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Chapter 1

Standard 8.76 Lesson

Standard 8.76 Lesson 8.76 Describe Abraham Lincoln’s presidency and his significant writings and speeches, including his House Divided speech in 1858, Gettysburg Address in 1863, Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and Inaugural Addresses in 1861 and 1865. (C,H,P)

Abraham Lincoln became the United States’ 16th President in 1861, issuing the Emancipation Proclamation that declared forever free those slaves within the Confederacy in 1863. Lincoln warned the South in his Inaugural Address: “In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you.... You have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to preserve, protect and defend it.” Lincoln thought secession illegal, and was willing to use force to defend Federal law and the Union. When Confederate batteries fired on Fort Sumter and forced its surrender, he called on the states for 75,000 volunteers. Four more slave states joined the Confederacy but four remained within the Union. The Civil War had begun. The son of a Kentucky frontiersman, Lincoln had to struggle
for a living and for learning. Five months before receiving his party’s nomination for President, he sketched his life: "I was born Feb. 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families—second families, perhaps I should say. My mother, who died in my tenth year, was of a family of the name of Hanks.... My father ... removed from Kentucky to ... Indiana, in my eighth year.... It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods. There I grew up.... Of course when I came of age I did not know much. Still somehow, I could read, write, and cipher ... but that was all." Lincoln made extraordinary efforts to attain knowledge while working on a farm, splitting rails for fences, and keeping store at New Salem, Illinois. He was a captain in the Black Hawk War, spent eight years in the Illinois legislature, and rode the circuit of courts for many years. His law partner said of him, "His ambition was a little engine that knew no rest." He married Mary Todd, and they had four boys, only one of whom lived to maturity. In 1858 Lincoln ran against Stephen A. Douglas for Senator. He lost the election, but in debating with Douglas he gained a national reputation that won him the Republican nomination for President in 1860. As President, he built the Republican Party into a strong national organization. Further, he rallied most of the northern Democrats to the Union cause. On January 1, 1863, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation that declared forever free those slaves within the Confederacy. Lincoln never let the world forget that the Civil War involved an even larger issue. This he stated most movingly in dedicating the military cemetery at Gettysburg: "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." Lincoln won re-election in 1864, as Union military triumphs heralded an end to the war. In his planning for peace, the President was flexible and generous, encouraging Southerners to lay down their arms and join speedily in reunion. The spirit that guided him was clearly that of his Second Inaugural Address, now inscribed on one wall of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D. C.: "With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation’s wounds...." On Good Friday, April 14, 1865, Lincoln was assassinated at Ford’s Theatre in Washington by John Wilkes Booth, an actor, who somehow thought he was helping the South. The opposite was the result, for with Lincoln’s death, the possibility of peace with magnanimity died. The Presidential biographies on WhiteHouse.gov are from “The Presidents of the United States of America,” by Frank Freidel and Hugh Sidey. Copyright 2006 by the White House Historical Association. Abraham Lincoln’s "A House Divided Speech"

“A House Divided”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_tcDKDA5sk

The House Divided Speech was an address given by Abraham Lincoln (who would later become President of the United States ) on June 16, 1858, at what was then the Illinois State Capitol in Springfield, upon accepting the Illinois Republican Party ‘s nomination as that state’s United States senator. The speech became the launching point for his unsuccessful campaign for the Senate seat held by Stephen A. Douglas; this campaign would climax with the Lincoln-Douglas debates of 1858. Mr. Lincoln’s remarks in Springfield created an image of the danger of slavery-based disunion, and it rallied Republicans across the North. Along with the Gettysburg Address and his second inaugural address, this became one of the best-known speeches of his career. The best-known passage of the speech is: A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved — I do not expect the house to fall — but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward, till it shall become lawful in all the States, old as well as new — North as
well as South. Lincoln’s goals with this speech were, firstly, to differentiate himself from Douglas, the incumbent; and secondly, to publicly voice a prophecy for the future. Douglas had long advocated popular sovereignty, under which the settlers in each new territory decided their own status as a slave or free state; he had repeatedly asserted that the proper application of popular sovereignty would end slavery-induced conflict, and would allow northern and southern states to resume their peaceful coexistence. Lincoln, however, responded that the Dred Scott decision had closed the door on Douglas’s preferred option and left the Union with only two remaining outcomes: the United States would inevitably become either all slave, or all free. Now that the North and the South had come to hold distinct opinions in the question of slavery, and now that this issue had come to permeate every other political question, the time would soon come when the Union would no longer be able to function. Inaugural Speech 1861

