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History of All Ancient Things

Prof. Wilson

### Proposal: Hannibal and the Elephants

Hannibal Barca, the great Carthaginian general, brought 37 war elephants with him over the Alps into Italy, and at the climactic Battle of Zama they had a front line that included 80 elephants. Did Hannibal's elephants really make a difference? Some say that Hannibal's elephants were crucial in establishing the morale of his troops against the legendary Roman legions and in intimidating other armies along the way into alliances; but others say that Hannibal's elephants did the Carthaginian side more harm than good in their fight with Rome. I believe that Hannibal's use of elephants was a mistake, not because war elephants were a dumb idea in general, but because Roman adaptability meant that the Romans would inevitably find a way around them.

Problem

Thesis

Note that the thesis is

- (a) a statement of opinion you can back up with evidence, and
- (b) specific as to the reasons why the thesis will be supported