Union's war effort? Give two effects.	It linked Union victory to ending slavery and expanded Black military recruitment. Black soldiers added needed manpower.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Lee hoped victory in Maryland would weaken Northern support for the war. He used ridges and a sunken road for defense. Although Antietam had no clear tactical winner, Lee retreated to Virginia. Afterward, Lincoln announced a preliminary emancipation proclamation, linking Union victory to ending slavery.

Accept equivalent wording that accurately connects a leader's decision, geography, battle result, technology, or manpower to the war's course. For the open response, require all four named elements and an accurate explanation of Antietam's influence.