



# Reading 47

## The Battle of Gettysburg

In June 1863, a Confederate army under the command of General Lee encountered a Union army commanded by General Meade near the town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The ensuing battle, which lasted three days, is considered the most important single **engagement** of the American Civil War in that it effectually ended the Confederates' last major invasion of the North. Once the Southern Confederate army's offensive strategy was destroyed at Gettysburg, the Southern states were forced to fight a defensive war in which their weaker manufacturing capacity and transportation infrastructure led ultimately to defeat.

**General Lee had ordered his Confederate army to invade the northern state of Pennsylvania in the hope of enticing the Union army into a vulnerable position.** The strategy was also aimed at increasing the war weariness of the North and ultimately at leading Abraham Lincoln's government into concluding a peace deal and recognizing the independence of the Confederate South.

On the morning of July 1, the battle opened with Confederate troops attacking a Union cavalry division to the west of Gettysburg at McPherson Ridge. The Union forces were outnumbered but managed to hold their positions initially. Reinforcements came to both sides, but eventually the Union forces were overpowered and were driven back to the south of Gettysburg. Thousands of their soldiers were captured in this retreat. During the night the bulk of the Union army arrived and the troops labored to create strong defensive positions along Cemetery Ridge, a long rise of land running southward from outside the town, and on two hills just to the north and east of this **crest**. When it was fully assembled, the whole Union army formed a defensive arc resembling a fishhook. The Confederate forces, about one mile distant, faced the Union positions from the west and north in a larger concave arc.

Throughout July 2 Lee's forces attacked both Union flanks, leaving thousands of dead on both sides. To the south the Confederates overran the Union's advance lines, but they failed to dislodge the Union forces from their main positions. A strategically important hill on the Union army's left flank known as Little Round Top was stormed by the

Confederates, but Meade's forces fought a skillful defensive battle and the attacks were unsuccessful. There was a devastating number of casualties on both sides.

On the third day of battle, General Lee decided to concentrate his attack on the center of the Union forces ranged along Cemetery Ridge. [A] He reasoned, against the advice of others in his senior staff, that since the Union forces had reinforced both their flanks, their central defensive positions would be weaker and easier to overrun. [B] As a prelude to the attack, the Confederate artillery bombarded the ridge for two hours, but inflicted less damage than they had expected, due to poor visibility. [C] When the bombardment ceased, a Confederate infantry force of about 13,000 men charged courageously across the open land toward the Union lines on Cemetery Ridge about a mile away. [D] This attack, now known as Pickett's Charge after the general whose division led it, failed in its objective to break the Union line.

With the failure of Pickett's Charge, the battle was essentially over and Lee's retreat began the following day. His exhausted army staggered toward safer territory in the South, leaving behind a scene of terrible devastation. Both sides had suffered excessive losses of men, but the Union had succeeded in preventing the Confederates from invading the North. So Gettysburg proved to be a decisive turning point in the Civil War and was celebrated as the biggest Union victory of the war.

## Questions

27. The word "engagement" in the passage is closest in meaning to

- A agreement
- B meeting
- C battle
- D defeat

28. In paragraph 1, the author suggests that the Confederates lost the Civil War largely because their

- A leaders were ineffective
- B industrial capacity was weaker
- C soldiers were unprofessional
- D strategy was poorly planned

29. Which of the sentences below best expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence in the passage? Incorrect choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out essential information.

A General Lee tried to lure his soldiers into invading the North in order to defeat the Union army.

B The Union army was in danger of an invasion by General Lee's army due to its location in Pennsylvania.

C In the hope of luring the Union army into an exposed situation, General Lee's forces marched into Pennsylvania.

D The state of Pennsylvania was a suitable location for drawing out the Union army into a dangerous situation.

30. What can be inferred from paragraph 2 about the North's attitude about the war?

A It was angry at the loss of freedoms.

B It was keen on continuing the war.

C It was keen on independence.

D It was tired of waging war.

