**The Art of War**
By Sun Tzu
Translated by Lionel Giles

Background: Written in the 6th century B.C., The Art of War remains the ultimate guide to combat strategy. Sun Tzu explains when and how to engage opponents in order to prevail in difficult situations. Instead of describing the logistics of warfare, he shows the reader how to succeed by motivating soldiers and leveraging tactical advantages. In short, he explains how to win the battle of wits. Though it was written for the battlefield, The Art of War contains valuable advice for other endeavors as well. Tzu's work has been lauded by sports coaches, business executives, and other leaders of the 21st century. This edition contains the translation of Lionel Giles, widely considered the most faithful and authoritative translation. *Source: Book description from Amazon.com*

Directions:

Part 1: There are 10 topics of war discussed by Sun Tzu below. Some topics have one example some have several. Summarize what he is saying by putting each example into your own words.

Part 2: Write a paragraph that explains how the ideas of Sun Tzu related to the ideas of his contemporary Confucius. See pages 150 to 153 for a refresher on Confucianism.

**I. Laying Plans**

**18.** All warfare is based on deception.
**19.** Hence, when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when far away, we must make him believe we are near.

**III. Attack by Stratagem**

**2.** Hence to fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting.

**6.** Therefore the skillful leader subdues the enemy's troops without any fighting; he captures their cities without laying siege to them; he overthrows their kingdom without lengthy operations in the field.

**IV. Tactical Dispositions**

**11.** What the ancients called a clever fighter is one who not only wins, but excels in winning with ease.
**12.** Hence his victories bring him neither reputation for wisdom nor credit for courage.

**V. Energy**

**16.** Amid the turmoil and tumult of battle, there may be seeming disorder and yet no real disorder at all; amid confusion and chaos, your array may be without head or tail, yet it will be proof against defeat.
**17.** Simulated disorder demands perfect discipline, simulated fear demands courage; simulated weakness demands strength.

**VI. Weak Points and Strong**

**29.** Military tactics are like unto water; for water in its natural course runs away from high places and hastens downwards.
**30.** So in war, the way is to avoid what is strong and to strike at what is weak.
**31.** Water shapes its course according to the nature of the ground over which it flows; the soldier works out his victory in relation to the foe whom he is facing.
**32.** Therefore, just as water retains no constant shape, so in warfare there are no constant conditions.
**33.** He who can modify his tactics in relation to his opponent and thereby succeed in winning, may be called a heaven-born captain.

**VII. Maneuvering**

**28.** Now a soldier's spirit is keenest in the morning; by noonday it has begun to flag; and in the evening, his mind is bent only on returning to camp.
**29.** A clever general, therefore, avoids an army when its spirit is keen, but attacks it when it is sluggish and inclined to return. This is the art of studying moods.

**VIII. Variation in Tactics**

**12.** There are five dangerous faults which may affect a general: (1) Recklessness, which leads to destruction; (2) cowardice, which leads to capture; (3) a hasty temper, which can be provoked by insults; (4) a delicacy of honor which is sensitive to shame; (5) over-solicitude for his men, which exposes him to worry and trouble.

**IX. The Army on the March**

**24.** Humble words and increased preparations are signs that the enemy is about to advance. Violent language and driving forward as if to the attack are signs that he will retreat.

**42.** If soldiers are punished before they have grown attached to you, they will not prove submissive; and, unless submissive, then will be practically useless. If, when the soldiers have become attached to you, punishments are not enforced, they will still be unless.
**43.** Therefore soldiers must be treated in the first instance with humanity, but kept under control by means of iron discipline. This is a certain road to victory.

**X. Terrain**

**25.** Regard your soldiers as your children, and they will follow you into the deepest valleys; look upon them as your own beloved sons, and they will stand by you even unto death.
**26.** If, however, you are indulgent, but unable to make your authority felt; kind-hearted, but unable to enforce your commands; and incapable, moreover, of quelling disorder: then your soldiers must be likened to spoilt children; they are useless for any practical purpose.

**XI. The Nine Situations**

**23.** Throw your soldiers into positions whence there is no escape, and they will prefer death to flight. If they will face death, there is nothing they may not achieve. Officers and men alike will put forth their uttermost strength.