Abraham Lincoln’s first inaugural address was delivered by President Abraham Lincoln, on Monday, March 4, 1861, as part of his taking of the oath of office for his first term as the sixteenth President of the United States. The speech was primarily addressed to the people of the South, and was intended to succinctly state Lincoln’s intended policies and desires toward that section, where seven states had seceded from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America. Written in a spirit of reconciliation toward the seceded states, Lincoln’s inaugural address touched on several topics: first, his pledge to "hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the government"—including Fort Sumter, which was still in Federal hands; second, his argument that the Union was undissolvable, and thus that secession was impossible; and third, a promise that while he would never be the first to attack, any use of arms against the United States would be regarded as rebellion, and met with force. The inauguration took place on the eve of the American Civil War, which began soon after with the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter. Lincoln denounced secession as anarchy, and explained that majority rule had to be balanced by constitutional restraints in the American system of republicanism: A majority held in restraint by constitutional checks and limitations, and always changing easily with deliberate changes of popular opinions and sentiments, is the only true sovereign of a free people." Desperately wishing to avoid this terrible conflict, Lincoln ended with this impassioned plea: I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature. The Gettysburg Address
The Gettysburg Address

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qCXUbQ4jXl and The Gettysburg Address from "Saving Lincoln" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2a-S3rjDBw

The Gettysburg Address is a speech by U.S. President Abraham Lincoln, one of the best-known in American history. It was delivered by Lincoln during the American Civil War, on the afternoon of Thursday, November 19, 1863, at the dedication of the Soldiers’ National Cemetery in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, four and a half months after the Union armies defeated those of the Confederacy at the Battle of Gettysburg.

Abraham Lincoln’s carefully crafted address, secondary to other presentations that day, came to be regarded as one of the greatest speeches in American history. In just over two minutes, Lincoln reiterated the principles of human equality espoused by the Declaration of Independence and proclaimed the Civil War as a struggle for the preservation of the Union sundered by the secession crisis, with "a new birth of freedom", that would bring true equality to all of its citizens. Lincoln also redefined the Civil War as a struggle not just for the Union, but also for the principle of human equality.

Beginning with the now-iconic phrase "Four score and seven years ago"—referring to the Declaration of Independence, written at the start of the American Revolution in 1776—Lincoln examined the founding principles of the United States in the context of the Civil War, and memorialized the sacrifices of those who gave their lives at Gettysburg and extolled virtues for the listeners (and the nation) to ensure the survival of America’s representative democracy, that "government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Copy of the Gettysburg Address

http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/gettysburg.htm

Activity and Assessment for the Gettysburg Address

http://www.ettc.net/tah/lessonplans/papers/GettysburgWorksheet.pdf

The Emancipation Proclamation
Pictured Above: First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Lincoln, painted by Francis Carpenter in 1864. Americans tend to think of the Civil War as being fought to end slavery. Even one full year into the Civil War, the elimination of slavery was not a key objective of the North. Despite a vocal Abolitionist movement in the North, many people and many soldiers, in particular, opposed slavery, but did not favor emancipation. They expected slavery to die on its own over time. In the border states — Union states that still permitted slavery — the situation was full of problems. When a Union officer in Kentucky freed local slaves after a major victory, Union soldiers threw down their arms and disbanded. Lincoln intervened and "unfreed" those slaves. He did this to prevent a military backlash.

