

Understanding the Primary Text: What Does It Say?

Student Name _____ Date _____

Abraham Lincoln, “The Gettysburg Address” (November 19, 1863):
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/gadd/images/Gettysburg-2.jpg>

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Supplementary Texts: How Do They Shed Light on the Primary Text?

Student Name _____ Date _____

Chicago Times Editorial, “The President at Gettysburg” (November 23, 1863)

THE PRESIDENT AT GETTYSBURG

It is not supposed by any one, we believe, that Mr. Lincoln is possessed of much polish in manners or conversation. His adherents, however, claim for him an average amount of common sense, and more than an ordinarily kind and generous heart. We have failed to distinguish his pre-eminence in the latter, and apprehend the former to be somewhat mythical, but imagine that his deficiencies herein being less palpable than in other qualities constituting a statesman have led his admirers greatly to overestimate him in these regards. . . .

But aside from the ignorant rudeness manifest in the President’s exhibition of Dawdleism* at Gettysburg,—and which was an insult at least to the memories of a part of the dead, whom he was there professedly to honor,—in its misstatement of the cause for which they died, it was a perversion of history so flagrant that the most extended charity cannot regard it as otherwise than willful. That, if we do him injustice, our readers may make the needed correction, we append a portion of his eulogy on the dead at Gettysburg:

“Four score and ten [sic] years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a nation consecrated [sic] to liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. [Cheers.] Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any other [sic] nation so consecrated [sic] and so dedicated can long endure.”

As a refutation of this statement, we copy certain clauses in the Federal constitution:

“Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included in this Union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of *free* persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of *all other persons*.”

“The migration or importation of such persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year 1808, but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each person.”

“No amendment to the constitution, made prior to 1808, shall affect the preceding clause.”

“No person held to service or labor in one State under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.”

Do these provisions in the constitution dedicate the nation to “the proposition that all men are created equal”? Mr. Lincoln occupies his present position by virtue of this constitution, and is sworn to the maintenance and enforcement of these provisions. It was to uphold this constitution, and the Union

created by it, that our officers and soldiers gave their lives at Gettysburg. How dared he, then, standing on their graves, misstate the cause for which they died, and libel the statesmen who founded the government? They were men possessing too much self-respect to declare that negroes were their equals, or were entitled to equal privileges.

** Dawdleism – to “dawdle” means to idle or waste time; despite the brevity of Lincoln’s remarks, the author apparently thought Lincoln displayed poor etiquette by bringing a partisan interpretation of the war into a eulogy that should have focused on honoring the dead soldiers at the Gettysburg cemetery.*

Supplementary Texts: How Do They Shed Light on the Primary Text?

Student Name _____ Date _____

Directions: After reading the *Chicago Times* Editorial, “The President at Gettysburg” (November 23, 1863), answer the following questions in the space provided.

Questions	Answers
<p>In the second paragraph of the editorial, what were the author’s criticisms of Lincoln’s address?</p>	
<p>What subject is being addressed in the passages from the Constitution included by the author?</p>	
<p>What does the author want to show when he quotes passages from the Constitution and then derides Lincoln for talking about equality of all human beings in his Gettysburg remarks?</p>	
<p>What disagreements over ‘the cause for which they died’ between Lincoln and the author can you infer from the editorial? For what cause does the author think the Union soldiers died at Gettysburg? For what cause does Lincoln think they died?</p>	
<p>What words would you use to describe the tone of the author in the editorial?</p>	

Supplementary Texts: How Do They Shed Light on the Primary Text?

Student Name _____ Date _____

Abraham Lincoln, "Response to a Serenade" (July 7, 1863): <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=lincoln;cc=lincoln;type=simple;rgn=div1;q1=response%20to%20a%20serenade;singlegenre=All;view=text;subview=detail;sort=occur;idno=lincoln6;node=lincoln6%3A674>

Fellow-citizens:

I am very glad indeed to see you to-night, and yet I will not say I thank you for this call, but I do most sincerely thank Almighty God for the occasion on which you have called. [Cheers.] How long ago is it?—eighty odd years—since on the Fourth of July for the first time in the history of the world a nation by its representatives, assembled and declared as a self-evident truth that "all men are created equal." [Cheers.] That was the birthday of the United States of America. Since then the Fourth of July has had several peculiar recognitions. The two most distinguished men in the framing and support of the Declaration were Thomas Jefferson and John Adams—the one having penned it and the other sustained it the most forcibly in debate—the only two of the fifty-five who sustained [signed?] it being elected President of the United States. Precisely fifty years after they put their hands to the paper it pleased Almighty God to take both from the stage of action. This was indeed an extraordinary and remarkable event in our history. Another President [James Monroe], five years after, was called from this stage of existence on the same day and month of the year; and now, on this last Fourth of July just passed, when we have a gigantic Rebellion, at the bottom of which is an effort to overthrow the principle that all men were [are?] created equal, we have the surrender of a most powerful position and army on that very day, [cheers] and not only so, but in a succession of battles in Pennsylvania, near to us, through three days, so rapidly fought that they might be called one great battle on the 1st, 2d and 3d of the month of July; and on the 4th the cohorts of those who opposed the declaration that all men are created equal, "turned tail" and run. [Long and continued cheers.] Gentlemen, this is a glorious theme, and the occasion for a speech, but I am not prepared to make one worthy of the occasion. I would like to speak in terms of praise due to the many brave officers and soldiers who have fought in the cause of the Union and liberties of the country from the beginning of the war. There are trying occasions, not only in success, but for the want of success. I dislike to mention the name of one single officer lest I might do wrong to those I might forget. Recent events bring up glorious names, and particularly prominent ones, but these I will not mention. Having said this much, I will now take the music.

