Before You Read
In the last section, you read about the hardships of army life during the Civil War.
In this section, you will learn about the war’s early battles and how they resulted in a bloody stalemate.

As You Read
Use the diagram below to take notes on the key events of the war’s early years.

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**Union Victories in the West** (page 493)

**Who was Ulysses S. Grant?**
The Union army won victories in the West. The victorious Union general was **Ulysses S. Grant**. In 1862, Grant captured two Confederate river forts in Tennessee. These were Fort Henry on the Tennessee River and Fort Donelson on the nearby Cumberland River.
The seizure of Fort Henry opened up a river highway into the heart of the South. Union gunboats could now travel on the river as far as northern Alabama. Soon after taking the forts, Union troops marched into Tennessee’s capital, Nashville.

1. Why was capturing Fort Henry important?

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**The Battle of Shiloh** (pages 494–495)

**Who won the Battle of Shiloh?**
As a result of Grant’s victories, the Confederate troops along the Western front retreated. Grant followed. The two sides met in April 1862 near Shiloh Church in Tennessee. The **Battle of Shiloh** turned out to be the bloodiest battle the Civil War had yet seen.
The North won—but at a terrible cost. The number of dead and wounded Union soldiers was more than 13,000. The Confederates lost nearly 11,000 of out 41,000 soldiers.

2. Why was the Battle of Shiloh considered a costly victory for the North?

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The Fall of New Orleans (page 495)

Why was the capture of New Orleans significant?
Another setback for the Confederacy occurred in the spring of 1862. In April, a Union fleet led by David Farragut captured New Orleans. New Orleans was the largest city in the South.

The fall of New Orleans was a heavy blow to the South. After the victories of General Grant and Admiral Farragut, the Union controlled most of the Mississippi River. The North was well on its way to cutting the Confederacy in two.

3. What goal was the North on its way to achieving with the capture of New Orleans?

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Lee Claims Victories in the East; Lee Invades the North (page 496)

Why did Lee invade the North?
Fighting increased in the East during the spring of 1862. After many delays, Union General George McClellan attempted to capture Richmond. In June, Confederate General Robert E. Lee prepared to turn McClellan’s army back. Lee sent his cavalry—soldiers on horseback—to spy on McClellan’s army and to find out its size. Lee then attacked McClellan's forces. For about a week, the two sides fought a series of clashes known as the Seven Days’ Battles. In the end, the Confederate troops forced the Union army to retreat to Washington.

Encouraged by his victory, Lee decided to invade the Union. In September 1862, the Confederate general took his army into Maryland. Lee had several reasons for attacking the North. He hoped that a victory would force Lincoln to talk peace. In addition, the invasion would give Virginia farmers a break from the war during harvest season.

Lee also hoped that a successful invasion of the North might convince Europe to side with the South. Britain and France originally had chosen to stay out of the war. But by 1862, both countries were leaning toward supporting the Confederacy. Both nations were impressed by Lee’s victories. In addition, their textile industry was suffering from a lack of Southern cotton.

4. For what reasons did Lee invade the North?

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Bloody Antietam (pages 496–497)

How did the North learn of Lee’s plans?
Soon after invading Maryland, Lee drew up plans for his campaign in the North. A Confederate officer accidentally left a copy of the plans behind at a campsite. A Union soldier found the plans and told his commanders.

General McClellan now knew Lee’s campaign plans. As a result, he decided to attack Lee’s army. The two sides met in September 1862 at Antietam Creek in Maryland. The Battle of Antietam was the bloodiest day in all of American history. By the end of the one-day clash, about 25,000 soldiers lay dead or wounded.

Lee lost about one-third of his fighting force. As a result, he withdrew to Virginia. McClellan did not follow, missing a chance to finish off the wounded Southern army. President Lincoln fired McClellan.

5. Why did Lee retreat after the Battle of Antietam?

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