

Great Battles for Boys: The Vietnam War

Study Guide Questions

INTRODUCTION

1. Which three countries were known as “French Indochina”?
2. Who was Ho Chi Minh? And what kind of government did he want for Vietnam?
3. In 1961, which US President sent several hundred troops to Vietnam?

THE BATTLE OF DIEN BIEN PHU

1. Just before the United States and its allies entered the Vietnam War, the Vietnamese people were fighting against which country?
2. Which two countries were supplying the Viet Minh?
3. What were some of the problems with the Dien Bien Pho’s base and its location?

THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL

1. By 1968, roughly how many NVA troops had passed through the Ho Chi Minh Trail?
2. Which two neighboring countries helped the NVA travel on the Ho Chi Minh Trail?
3. Can you recall some of the tactics used by the United States to destroy the Ho Chi Minh Trail? Were those efforts successful? Why not?

THE BATTLE OF VAN TUONG

1. What year did the United States send its Marines to Vietnam?
2. What type of rifles did the Marines carry?
3. After the Battle of Van Tuong, how did politics enter into the military decision-making process?

TUNNEL RATS

1. Were all the tunnels the same size?
2. What did the largest tunnels contain?

3. What were some of the traps inside the tunnels?

BATTLE OF LONG TAN

1. What color uniforms did the Viet Cong soldiers wear?

2. The Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs) were equipped with what caliber of machine gun?

3. What does “danger close” mean?

GENERAL GIAP AND SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT MCNAMARA

1. What brilliant tactics did General Giap use to defeat the French Army?

2. Which US president did Secretary McNamara serve under?

3. What was McNamara’s strategy and plan for the Vietnam War? Was it effective?

TET OFFENSIVE AND THE BATTLE OF HUE

1. What is “Tet” in Vietnam?
2. Why were the South Vietnamese and American forces surprised by the attack? What promises had been made before the attack?
3. Why was the Battle of Hue different from the other Vietnam War battles before it?

MEDIA AND POLITICS

1. Who was the U.S. president at the time of the Tet Offensive?
2. Even though the the US won a major victory in the Tet Offensive, why did it turn into a political victory for the North Vietnamese forces?

STAFF SERGEANT ROY PEREZ BENAVIDEZ

1. Staff Sergeant Roy Benavidez took two items on the helicopter to help the recon team. What were they?
2. What was a CIDG? What was their role with American forces?
3. What medal did Sergeant Benavidez receive in 1981 — and why was the award delayed?

DOGS OF WAR

1. How many dogs served in Vietnam from 1964 to 1973?
2. These dogs were given different duties. Can you name those duties?
3. What did Nemo do?

MISSION TANGO 51

1. In which country did this mission take place?
2. How did the Special Forces conceal their American identity from the enemy?
3. Why do some military combat veterans prefer not to talk about their experiences on the battlefield?

THE HOA LO PRISON

1. What was the nickname of the Hot Lo prison?
2. Which country built the prison?
3. Name some of the habits and behaviors that helped POWs survive the prison.

FIRE SUPPORT BASE RIPCORD

1. Who was president of the United States during the Battle of Fire Support Base Ripcord?
2. How did this battle resemble the French fight at Dien Bien Phu?
3. After the evacuation of the base, what did the United States use to destroy the base and surrounding area?

THE END(S) OF THE VIETNAM WAR

1. In which country did the peace talks take place?
2. Can you name some of the reasons why the United States lost the Vietnam War?
3. After the fall of Saigon, the city was renamed. Do you know its new name?

