

Teaching American History Grant: Learning Experience 2008-2009

Rebecca Wetzel, Washingtonville Central School District

Topic: Lincoln and the Issue of Slavery

Date: 2008

Grade Level: 8th grade

Overview of the Learning Experience:

Where does this integrate into the unit?

- Students will have already learned:
 - This part of the unit will be conducted as part of the unit on the Civil War to start the 8th grade school year
 - History of slavery and how it relates to the United States and the Constitution of the United States
 - Long Term causes of the Civil War
 - Important people of the Civil War
 - Secession of the Southern States
 - Emancipation Proclamation
- Students will be learning (after this lesson):
 - Battles of the Civil War
 - Effects of the Civil War
 - Reconstruction
 - Civil Rights

Goals and Objectives:

- Students will be able to:
 - Evaluate primary documents
 - Apply the knowledge of the primary document to answer whether or not Abraham Lincoln was the Great Emancipator that history remembers him as today
 - Write a newspaper article either in favor of Lincoln being the Great Emancipator or against Lincoln being the Great Emancipator using prior knowledge and knowledge gathered during this lesson

New York State Learning Standards and Performance Indicators:

Standard 1: History of New York and the United States

Key Idea 1: Important ideas, social and cultural values, beliefs and traditions from New York State and United States history illustrate the connections and interactions of people and events across time and from a variety of perspectives

Performance Indicator:

- Students investigate key turning points in New York State and United States history and explain why these events or developments are significant.

Key Idea 2: Study about the major social, political, economic, cultural, and religious developments in New York State and United States history involves learning about the important roles and contributions of individuals and groups.

Performance Indicator:

- Students gather and organize information about the important achievements and contributions of individuals and groups living in New York State and the United States.

Key Idea 3: The skills of historical analysis include the ability to: explain the significance of historical evidence; weigh the importance, reliability, and validity of evidence; understand the concept of multiple causation; understand the importance of changing and competing interpretations of different historical developments.

Performance Indicator:

- Students compare and contrast different interpretations of key events and issues in New York State and United States history and explain reasons for these different accounts.

Essential Questions:

- How do the personal views of a President affect/influence his political decisions?

Time Allotment: Three days ---- 42 minute class period and completion of editorial as homework

Vocabulary (Key Terms):

Theology

Emancipate

Materials/Resources:

Document Packet (attached)

Doc. 1 – Fragment on Slavery – August 1, 1858

Doc. 2 – Fragment on Slavery – October 1, 1858

Doc. 3 - Protest on the Slavery Question - March 3, 1837

Doc. 4 - Speech at Chicago, Illinois - July 10, 1858

Doc. 5 - Speech at Peoria, Illinois - October 16, 1854

Doc. 6 - Letter to Alexander H. Stephens – Dec. 22, 1860

Doc. 7 - Letter to Horace Greeley – August 22, 1862

Doc. 8 – Final Emancipation Proclamation – January 1, 1863

Procedure:

Day 1:

Students will come into class and complete the Do Now activity.

Do Now: Define: Theology and Emancipate

Discuss the meaning of the words as a class.

Students will then work in groups of four to discuss and answer the document packet provided above. Each group should decide the answers together and be able to clearly explain their answers in a class discussion. For lower level readers, the teacher can facilitate a reading circle to help them understand the documents. Answers should be written in complete sentences.

Students will finish the document based questions for homework.

Day 2:

Students will sit together with their group to prepare for the class discussion. Teacher will facilitate the discussion of each of the document questions. When the teacher is satisfied with the answers from the class, the editorial newspaper assignment will be given to the students. The process of writing an editorial newspaper column has been reviewed in English class, so the students are familiar with persuasive writing and citing information from primary sources.

