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| *Focus Question:*  *Who primarily made up the forces of each side?*  *What training did a soldier go through to become a [soldier]?*  *What conditions did soldiers have to deal with in the army?*  *What advances in weapon technology occurred during the Civil War?* | **What hardships did Union and Confederate soldiers share during the Civil War?**  Those Who Fought   * Majority of soldiers were between 18 and 30 years old. * Farmers made up the largest group of soldiers. * German and Irish immigrants made up the largest participating immigrant groups in the war. * African Americans wanted to fight in the beginning of the war; the North finally accepted them as the war dragged on. * Native Americans fought on both sides of the war. * 2 million soldiers served in the Union, over twice as much as the Confederacy. * Many soldiers sought adventure and glory; used it as an escape from the boredom of farm life.   Turning Civilians into Soldiers   * At a nearby army camp, volunteers followed a strict schedule in which they’d be drilled and performed maintenance tasks around the camp. * Union soldiers soon received blue uniforms, while Confederates received gray. * Contractors cheated the Northern government initially, made clothing out of imitation materials. * Rations became slowly more limited as the war progressed, dropping from large servings to below-standard levels.   Hardships of Army Life   * Camps and battlefields often encountered wet, muddy, and cold terrain. * Germ carrying insects helped advance the spread of sickness combined with the lack of clothing, body, and bedding cleanliness. * Poor hygiene led to widespread sickness, doctors failed to wash their hands and instruments.   Changes in Military Technology   * Battle tactics changed and casualties increased as military technology advanced. * Rifles firing a minié ball helped increase this, providing much better accuracy and fire rate than muskets. * Ironclads, warships covered with iron, were a vast improvement over previous wooden ships. * In the first two years, however, neither side pulled out an obvious lead over the other.   Summary  Soldiers who volunteered for the war, mainly comprised of farmers, faced tough training. In battle, they faced wet and muddy conditions, dealing with new types of rifles with ever-increasing accuracy. In addition, disease spread due to poor hygiene and medical practices. |