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***H. L. Hunley* – A Civil War Submarine**

Prior to the Civil War Charleston, South Carolina was one of the busiest ports for shipping in the United States. The leaders of South Carolina were important contributors to the creation of the Confederacy, a group of states that seceded from the United States. In



fact, South Carolina was the first state to secede in December 1860 and the first shots of the Civil War were fired at Fort Sumter, South Carolina in January 1861. Also in 1861 the Union Navy blockaded Confederate ports, including Charleston, to keep goods from being imported or exported. A blockade means that warships patrol the waters outside the harbor and fire upon any ships that attempt to enter or leave the harbor.

Meanwhile the Confederacy offered a \$100,000 reward to anyone who could sink either of the two largest blockade ships and a \$50,000 reward for destruction of a monitor ship. Staunch Confederates Horace L. Hunley and James McClintock formed a partnership and by 1862 had built their first submarine. They destroyed this first submarine to prevent it from being captured by Union forces in New Orleans where it was developed. Their second submarine sank in Mobile Bay. However their third submarine named the *H. L. Hunley* looked like it could be a success at delivering a fatal torpedo without being detected in the water. It was moved to Charleston harbor by railcar in August 1863.

The *H. L. Hunley* ended up sinking in Charleston harbor three times. The first was an accident caused by an inexperienced crew and the second time the vessel was overcome by a large wave that occurred when a hatch was open. Confederate divers raised the submarine twice and it sailed out for a third time. This time the crew of the *H. L. Hunley* were successful in sinking the Union ship *Housatonic* with a torpedo. Unfortunately, the *H. L. Hunley* never returned and no one knows what happened to the submarine.

Divers and treasure hunters searched for the sunken submarine but it proved difficult to locate in the murky water and on the muddy sea floor, especially since no one knew where it sank. The search continued for over 100 years and the *H. L. Hunley* was finally found on May 3, 1995.



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Multiple Choice Questions

Circle the correct answer.

1. At the time of the Civil War the first state to secede from the Union was
 - a. South Dakota
 - b. South Carolina
 - c. North Carolina
 - d. Virginia
2. The first shots of the Civil War were fired at
 - a. Fort Detroit
 - b. Fort Sumter
 - c. Fort McHenry
 - d. Fort Knox
3. Who blockaded Southern ports during the Civil War?
 - a. Union Navy
 - b. Union Army
 - c. Confederate Navy
 - d. Confederate Army
4. Where did Hunley and McClintock build their first submarine?
 - a. Charleston
 - b. Atlanta
 - c. New Orleans
 - d. Mobile
5. What happened to Hunley and McClintock's first submarine?
 - a. It sank due to an accident
 - b. It sank due to a large wave
 - c. It was captured by Union forces
 - d. It was sunk on purpose
6. The purpose of the *H. L. Hunley* was
 - a. To act as a spy ship
 - b. To sink ships involved in the blockade
 - c. Both a. and b. above
 - d. None of the above



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Short Answer Questions

1. What is a blockade?
2. Do some research and list all the states that made up the Confederacy.
3. Why was Charleston, South Carolina important during the Civil War?
4. Do some research and find out what a monitor ship was during the Civil War.
5. Why did Hunley and McClintock destroy their first submarine?
6. Do some research and explain how circus owner P. T. Barnum is related to the submarine *H. L. Hunley*.
7. Do some research and explain what a torpedo is.



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Answer Key

Multiple Choice

1. b.
2. b.
3. a.
4. c.
5. d.
6. b.

Short Answer

1. A blockade means that warships patrol the waters outside the harbor and fire upon any ships that attempt to enter or leave the harbor.
2. South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, North Carolina
3. Charleston, South Carolina was one of the busiest ports for shipping in the United States.
4. A monitor ship was a type of military warship that had an iron hull and extremely large guns for its size.
5. They destroyed their first submarine to prevent it from being captured by Union forces in New Orleans where it was developed.
6. In the early 1900s P. T. Barnum offered a reward of \$100,000 to whoever could locate the lost *H. L. Hunley*.
7. A torpedo is an underwater weapon that is launched from an aircraft, a ship or a submarine that explodes when it strikes another object, usually an enemy ship.

