

Tracing the Civil War

The American Civil War along the Natchez Trace: Mississippi



Teacher's Guide

Student Activity 1: Read about the Battle of Brices Crossroads

Directions: Read the *Summary of the Battle of Brices Crossroads (June 10, 1864)* and answer the following questions.

1. How was General Sherman's overall strategy being affected by Forrest's cavalry? Why was it important that he should be engaged in Mississippi? *Sherman was afraid Forrest would damage the railroads supplying his army in Georgia. It was important to keep Forrest as far away from his rear area as possible.*
2. What are some of the advantages that the Union forces had over the Confederates at the battle? What kind of disadvantages did the Union forces have? *Advantage: more men and well supplied. Disadvantages: Far away from home base, hot weather and muddy conditions.*
3. Explain how Forrest decided to use the weather and the terrain to his advantage at Brices Crossroads. *Forrest knew the Federals would be hot and tired from marching in the mud and he knew the flooded creek would cause the Federals problems coming to and going from the battlefield.*
4. Why do you think this Confederate victory had little impact on the overall Union strategy? *Answers may vary but should discuss how the battle had no impact on Sherman's army in Georgia and didn't prevent the Union from launching another raid very soon.*
5. Imagine you were a Union soldier that fought at Brice's Crossroads. Write a letter home describing how you felt after the battle. Describe the conditions and write a brief summary of the battle. *Answers will vary but should include some details from the reading.*