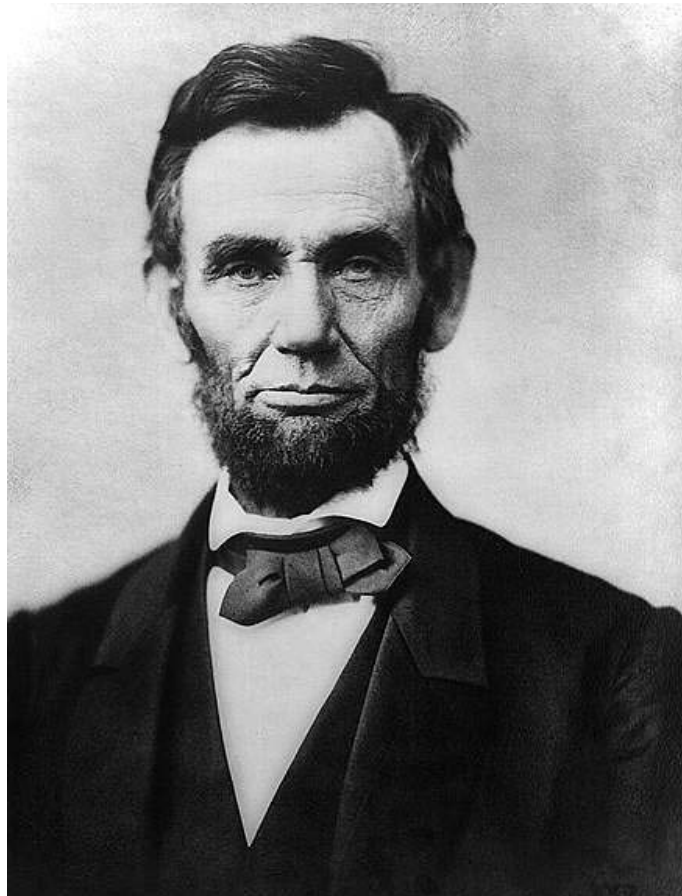
Students will fill out the information sheet for homework.

Day 3:

Students will begin to write their editorial newspaper article based off of their answers to the documents and last nights homework assignment. The newspaper article should be persuasive and look like a page from a newspaper. (See Rubric) The students will work on the article during class and turn it in the next day.

Name _____

Abraham Lincoln - The Great Emancipator or the Great Oppurtunist?



Name _____

Date _____

Lincoln and the Issue of Slavery

Students will evaluate the following letters and speeches written by Abraham Lincoln on the issue of slavery before and during the Civil War. There will be a class discussion of the documents once the students have completed the document based questions.

Students will then write a one page editorial article evaluating whether or not Abraham Lincoln is the Great Emancipator. Remember the procedure that you used in English class when learning how to write an Editorial newspaper article. The grading rubric is attached to the packet of documents.

Historical Background/Task: Abraham Lincoln is remembered in history as the President who reunited the country during the Civil War and in the process freed the slaves from bondage. As historians look back on the lifespan of Abraham Lincoln, they have found conflicting opinions when it comes to how Lincoln felt about freeing the slaves. It is your job to unravel the truth by examining speeches given by Abraham Lincoln before his presidency and during the Civil War. When evaluating your documents, please pay close attention to the dates of the speeches because this could become helpful in persuading your audience.

Doc. 1 –

Fragment on Slavery

Abraham Lincoln

August 1, 1858

As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy.

Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is not democracy.

A. Lincoln—

Document from TeachingAmericanHistory.org

Questions on Doc. 1:

1. What does Democracy mean?

2. How does Lincoln use slavery to explain his position on Democracy in the United States?

Doc. 2 –

Fragment: On Slavery

Abraham Lincoln

October 1, 1858

Suppose it is true, that the negro is inferior to the white, in the gifts of nature; is it not the exact reverse justice that the white should, for that reason, take from the negro, any part of the little which has been given him? "*Give* to him that is needy" is the Christian rule of charity; but "Take from him that is needy" is the rule of slavery.

PRO—SLAVERY THEOLOGY

The sum of pro—slavery theology seems to be this: "Slavery is not universally *right*, nor yet universally *wrong*; it is better for *some* people to be slaves; and, in such cases, it is the Will of God that they be such."

Certainly there is no contending against the Will of God; but still there is some difficulty in ascertaining, and applying it, to particular cases. For instance we will suppose the Rev. Dr. Ross has a slave named Sambo, and the question is "Is it the Will of God that Sambo shall remain a slave, or be set free?" The Almighty gives no audible [*sic*] answer to the question, and his revelation—the Bible—gives none—or, at most, *none* but such as admits of a squabble, as to it's meaning. No one thinks of asking Sambo's opinion on it. So, at last, it comes to this, that *Dr. Ross* is to decide the question. And while he consider [*sic*] it, he sits in the shade, with gloves on his hands, and subsists on the bread that Sambo is earning in the burning sun. If he decides that God wills Sambo to continue a slave, he thereby retains his own comfortable position; but if he decides that God wills Sambo to be free, he thereby has to walk out of the shade, throw off his

gloves, and delve for his own bread. Will Dr. Ross be actuated by that perfect impartiality, which has ever been considered most favorable to correct decisions?

But, slavery is good for some people!!! As a *good* thing, slavery is strikingly peculiar [*sic*], in this, that it is the only good thing which no man ever seeks the good of, *for himself*.

Nonsense! Wolves devouring lambs, not because it is good for their own greedy maws, but because it is good for the lambs!!!

