

Name: _____ Hour: _____

ABC Summaries Assignment: *Title of Whatever We Just Read*

Rewrite this article (or section, chapter, etc.) in 26 complete sentences, beginning with consecutive letters of the alphabet. (Your 24th sentence must begin with a word which contains the letter 'X', but need not begin with the letter 'X'.) Your summary must make sense when read in order. Sentences cannot begin with interjections, fictional names, or proper names unrelated to your topic.

Example:



Arguably the largest danger to the survival of the United States was the Civil War which took place from 1861 – 1865.

Because this conflict has become so iconic in the annals of American History, it is easy to forget the many ways in which its causes and course were often mixed and unclear to those experiencing it firsthand.

Causes of the war certainly include the different economies and diverging cultures of the North and the South, shifting political power culminating in the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860, the rhetoric of the abolition movement, and the ways in which westward expansion continually provoked tensions over the central debate of the day: slavery.

Divorcing slavery from the war or reducing the argument to one of “states’ rights” was a popular strategy of the South AFTER the war, but the various state documents proclaiming secession left little doubt that perceived threats to slave-holding were central in the decision to seek dissolution of the Union.

Essentially, without slavery, there would have been no Civil War.

Figuring this means, however, that the majority of those fighting believed they were doing so to either destroy or defend slavery would be difficult to defend.

Good men and women on both sides, both on the battlefield and at home, believed they were standing for American ideals, local communities, families, or other principles—some of which would be familiar today, but many of which would perhaps seem outdated or quaint.

Hell—that’s what war is, or so proclaimed William T. Sherman late in the conflict.

It was, however, a hell interspersed with long periods of boredom, fear, doubt, or—worst of all—illness.

Judging from extant sources, the men who fought on both sides did so for complex reasons of their own, often with attitudes and beliefs which would be thought excessively sentimental and idealistic today.



Killing other men for a noble cause is unpalatable to most of us in the 21st century, as perhaps it should be, but whatever its glories, quirks, or cinematic moments, this is at its most basic what war is.

Life at home was perhaps less immediately violent, but in some ways could require more faith in the cause than actual battlefield service, especially in the South... *[obviously you'd need to finish]*