

Civil War Letters

You will research ONE battle and write a letter from the perspective of either a Union or Confederate soldier. Your letter will be written to family members still at home. Your letter will be TWO PARAGRAPHS (5-10 sentences each) AND written in the FIRST PERSON (“I” and “We” statements).

Paragraph 1: Battle

Required: Date and location of battle. Generals commanding both armies. Casualties (dead + wounded) for each side. Winner and loser of battle. Something unique you saw.

Paragraph 2: Personal Life

Options: Missing home. Conditions during the war. Likes and dislikes of being a soldier. How long you've been away. Requests for food. Opinions of Lincoln.

Rubric:

Paragraph 1: Battle - 10 points

Paragraph 2: Personal Life - 10 points

Organization, Format, and Grammar - 5 points

Appropriate Length - 5 points

TOTAL - 30 points

Battle of Gettysburg:

Described by many historians as *the turning point of the Civil War*, the Battle of Gettysburg was fought between the *Union Army of the Potomac* under *Major General George Meade* and the *Confederate Army of Northern Virginia* under *General Robert E. Lee*. In the summer of 1863, the vital strategic city of *Vicksburg* on the Mississippi River was *under siege by the Union forces*. In the hope of building pressure on the Union and drawing out General Grant from Vicksburg, Confederate General Robert E. Lee invaded the North again, this time marching to Pennsylvania. Using the Shenandoah Valley as cover, *Major General Joseph Hooker* of the Union moved his army in pursuit. Hooker however soon lost favor with President Lincoln and was replaced just three days before the battle by Major General George Meade. Fighting began on the morning of *1st July, 1863* in the town of *Gettysburg* and continued over the course of *three days*. The battle is remembered for the *full assault of close to 15,000 Confederate infantry men against the center of the Union line on Cemetery Ridge*. Now famously known as *Pickett's Charge*, this *failed attack by Lee is cited as the primary reason for the Confederate defeat*. Lee's army *conceded the field on the 4th of July* and staggered back to Virginia. Another Northern invasion had failed. There were *close to 50,000 casualties over three days, the costliest in US history*.