Enslavement to Emancipation

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFwG7jAeyrU (59 minutes)

The Emancipation Proclamation 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 the 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. John, 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 and 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 WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

Pictured Above: African Americans across the nation celebrated the Emancipation Proclamation.

Emancipation Proclamation
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUVkXthLz4w

By mid-1862 Lincoln had come to believe in the need to end slavery. Besides his disdain for the institution, he simply felt that the South could not come back into the Union after trying to destroy it. The opposition Democratic Party threatened to turn itself into an antiwar party. Lincoln’s military commander, General George McClellan, was vehemently against emancipation. Many Republicans who backed policies that forbid black settlement in their states were against granting blacks additional rights. When Lincoln indicated he wanted to issue a proclamation of freedom to his cabinet in mid-1862, they convinced him he had to wait until the Union achieved a significant military success.

Slaves in the border states that remained in the Union, shown in dark brown, were excluded from the Emancipation Proclamation, as were slaves in the Confederate areas already held by Union forces (shown in yellow).
David Blythe imagined a scene like this when he painted President Lincoln Writing the Proclamation of Freedom, January 1, 1863. Note the symbolism in this print, including the flag, the Bible under Lincoln’s hand, the Constitution in his lap, the railsplitter at his feet, and the scales of justice in the corner. That victory came in September at Antietam. No foreign country wants to ally with a potential losing power. By achieving victory, the Union demonstrated to the British that the South may lose. As a result, the British did not recognize the Confederate States of America, and Antietam became one of the war’s most important diplomatic battles, as well as one of the bloodiest. Five days after the battle, Lincoln decided to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, effective January 1, 1863. Unless the Confederate States returned to the Union by that day, he proclaimed their slaves "shall be then, thenceforward and forever free." It is sometimes said that the Emancipation Proclamation freed no slaves. In a way, this is true. The proclamation would only apply to the Confederate States, as an act to seize enemy resources. By freeing slaves in the Confederacy, Lincoln was actually freeing people he did not directly control. The way he explained the Proclamation made it acceptable to much of the Union army. He emphasized emancipation as a way to shorten the war by taking Southern resources and hence reducing Confederate strength. Even McClellan supported the policy as a soldier. Lincoln made no such offer of freedom to the border states. The Emancipation Proclamation created a climate where the doom of slavery was seen as one of the major objectives of the war. Overseas, the North now seemed to have the greatest moral cause. Even if a foreign government wanted to intervene on behalf of the South, its population might object. The Proclamation itself freed very few slaves, but it was the death knell for slavery in the United States. Eventually, the Emancipation Proclamation led to the proposal and ratification of the THIRTEENTH AMENDMENT to the Constitution, which formally abolished slavery throughout the land.

Abraham Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address

Abraham Lincoln delivered his second inaugural address on March 4, 1865, during his second inauguration as President of the United States. At a time when victory over the secessionists in the American Civil War was within days and slavery was near an end, Lincoln did not speak of happiness, but of sadness. Some see this speech
as a defense of his pragmatic approach to Reconstruction, in which he sought to avoid harsh treatment of the defeated South by reminding his listeners of how wrong both sides had been in imagining what lay before them when the war began four years earlier. Lincoln balanced that rejection of triumphalism, however, with recognition of the unmistakable evil of slavery, which he described in the most concrete terms possible. John Wilkes Booth, David Herold, George Atzerodt, Lewis Paine, John Surratt, and Edmund Spangler, some of the conspirators involved with Lincoln’s assassination, were present in the crowd at the inauguration.

This is a link to a short commentary and the House Divided speech in 1858 http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/house.htm

This is a link to the Gettysburg Address in 1863. This site also includes the transformation the speech took to get to the one we know of today. http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm

This is a link to a “kid friendly” version of the Gettysburg Address http://www.westmeade.net/Library/GettysburgAddress.html

Interactive site about the life of Abraham Lincoln

http://havefunwithhistory.com/HistorySubjects/AbrahamLincoln.html