Document from TeachingAmericanHistory.org

Questions on Doc. 2:

1. What does Lincoln say in the Pro-Slavery Theology?

2. Why does Lincoln say that Dr. Ross would want Sambo to remain a slave?

Doc. 3 -

Protest on the Slavery Question

Abraham Lincoln

March 3, 1837

Resolutions upon the subject of domestic slavery having passed both branches of the General Assembly at its present session, the undersigned hereby protest against the passage of the same.

They believe that the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy; but that the promulgation of abolition doctrines tends rather to increase than to abate its evils.

They believe that the Congress of the United States has the power, under the constitution, to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia; but that that power ought not to be exercised unless at the request of the people of said District.

The difference between these opinions and those contained in the said resolutions, is their reason for entering this protest.

Dan Stone

A. Lincoln

Representatives from the county of Sangamon

Document from TeachingAmericanHistory.org

Questions for Doc. 3 –

1. What does Lincoln say about the power of Congress in reference to slavery?

Doc. 4 –

In this speech at Chicago, Lincoln reiterated his hatred of slavery and also his belief that it should not be touched where it then existed.

Speech at Chicago, Illinois
July 10, 1858

I have always hated slavery, I think as much as any Abolitionist. I have been an Old Line Whig. I have always hated it, but I have always been quiet about it until this new era of the introduction of the Nebraska Bill began. I always believed that everybody was against it, and that it was in course of ultimate extinction.

I have said a hundred times, and I have now no inclination to take it back, that I believe there is no right, and ought to be no inclination in the people of the free States to enter into the slave States, and interfere with the question of slavery at all.

(II, 492)

Document from <http://www.nps.gov> Lincoln Home National Historic Site

Questions for Doc. 4 –

1. What does Lincoln say about stopping slavery in the states where it already exists?

2. What would it mean to the country if Lincoln allowed slavery to continue where it already existed?

Doc. 5 –

Lincoln, in a speech at Peoria, attacked slavery on the grounds that its existence within the United States made American democracy appear hypocritical in the eyes of the world. However, he also confessed his uncertainty as how to end slavery where it then existed, because he believed that neither colonization nor racial equality were practical.

Speech at Peoria, Illinois
October 16, 1854

I cannot but hate [the declared indifference for slavery's spread]. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world -- enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites -- causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity, and especially because it forces so many really good men amongst ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty -- criticising [sic] the Declaration of Independence, and insisting that there is no right principle of action but self-interest.

Before proceeding, let me say I think I have no prejudice against the Southern people. They are just what we would be in their situation. If slavery did not now exist amongst them, they would not introduce it. If it did now exist amongst us, we should not instantly give it up. This I believe of the masses north and south. Doubtless there are individuals, on both sides, who would not hold slaves under any circumstances; and others who would gladly introduce slavery anew, if it were out of existence. We know that some southern men do free their slaves, go north, and become tip-top abolitionists; while some northern ones go south, and become most cruel slave-masters.

When southern people tell us they are no more responsible for the origin of slavery, than we; I acknowledge the fact. When it is said that the institution exists; and that it is very difficult to get rid of it, in any satisfactory way, I can understand and appreciate the saying. I surely will not blame them for not doing what I should not know how to do myself. If all earthly power were given me, I should not know what to do, as to the existing institution. My first impulse would be to free all the slaves, and send them to Liberia, -- to their own native land. But a moment's reflection would convince me, that whatever of high hope, (as I think there is) there may be in this, in the long run, its sudden execution is impossible. If they were all landed there in a day, they would all perish in the next ten days; and there are not surplus shipping and surplus money enough in the world to carry them there in many times ten days. What then? Free them all, and keep them among us as underlings? Is it quite certain that this betters their condition? I think I would not hold one in slavery, at any rate; yet the point is not clear enough for me to denounce people upon. What next? Free them, and make them politically and socially, our equals? My own feelings will not admit of this; and if mine would, we well know that those of the great mass of white people will not.

Questions for Doc. 5 –

1. How does Lincoln feel about the Southern people?

2. Does Lincoln know how to free the slaves? Explain.

3. What does Lincoln say about making the slaves equal to the whites?

Doc. 6 –

Letter to Alexander H. Stephens

Abraham Lincoln

December 22, 1860

Springfield, Illinois

For your own eye only

My dear Sir

Your obliging answer to my short note is just received, and for which please accept my thanks. I fully appreciate the present peril the country is in, and the weight of responsibility on me.

Do the people of the South really entertain fears that a Republican administration would, *directly, or indirectly*, interfere with their slaves, or with them, about their slaves? If they do, I wish to assure you, as once a friend, and still, I hope, not an enemy, that there is no cause for such fears.