31. We can infer from the passage that, at Gettysburg, the Union army largely played which kind of strategy?

A An offensive strategy

B A strategy of hit and run

C A defensive strategy

D A strategy of wait and see

32. The phrase "this crest" in the passage refers to

A the Confederate forces

B Cemetery Ridge

C Union army reinforcements

D the town of Gettysburg

33. Why does the author say the positions of the Union army resembled a fishhook?

A give the reader a mental picture of the troops' positions

B To explain the appearance of the sharp pointed hooks used as weapons

C To suggest that taking a fishhook formation is a good tactic in war

D To imply that the ridge had a curved shape like that of a fishhook

34. The word “devastating” in the passage is closest in meaning to

- A important
- B desperate
- C decisive
- D ruinous

35. All of the following are implied in paragraph 5 as contributing to the failure of Pickett’s Charge EXCEPT

- A General Lee’s refusal to listen to his generals’ opinion
- B the Confederate artillery’s failure to cause much damage
- C the Union’s center being stronger than anticipated
- D the Confederate infantry not performing at full strength

36. Look at the four squares [ ] that indicate where the following sentence could be added to the passage.

***They were subjected to heavy artillery and rifle fire and sustained a huge number of casualties.***

Where would the sentence best fit?

Choose the letter of the square that shows where the sentence should be added.

37. According to the passage, the battle of Gettysburg ended with

- A Lee signing a document of surrender
- B the Southern territories becoming much safer
- C Lee’s army devastating the countryside in their retreat
- D a high death toll for both the Union and the Confederates

38. According to the passage, why was the battle of Gettysburg so decisive?

- A The Confederates lost so many troops.
- B It created war weariness on both sides.
- C The Confederates failed to capture Northern territory.
- D The Union troops gained confidence.

39. An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the THREE answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. Some sentences do not belong in the summary because they express ideas that are not presented in the passage or are minor ideas in the passage.

Write the letters of the answer choices in the spaces where they belong.

**The battle of Gettysburg was the battle that turned the tide of the American Civil War.**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
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### **Answer Choices**

A The Confederate army's strategy was aimed at getting the North to seek a peace deal.

B The fighting was heavy from the beginning, and after two indecisive but bloody days, the main battle lines were drawn with reinforcements coming to both sides.

C The initial fighting was heavy, but at the end of the first two days General Meade's army seemed to be in a superior position.

D The Union army successfully overran most of General Meade's positions on the Confederates' left flank.

E A large-scale and devastating infantry advance by troops of the Confederate army failed to dislodge the Union army from their positions.

F The invading Confederate army retreated, leaving the North in a stronger position militarily and strategically.

*Источник задания: Cambridge Preparation to the TOEFL*

# Reading 47 — Keys

27 C

When two armies are "engaged," they are involved in a "battle."

28 B

The passage states that the Confederates' "weaker manufacturing capacity and transportation infrastructure led ultimately to defeat."

29 C

Part of Lee's plan was to lure or entice the Northern army to fight in an exposed or vulnerable position.

30 D

The phrase "aimed at increasing the war weariness of the North" implies that the North was tired of waging war.

31 C

In paragraphs 1 and 2, the invasion of the North by the Confederate army indicates that the Union had to defend itself. In paragraph 3, the passage discusses the defensive positions that the Union took.

32 B

"This crest" refers to the "long rise of land" known as Cemetery Ridge.

33 A

The author is giving a description of what the Union army position may have looked like if it were drawn on a map or seen from the air.

34 D

"Devastating" or "ruinous" means the number of casualties was disastrous.

35 D

The strength of the Confederate infantry was probably great, considering 13,000 men were involved in the charge.

36 D

The word "They" refers to the 13,000 men charging across the open land.

37 D

The passage states that "Both sides had suffered excessive losses of men."

38 C

Because Pickett's Charge failed and the Confederates did not capture Northern territory, they were unable to reach their objectives of weakening the Union army and increasing war weariness, and they had to take on a defensive strategy without adequate manufacturing and transportation infrastructure.

39 B E F

The main outlines of the battle were as follows: Two days of fighting failed to lead to a successful outcome for either side. Reinforcements strengthened the positions of both armies, which formed lines facing each other. On the final day, the Confederate army attacked the defensive positions of the Union army, but was unsuccessful. After this failure, the Confederates retreated back to the South.