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## The Civil War in America

While America had many battles and wars the Civil War was one of, or if not the most important wars ever. The Civil War defined what kind of nation America would be. It also changed the lives of slaves forever and set the tone of the way America was going to be run. Two parts of America, free North and the South, that was still in support of owning slaves, blew up into a massive altercation succeeding the election of Abraham Lincoln as president in 1860. 11 Southern states broke away from the Union, altogether turning away from the idea of a single American nation.

After the states broke away Abraham Lincoln, who had only been in office for a couple of weeks, stated that the acts of secession were illegal, he also asked Congress for five hundred thousand men to stop and destroy what seemed to be an aggressive act of rebellion. The first shots of the war were fired in April 1861 upon the famous Fort Sumter and what happened next became a national tragedy of unimaginable proportions. An estimate of 600,000 were killed and near millions were wounded. Large sizable portions of the South were nearly destroyed by violent battles. The Union nearly broke down under the determined Confederate forces.

The war began slowly. After the battle of Bull Run in Virginia in July of 1861, it was for sure that the war would be long and exhausting for both sides and would last maybe last months or even years. Many large battles raged all over the United States between the Union and the Confederates. Most of the battles that were important were fought in Virginia. The Confederate army, winning many victories against the poorly led Union army, was led by the Confederate general Robert E. Lee. Confederate general Lee invaded Maryland in the September of 1862. In Maryland he experienced a very influential loss at the Battle of Antietam, the bloodiest altercation of the war. The year after general Lee defeated the strong Union Army at Chancellorsville and invaded Pennsylvania, which also led to the Battle of Gettysburg. More than 50,000 men died and were wounded and eventually died because of their lack of medical knowledge and supplies. General Lee was forced to leave and retreat to Virginia, and was never able to invade the North again.

The general for the Union Ulysses S. Grant on July 4th 1863 took the important Confederate town of Vicksburg on the Mississippi River, on the same day news from the war on the victory of Gettysburg was sent and received in Washington. Although the Union was winning important battles, the war was far from over. General Grant started his 1864 Overland Campaign, and fought a bunch of significant battles. He hoped to destroy Lee's army by utilizing a strategy of attrition,

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