Supplementary Texts: How Do They Shed Light on the Primary Text?

Student Name _____ Date _____

Directions: After reading Abraham Lincoln’s “Response to a Serenade” (July 7, 1863), answer the following questions in the space provided.

Questions	Answers
<p>Why does Lincoln call July 4, 1776 “the birthday of the United States of America”? Given that the War for Independence would not be over until the Treaty of Paris in 1783, what was born on July 4th that Lincoln views as the start of a new nation?</p>	
<p>Lincoln calls the Southern attempt at secession “a gigantic Rebellion.” What did Lincoln say was its fundamental aim?</p>	
<p>What does Lincoln say was the fundamental aim of the federal military throughout the Civil War?</p>	

Understanding the Primary Text: What Does It Say?

Student Name _____ Date _____

Directions: After re-reading Abraham Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address” (November 19, 1863), answer the following questions in the space provided.

Questions	Answers
<p>Why does Lincoln begin his eulogy to the soldiers buried at Gettysburg with a reference to “Four score and seven years ago”? (Hint: What significant event happened in America eighty-seven years before 1863?)</p>	
<p>The Declaration of Independence says “all men are created equal” is a “self-evident” truth, suggesting that human equality is obvious to any unbiased person. Why does Lincoln at Gettysburg call human equality a “proposition,” meaning something that needs to be proven? (Hint: What does the Civil War suggest about American convictions regarding human equality??</p>	
<p>What does Lincoln mean by calling the Civil War a test of the ability of the nation to “long endure”?</p>	

<p>What does Lincoln say is the best way for the living to honor the dead at Gettysburg? (Hint: How does Lincoln use the idea of dedication to shift his audience from the ceremony at the battlefield cemetery to the audience's responsibility once the ceremony is over?)</p>	
<p>What is "the unfinished work" or "great task remaining before" his audience, the American people?</p>	
<p>What is "the cause" for which the soldiers buried at Gettysburg "gave the last full measure of devotion"?</p>	
<p>What is "the new birth of freedom" Lincoln calls for, and how does it differ from the nation's original birth? (Hint: Who were the main beneficiaries of the original birth of freedom in 1776, and who does Lincoln think will experience the new birth of freedom if the federal military wins the war?)</p>	

Extending the Lesson

Student Name _____ Date _____

An Introduction to the “Central Act” of Lincoln’s Presidency

Abraham Lincoln, Excerpts from the “Final Emancipation Proclamation” (January 1, 1863):
http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured_documents/emancipation_proclamation/transcript.html

By the President of the United States of America:

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

“That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.”

...

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

...

Done at the City of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

By the President: ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Extending the Lesson

Student Name _____ Date _____

An Introduction to the “Central Act” of Lincoln’s Presidency

Directions: After reading Abraham Lincoln’s “Final Emancipation Proclamation” (January 1, 1863), answer the following questions in the space provided.

Questions	Answers
<p>The Constitution required that fugitive (or escaped) slaves be returned to their masters, a mandate that was enforced by the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. What effect does Lincoln’s Proclamation have on “persons held as slaves” in rebellious areas of the United States?</p>	
<p>Besides protecting their efforts to “labor faithfully for reasonable wages,” what additional opportunity does the Emancipation Proclamation offer the freed slaves?</p>	
<p>What reasons does Lincoln give to justify the Emancipation Proclamation? (Recall that at his presidential inauguration, Lincoln declared no intention “to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists.”)?</p>	

Extending the Lesson

Student Name _____ Date _____

Further Consideration of the “Central Act” of Lincoln’s Presidency

Abraham Lincoln, “Final Emancipation Proclamation” (January 1, 1863):

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured_documents/emancipation_proclamation/transcript.html

By the President of the United States of America:

A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

“That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

“That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be, in good faith, represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States.”

Now, therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief, of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days, from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit:

Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, (except the Parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. Johns, St. Charles, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the City of New-Orleans) Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South-Carolina, North-Carolina, and Virginia, (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the

counties of Berkley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth-City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk & Portsmouth); and which excepted parts are, for the present, left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free; and that the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

By the President: ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Extending the Lesson

Student Name _____ Date _____

Further Consideration of the “Central Act” of Lincoln’s Presidency

Directions: After reading the complete text of Abraham Lincoln’s “Final Emancipation Proclamation” (January 1, 1863), answer the following questions in the space provided.

Questions	Answers
<p>Which slaveholding states did the Emancipation Proclamation apply to, and which slaveholding states were not included in this proclamation? (Hint: Ten slaveholding states were covered by the Emancipation Proclamation and five slaveholding states were not covered.)</p>	
<p>Why did the Emancipation Proclamation not apply to all the slaveholding states? What did a slaveholding state have to do (by January 1, 1863) to avoid having their slaves freed under the Emancipation Proclamation?</p>	
<p>According to the Emancipation Proclamation, what authority did Lincoln have to free certain slaves and for what constitutional purpose?</p>	

Contrasting the Emancipation Proclamation with the Gettysburg Address, which sounds more eloquent? What explains this difference? (Hint: think about the different aims of the documents and the different occasions that moved Lincoln to write them.)