Gettysburg's Two Meanings

A battlefield result and a purpose for the war

8.C.12.4.C "Describe how the Battle of Gettysburg ended the Confederate attempt to invade the North and analyze Lincoln's Gettysburg Address clarifying the Union's motivation for winning the war."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that show why Lee's invasion ended. Circle two phrases from Lincoln's address that show why he believed the Union needed to win.

From Battlefield to Address

1. In June 1863, Confederate General Robert E. Lee led his army into Pennsylvania, hoping a victory on Northern soil might weaken support for the Union war effort. Union and Confederate forces met at Gettysburg on July 1. For three days, soldiers fought for roads, hills, and fields around the town. On July 3, a Confederate attack across open ground, later called Pickett's Charge, failed to break the Union center. Both armies suffered terrible losses, but Lee's army could not force the Union army from its position.

2. After the fighting, Lee withdrew his battered army toward Virginia. His troops crossed the Potomac River later that month, ending this attempt to carry the war into Northern territory. The Union victory stopped Lee's Pennsylvania campaign, but it did not end the Civil War. Many soldiers on both sides were dead or wounded, and the question of what their sacrifice meant remained. A few months later, a cemetery was dedicated at Gettysburg for Union soldiers killed in the battle. President Abraham Lincoln spoke there on November 19, 1863.

3. Lincoln's short address looked beyond the battlefield. He recalled the founding belief that "all men are created equal," then said the war tested whether such a nation could survive. After his Emancipation Proclamation declared enslaved people in rebelling states free, his call for "a new birth of freedom" held special weight. He also wanted "government of the people, by the people, for the people" to endure. He asked the living to continue the soldiers' work. For Lincoln, winning meant preserving a government chosen by its people while advancing freedom.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the outcome of the July 3 attack help stop Lee's invasion?

2. How does Lee's movement after the battle show that his attempt to invade the North had ended?

3. How did Lincoln use the nation's founding belief to explain why the Union needed to win?

4. What two larger goals did Lincoln connect to Union victory? Give a phrase from the address that supports each goal.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence caption for a museum exhibit called "Two Meanings of Gettysburg." Include one detail about the failed invasion, one short quotation from Lincoln's address, and an explanation of why the battle mattered both immediately and for the nation's future.

ANSWER KEY

Gettysburg's Two Meanings

GRADE 8 · 8.C.12.4.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that show why Lee's invasion ended. Circle two phrases from Lincoln's address that show why he believed the Union needed to win. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the outcome of the July 3 attack help stop Lee's invasion?	**The attack failed to break the Union center, so Lee could not drive the Union army from its position.**
2	How does Lee's movement after the battle show that his attempt to invade the North had ended?	**Lee withdrew toward Virginia, and his troops crossed the Potomac River out of Northern territory.**
3	How did Lincoln use the nation's founding belief to explain why the Union needed to win?	**He said the war tested whether a nation founded on the belief that all people are created equal could survive.**
4	What two larger goals did Lincoln connect to Union victory? Give a phrase from the address that supports each goal.	**He sought greater freedom, supported by "a new birth of freedom," and lasting self-government, supported by "government of the people, by the people, for the people."**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At Gettysburg, Union forces held their position when a major Confederate attack failed. Lee withdrew toward Virginia and crossed the Potomac, ending his Pennsylvania invasion. Months later, Lincoln called for "a new birth of freedom." His words connected the battlefield victory to a larger struggle to protect self-government and advance freedom.

Accept answers that distinguish the end of Lee's Pennsylvania invasion from the end of the Civil War. For Lincoln's goals, accept accurate paraphrases supported by phrases from the passage.