

[Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address and Second Inaugural Address](#)

Students will analyze the significance of President Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address and his Second Inaugural Address. The student handout appears on the next page. Speech links are below.

<b>GSE Standards and Elements</b>	<p><b>SSUSH9 Evaluate key events, issues, and individuals related to the Civil War</b></p> <p>b. Discuss Lincoln’s purpose in using emergency powers to suspend habeas corpus, issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, and delivering the Gettysburg and Second Inaugural Addresses.</p>
<b>Literacy Standards</b>	<p><b>L11-12RHSS1-</b> Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an ordinary understanding of the text as a whole.</p> <p><b>L11-12RHSS2-</b> Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.</p> <p><b>L11-12RHSS4-</b> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).</p>
<b>Social Studies Matrices</b>	<p><b>Information Processing Skills-</b></p> <p>5. Identify main idea, detail, sequence of events, and cause and effect in a social studies context</p> <p>6. Identify and use primary and secondary sources</p> <p>11. Draw conclusions and make generalizations</p>
<b>Enduring Understanding(s)</b>	<p>Beliefs and Ideals, Individuals, Groups, and Institutions</p>

**Teachers should guide students through Lincoln’s speeches using the following links:**

Gettysburg Address

Full Text: <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=36&page=transcript>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndmcgAsA1aI>

Second Inaugural Address

Full Text: <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=38&page=transcript>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8VqFiU3fSU>

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Speech Analysis Questions – Abraham Lincoln

**Speech 1 Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Purpose and Audience**

1. Who was the speaker?
2. Where was the speech given?
3. When was the speech given?
4. Who was the audience?
5. What is “the unfinished work” or “great task remaining before” his audience, the American people?
6. What is “the cause” for which the soldiers buried at Gettysburg “gave the last full measure of devotion”?

**II. Content and Tone**

7. 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?)
8. What attitude did the speech convey?

**III. Speech Detail**

9. 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?)

10. What famous American documents (2) does Lincoln allude to in this speech?

11. 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?)

12. What is the message of the speech?

**Speech 2 Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Purpose and Audience**

1. Who was the speaker?
2. Where was the speech given?
3. When was the speech given?
4. Who was the audience?
5. What is the speaker trying to accomplish?

**II. Content and Tone**

6. In the second paragraph, what does Lincoln say that Americans (North and South) believed about the “impending civil-war”? Why does he not identify the South as responsible for starting the war?

7. What attitude did the speech convey?

### **III. Speech Detail**

8. What event, that Lincoln discusses in the beginning of the speech, defined the first four years of his Presidency?

9. What does Lincoln “suppose” God may be accomplishing with the Civil War?

10. How does Lincoln’s interpretation of the war humble both victorious Northerners and defeated Southerners? Why is this useful given the historical context in March 1865?

### **Finishing and Drawing Conclusions**

What do these two speeches say about Lincoln’s attitude towards the war and how it should be ended? Using examples from the speeches, write one paragraph.