

Civil War Battle Strategy: Mapping a Key Battle

Name: _____ Date: _____

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will analyze the terrain and strategy of a major Civil War battle by creating a labeled battle map.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- plain paper or poster board
- ruler
- colored pencils (at least 3 colors)
- internet-connected device or reference book
- pencil

HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

1. Choose one major Civil War battle to research: Antietam (1862), Gettysburg (1863), or Vicksburg (1863).
2. Research the basic terrain/layout of the battle (rivers, hills, towns) and the approximate positions of Union (blue) and Confederate (gray/red) forces at the start of the battle.
3. Draw a battle map on your paper/poster board including at least: a compass rose, terrain features (rivers, hills, roads), and labeled starting positions for both armies in their respective colors.
4. Draw arrows showing at least one key troop movement or attack during the battle, and label it with a one-sentence description of what happened.
5. Write a short paragraph (4-5 sentences) explaining the outcome of the battle and one reason (terrain, numbers, strategy, or leadership) that helped decide it.

QUESTIONS

1. Which battle did you choose, and what terrain feature played an important role in the battle?

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2. What was the outcome of your chosen battle, and which side won?
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3. Name one specific strategic decision or troop movement you included on your map, and explain why it mattered.

4. Why is this battle considered important or a turning point in the overall Civil War?
