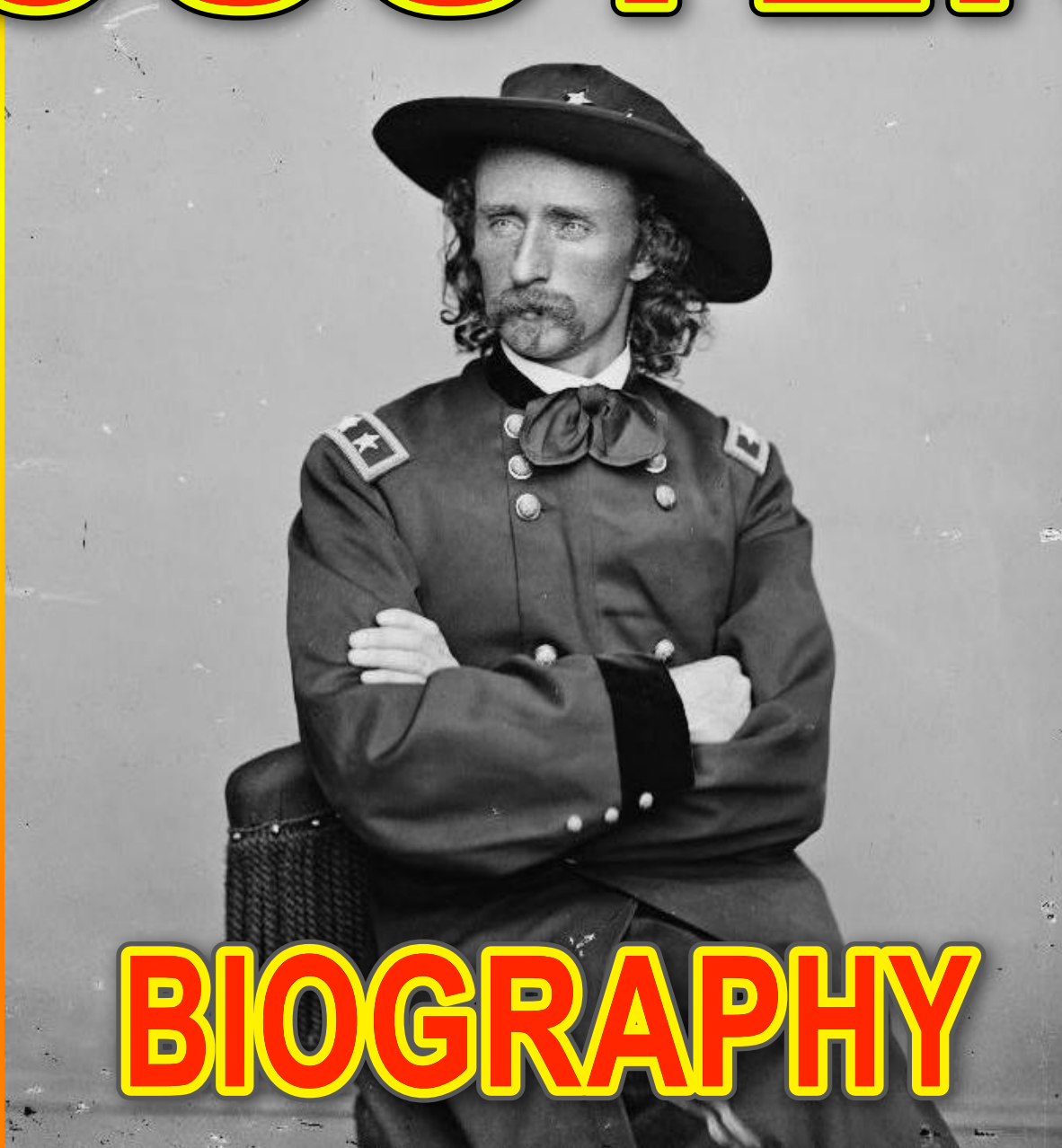


# GEORGE CUSTER



## BIOGRAPHY

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George Armstrong Custer was born in New Rumley, Ohio, on December 5, 1839, although he spent much of his childhood in Michigan. He trained at the military academy at West Point in New York, although he did not stand out while he was there.

But when the Civil War broke out in 1861, Custer got a chance to prove himself. He became a cavalry commander for the Union side, and faced his first major military action at the Battle of Bull Run. He led his men to victory, and was held up as a great commander afterwards.

During the war, Custer took part in several battles, including at Gettysburg in Pennsylvania. Towards the end of the war, Custer played a crucial role in forcing the Confederate General Robert E. Lee to surrender at Appomattox in 1865.

After the Civil War, Custer's military skills were needed against the Native Americans in the Dakota Territory and the Great Plains. As settlers headed for the American West, the Native Americans who had always lived on the land there fought to defend it. The U.S army was needed to control the Native Americans to go ahead with settling the land to the west.

In 1876, Custer led a force of men against the Lakota Sioux Native Americans in Montana. There were two other forces involved, but they were delayed in reaching Custer. The Native Americans, led by Sitting Bull, were a thousand strong, whereas Custer had around 200 men. But Custer decided to attack anyway. Without reinforcements, Custer was pushed back to the Little Bighorn, where the Native Americans were able to overwhelm Custer's forces. Custer and all his men were killed. The battle is often remembered as 'Custer's Last Stand'.

# Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'prove'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'prove' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'prove'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'prove'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'prove' means.

# Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: commander	leader

# Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

At the end of the Civil War, Custer forced General Robert E. Lee to surrender.

When the Civil War broke out, Custer fought for the Union side.

At the Battle of the Little Bighorn, Custer and all his men were killed.

At West Point military academy, Custer did not really stand out.

George Armstrong Custer was born in Ohio in 1839, but spent time in Michigan as a child.

During the Civil War, Custer fought in many major battles.

Later on, Custer fought in wars against Native Americans.

# Get to the facts

1 Where did George Armstrong Custer train?

2 Which war broke out in 1861?

3 Who did Custer force to surrender in 1865?

4 At which battle was Custer killed?

5 What is the battle often remembered as?

# Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

## Before the Little Bighorn

Imagine you are one of Custer's men just before the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Custer wants to attack the Native Americans before U.S reinforcements arrive to help you. But you think this is a bad idea.. (now complete the story)

**Below is a plain text version for printing:**

## Understanding words:

- a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'prove'.
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For example:

Key word – commander	Synonym – leader
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