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Level 1 | Elementary

1 Key vocabulary

Fill the gaps using these words.

insurgent
guerrilla

skilful
wealthy

regime
pessimistic

military
failure

1. If you are _____, you always think bad things will happen in every situation.
2. A _____ is a government that controls a country.
3. If you are _____, you are very good at doing something.
4. An _____ is someone who fights to take control of a country.
5. A _____ is another word for insurgent.
6. _____ is another word for rich.
7. _____ means relating to armies or armed forces.
8. _____ is the opposite of success.

2 Find the information

Find the answers to these questions in the article.

1. When did the Korean War start?
2. When did the Korean War end?
3. When did the Vietnam War start?
4. When did the Vietnam War end?
5. When did the Americans leave Vietnam?

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Max Hastings

Many American soldiers are beginning to think that the US will not win the war in Iraq. They remember what happened in Vietnam. In recent years the US army has become a very effective army for big military operations in other countries, but it has never been effective against insurgents. It is very difficult for regular armies to fight against guerrillas and suicide bombers.

Some years ago, I heard an American general talking about the US army. He said to me: "We went into Korea in 1950 with a very poor army, and came out of it in 1953 with a very good one. We went into Vietnam in 1964 with a fine army, and came out in 1975 with a terrible one." Some American officers think the same thing is happening in Iraq. The US armed forces are fighting a difficult war. It is now possible that it will have to leave Iraq without winning this war.

Other people think that America will win in the end but not with its army. Edward Luttwak, an American military expert, has said that the US began to win the Vietnam War the day after it left Vietnam in April 1975. The US military lost the military battle but, Luttwak says, it began to win culturally and economically. In theory Vietnam is still a communist state, but in reality capitalism is everywhere. American values are winning in Vietnam just as they are present in other nations which want to be wealthy.

Osama bin Laden and his Al-Qaida group are fighting against this cultural and economic invasion but it is a very difficult battle. It is more difficult to fight against Bill Gates and Steven Spielberg than it is to

fight against a regular army. Recent history shows us that America is more skilful in using economic and cultural power than it is in using military power.

Last spring in a refugee camp in Gaza, I asked a group of children what they enjoyed watching on television. Immediately they all said: "Rambo! Rambo!". This was a surprising answer not because of the character of Rambo but where Rambo comes from. The parents of these children hated America but Hollywood has a much greater power than the power of President Bush and the Pentagon. Young Palestinians may hate the US, but American culture is everywhere.

To return to Iraq: even if the insurgents force the Americans to leave the country, they have much less chance of winning a war against Tom Hanks, Julia Roberts and so on, because people can now watch satellite TV easily all over Iraq.

Powerful armies might become less important in the 21st century than cultural forces. We had examples of this in the last part of the 20th century. It was not Ronald Reagan's American armies that destroyed the Soviet Union, but economic failure, and the apartheid regime in South Africa ended for the same reason.

Unfortunately, in the poorest countries, military power will still be important, but in countries where external cultural influences are strong, soldiers will have a less important role to play. I do not think the US armed forces will win the war in Iraq. The pessimistic soldiers are probably right. But in the end, Microsoft and DreamWorks could succeed where George Bush and his military forces might fail.

The Guardian Weekly 2005-28-01, page 13

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3 Comprehension check

Choose the best answer according to the text.

1. At the end of the Korean War
 - a. the USA had a very good army.
 - b. the USA had a terrible army.
 - c. the USA had a very poor army.
2. The author of the article believes
 - a. the USA will win the military battle in Iraq.
 - b. the USA probably will not win the war in Iraq.
 - c. the USA will certainly lose the war in Iraq.
3. 'Rambo' was a surprising answer because
 - a. American culture is everywhere.
 - b. Rambo is an American character.
 - c. Hollywood has greater power than President Bush.
4. Tom Hanks and Julia Roberts will 'win the war' because
 - a. many people in Iraq can watch satellite TV.
 - b. the Americans will leave Iraq.
 - c. they are American.

4 Vocabulary - opposites

Find the opposites of these words in the text.

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| 1. optimistic | _____ | 5. love | _____ |
| 2. success | _____ | 6. internal | _____ |
| 3. easy | _____ | 7. boring | _____ |
| 4. poor | _____ | 8. weak | _____ |

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5 Prepositions

Fill the gaps with a preposition.

1. _____ theory, Vietnam is still a communist state.
2. The US army has never been effective _____ insurgents.
3. America went _____ Korea in 1950 with a very poor army.
4. The children enjoyed watching Rambo _____ television.
5. America may have to leave Iraq _____ winning the war.
6. They have little chance _____ winning the war.
7. _____ the end Microsoft and DreamWorks could succeed.
8. People can watch satellite TV all _____ Iraq.

6 Grammar focus - irregular past tenses

Complete the table with the past tense of the verb.

- | | |
|-----------|-------|
| 1. win | won |
| 2. hear | _____ |
| 3. lose | _____ |
| 4. fight | _____ |
| 5. think | _____ |
| 6. become | _____ |
| 7. leave | _____ |
| 8. begin | _____ |

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KEY

1 Key vocabulary

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. pessimistic | 4. insurgent | 7. military |
| 2. regime | 5. guerrilla | 8. failure |
| 3. skilful | 6. wealthy | |

2 Find the information

- | | | |
|---------|---------|---------------|
| 1. 1950 | 3. 1964 | 5. April 1975 |
| 2. 1953 | 4. 1975 | |

3 Comprehension Check

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1. a | 2. b | 3. b | 4. a |
|------|------|------|------|

4 Vocabulary – opposites

- | | | |
|----------------|-------------|----------------------|
| 1. pessimistic | 4. wealthy | 7. interesting |
| 2. failure | 5. hate | 8. strong (powerful) |
| 3. difficult | 6. external | |

5 Prepositions

- | | | |
|------------|------------|---------|
| 1. in | 4. on | 7. in |
| 2. against | 5. without | 8. over |
| 3. into | 6. of | |

6 Grammar focus

- | | | |
|----------|------------|----------|
| 1. won | 4. fought | 7. left |
| 2. heard | 5. thought | 8. began |
| 3. lost | 6. became | |