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Lesson

Unit: Persuasion Across Time and Space:
Analyzing and Producing Complex Texts

Lesson: Persuasion in Historical Context: *The Gettysburg Address*

Handout #1: Abraham Lincoln Biography

Abraham Lincoln was the 16th president of the United States. Born in 1809 in a small log cabin in Kentucky, he grew up helping on his family's 348 acre farm. His parents were of low social standing and had little education. Still, Lincoln learned to read and write, and ultimately became a lawyer, passing the bar exam in 1837.

Lincoln married Mary Todd in 1842. They had four sons, but three died at a young age. In 1846, Lincoln was elected to U.S. Congress, and moved to Washington to serve out his term, where he spoke out against the Mexican War and unsuccessfully attempted to abolish **slavery**¹ in the District of Columbia.

A combination of luck, manipulation, and talent won Lincoln the Republican nomination, and he was elected president in 1860. There were four major candidates running for president, and despite the fact that he won less than 40% of the popular vote, Lincoln was elected president. Because some states believed that Lincoln would eventually abolish slavery, which would have a negative impact on farm production, several southern states began to consider the prospect of **secession**²—breaking away from the rest of the country.

An initial wave of secession led by South Carolina brought about the establishment of the "Confederate States of America," a self-declared independent nation apart from the United States of America. When Confederate forces from the South opened fire on the Union soldiers from the North at Fort Sumter, the **Civil War**³ began. After Lincoln called for a **sizeable**⁴ militia to **quash**⁵ the rebellion, several more states, led by Virginia, also seceded.

notes

¹ Complete ownership and control by a master; the condition of people being owned and used for difficult work

² The withdrawal from the Union of 11 Southern states in the period 1860-61, which brought on the Civil War.

³ A war between people of different regions or areas within the same country or nation

⁴ Large

⁵ To subdue, or to stop completely something from happening

Although he was heavily criticized by both the Confederate and Union supporters during his first term, Lincoln was able to gather enough votes to win re-election for a second term in 1864. As the war drew to a close, Lincoln made preparations to unify the nation once again.

Less than one week after the Confederate Army surrendered, Lincoln was **assassinated**⁶ by John Wilkes Booth while attending a Washington theater.

Today, many view Lincoln's most significant action as president to be his Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863, which paved the way for the Thirteenth Amendment and the abolishment of slavery in the United States. He is also remembered for his gifted way with words, giving such memorable speeches as the *Gettysburg Address* and the *Second Inaugural*.

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⁶ Killed suddenly or secretly, often for political reasons

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Handout #2: The Civil War

Before the American **Civil War**¹ began, there was increasing tension between the Southern and Northern states. One reason for the tension was the fact that the North and the South had different economic interests. The South was mostly comprised of **plantations**² that grew crops, such as cotton. A lot of **inexpensive manual labor**³ was needed to run the plantations, and slaves were used to do this. The North, on the other hand, had **abolished**⁴ slavery. The Northern States did not have plantations, and instead used **raw materials**,⁵ such as leather, metal, and wood, to create finished goods. As new states were added to the United States, **compromises had to be reached**⁶ as to whether they would be admitted as slave or as free states. Both sides worried that the other side would gain an unequal amount of power.

When Abraham Lincoln was elected president in 1861, the conflict between northern and southern states had grown. Many southern states felt that the government was becoming too strong, and that before long, the north would control the south. One fear of the south was slavery would one day be abolished, as President Lincoln was an **Abolitionist**⁷. Of course, this was something that the Southern states disagreed with, and feared would **cripple**⁸ their plantation way of life. The month before Lincoln was elected, South Carolina had left from the Union and formed its own country. Ten more states followed with **secession**⁹: Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee and North Carolina. One month after Lincoln became president, the Civil War Began, lasting four years.

The Union—or the Northern states—won the civil war, thus abolishing slavery for the nation and requiring the Southern states that had left the union to return. By the time the war was over, more than 600,000 soldiers had died, due to battle and disease. More soldiers died in the Civil War than in the American Revolutionary War, World War I, World War II, and the Vietnam War combined.

notes

¹A war between people of different regions or areas within the same country or nation

²Large farms that grew cotton, tobacco, coffee, sugar cane, and peanuts

³Field workers who do not need to be paid, or are paid very little

⁴Ended; done away with

⁵Something that can be made into something else, such as leather or wood

⁶As the United States began to grow and add more and more states, people needed to agree as to whether those new states would allow slaves or not.

⁷Someone who worked to get rid of slavery.

⁸Hurt

⁹The withdrawal from the Union of 11 Southern states in the period 1860-61, which brought on the Civil War.

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Handout #3: The Battle of Gettysburg

The Battle of Gettysburg was one of the **bloodiest battles**¹ of the **Civil War**². Fought in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, the battle involved 75,000 Confederate (South) soldiers and 90,000 Union (North) soldiers; over 40,000 men were killed and many more injured during the three-day battle.

When the battle was over, the residents of Gettysburg suggested creating a national **cemetery**³ on the site, as the bodies of soldiers and horses were **rotting**⁴ in the sun, and needed to be quickly buried beneath the soil. A United States Cemetery Board of Commissions was placed in charge of creating the national cemetery. For the formal dedication of the cemetery, they chose Edward Everett of Massachusetts to give a speech, as he was one of the best-known speakers in America at the time. They also invited president Lincoln, generals, and government officials. While Everett's speech was to be the **highlight**⁵, President Lincoln was asked to **wrap up**⁶ the event with **concluding**⁷ comments and remarks.

One of the reasons that the *Gettysburg Address* **remains**⁸ significant to this day is that while Edward Everett's speech went on for a total of two hours and four minutes, President Lincoln spoke for only two minutes, and his speech contained only ten sentences. Later, Everett wrote to Lincoln and stated, "I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion in two hours as you did in two minutes."

notes

¹A battle that had the most wounded and dead soldiers

²A war between people of different regions or areas within the same country or nation

³Where dead people are buried

⁴Bodies started to decompose and smell

⁵The best part

⁶Lincoln's speech was supposed to be just something small to end the event

⁷The comments or words that come at the end

⁸Continues to be remembered and quoted

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Handout #4c: Clarifying Bookmark III

What I can do	What I can say
I am going to think about what the selected text may mean.	<i>I'm not sure what this is about, but I think it may mean...</i>
	<i>This part is tricky, but I think it means...</i>
	<i>After rereading this part, I think it may mean...</i>
I am going to summarize my understanding so far.	<i>What I understand about this reading so far is...</i>
	<i>I can summarize this part by saying...</i>
	<i>The main points of this section are...</i>
I am going to use my prior knowledge to help me understand.	<i>I know something about this from...</i>
	<i>I have read or heard about this when...</i>
	<i>I don't understand the section, but I do recognize...</i>
I am going to apply related concepts and/or readings.	<i>One reading/idea I have encountered before that relates to this is...</i>
	<i>We learned about this idea/concept when we studied...</i>
	<i>This concept/idea is related to...</i>
I am going to ask questions about ideas and phrases I don't understand.	<i>Two questions I have about this section are...</i>
	<i>I understand this part, but I have a question about...</i>
	<i>I have a question about...</i>
I am going to use related text, pictures, tables, and graphs to help me understand unclear ideas.	<i>If we look at this graphic, it shows...</i>
	<i>The table gives me more information about...</i>
	<i>When I scanned the earlier part of the chapter, I found...</i>

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Handout #5: Background Reading Focus Chart

#1: Abraham Lincoln Biography

Read the biography on President Lincoln. Jot down a few notes on

His Family Life:

His Education:

His contributions to America:



#2: The Civil War

What central issues caused the Civil War?

What was the outcome of the war?

Any other interesting facts:



Union Soldier



Confederate Soldier

#3: The Battle of Gettysburg

What is significant about the Battle of Gettysburg?

Two or three interesting facts about the Battle of Gettysburg:



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Handout #6: Civil War Photos





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Handout #7: Photograph Response

Select one photograph that stands out to your group to analyze further. Describe the photograph, completing the following information. After you have described the photographs, write a caption and post the captions below the picture/photos on the wall.

PHOTOGRAPH

General description: This is a picture of

Number of people: Number of men or boys: Number of women or girls:

Describe clothing:

Describe facial expressions:

Describe what is happening in the photograph:

Describe the objects in the photograph:

.....

SETTING OF THE PHOTOGRAPH

Describe as many details as you can identify about the place where the picture was taken (example: in a yard, on a street, etc.):

.....

.....

WRITING A CAPTION

A caption is a short description or explanation of a photograph or picture. It often includes information about what is happening in the picture, where and when the picture was taken, and who is in the picture. Write a caption for one photograph on a strip of paper and post it below the picture on the wall.

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Handout #8: Wordle

With a partner, discuss which words jump out at you (pick two or three). Once you have selected your two or three words, share with your partner what images or ideas come to mind when you think of those particular words.



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Handout #9: The Gettysburg Address

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 cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot 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.

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Handout #10: The Gettysburg Address in Four Voices

Directions: Each student chooses one of four fonts (regular font, bold font, underlined font, or italics); when it is your turn to read aloud, you will read your font only.

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 cannot dedicate—**we cannot consecrate**—*we cannot 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**.

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Handout #11: Literary Device Matrix

Repetition: By repeating the same word or idea within the same sentence, or across sentences, the speaker ties a theme together and creates clarity for the listener. Often, repetitions are in groups of three.

Directions: Work with a partner to find examples of repetition in the *Gettysburg Address*. The first example has been done for you.

Example: New nation	any nation	this nation

(Adapted from *The Gettysburg Address Teacher Resource Guide*, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum)

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Handout #12: Literary Device Answer Key

Repetition
New nation , that nation , any nation
So conceived, so dedicated
We are engaged, we are met, we have come
We cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow
Of the people, by the people, for the people

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Handout #13: Dedicate Matrix

How many times does Lincoln use the word (or a word derived from) <i>Dedicate</i> ?	
<p>The first two times Lincoln uses the word <i>dedicate</i>, it is linked to the word <i>conceived</i>.</p> <p>How is Lincoln using the word <i>dedicate</i> in these two instances? What does it mean?</p> <p><u>Who</u> is dedicating in these two instances?</p>	
<p>The next two times Lincoln uses the word <i>dedicate</i>, he relates it to the word <i>consecrate</i>.</p> <p>How is Lincoln using the word <i>dedicate</i> in these two instances? What does it mean now?</p> <p><u>Who</u> is dedicating in these two instances?</p>	
<p>The last two times Lincoln uses the word <i>dedicate</i>, it relates to personal commitment.</p> <p>What purpose does the word <i>dedicate</i> serve in these last two instances?</p>	

(after an idea from David Coleman)

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