The South would be in no more danger in this respect, than it was in the days of Washington. I suppose, however, this does not meet the case. You think slavery is *right* and ought to be extended; while we think it is *wrong* and ought to be restricted. That I suppose is the rub. It certainly is the only substantial difference between us.

Yours very truly

A.LINCOLN

Document from TeachingAmericanHistory.org

Questions for Doc. 6 –

1. What does Lincoln assure Alexander Stephens about in this letter?

2. Why do you think it states “for your eyes only”?

Doc. 7 –

Letter to Horace Greeley

Abraham Lincoln
August 22, 1862
Executive Mansion, Washington

Hon. Horace Greeley:

Dear Sir.

I have just read yours of the 19th. addressed to myself through the New—York Tribune. If there be in it any statements, or assumptions of fact, which I may know to be erroneous, I do not, now and here, controvert them. If there be in it any inferences which I may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not now and here, argue against them. If there be perceptable [sic] in it an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an old friend, whose heart I have always supposed to be right.

As to the policy I "seem to be pursuing" as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt.

I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored; the nearer the Union will be "the Union as it was." If there be those who would not save the Union, unless they could at the same time *save* slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time *destroy* slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle *is* to save the Union, and is *not* either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing *any* slave I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing *all* the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that. What I do about slavery, and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do *not* believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do *less* whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do *more* whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors; and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my view of *official* duty; and I intend no modification of my oft—expressed *personal* wish that all men everywhere could be free.

Yours,

A. Lincoln.

Questions from Doc. 7 –

1. What does Lincoln say is his paramount objective?

2. How does Lincoln's personal view on slavery conflict with his professional duties as President?

Final Emancipation Proclamation

Abraham Lincoln
January 1, 1863

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-defense; 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.

[L.S.]

By the President: ABRAHAM LINCOLN

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

Questions for Doc. 8 –

1. What does Emancipate mean?

2. Who did the Emancipation Proclamation free?

3. What effect did the Emancipation Proclamation have on the rebel states of the South?

4. How did the Emancipation Proclamation change the reasons the Civil War was being fought?

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

Writing a newspaper editorial column

Pretend you are living in the United States in January 1865, right near the end of the Civil War. You are asked by your newspaper editor to write an editorial column about President Lincoln and the issue of slavery. Your editor has asked you to examine speeches given by the President and has actually uncovered some of the President's personal letters. It is your job to determine whether or not President Lincoln is really the "Great Emancipator" or the "Great Opportunist". In 300 words or less, you must convince an audience that the position you take is correct.

Before you begin to write, answer the following questions, and remember that your answers will help determine which side of the issue you fall on in this debate.

1. Where do you live? _____

2. What does your state say about the issue of slavery?

3. What is the name of your paper? _____

4. Do you agree with the Abolitionists or the Cottonocracy?

5. Do you think Lincoln was the "Great Emancipator" based on the evidence you have examined?

6. What evidence will you use to support your ideas?

Persuasive Editorial Rubric:

CATEGORY	4 - Above Standards	3 - Meets Standards	2 - Approaching Standards	1 - Below Standards	Score
Position Statement	The position statement provides a clear, strong statement of the author's position on the topic.	The position statement provides a clear statement of the author's position on the topic.	A position statement is present, but does not make the author's position clear.	There is no position statement.	
Support for Position	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement. The writer anticipates the reader's concerns, biases or arguments and has provided at least 1 counter-argument.	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 2 pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 1 or fewer pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences).	
Evidence and Examples	All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Most of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	At least one of the pieces of evidence and examples is relevant and has an explanation that shows how that piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Evidence and examples are NOT relevant AND/OR are not explained.	

Audience	Demonstrates a clear understanding of the potential reader and uses appropriate vocabulary and arguments. Anticipates reader's questions and provides thorough answers appropriate for that audience.	Demonstrates a general understanding of the potential reader and uses vocabulary and arguments appropriate for that audience.	Demonstrates some understanding of the potential reader and uses arguments appropriate for that audience.	It is not clear who the author is writing for.	
Sources	All sources used for quotes, statistics and facts are credible and cited correctly.	All sources used for quotes, statistics and facts are credible and most are cited correctly.	Most sources used for quotes, statistics and facts are credible and cited correctly.	Many sources are suspect (not credible) AND/OR are not cited correctly.	
Grammar & Spelling	Author makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	
Capitalization & Punctuation	Author makes no errors in capitalization or punctuation, so the essay is exceptionally easy to read.	Author makes 1-2 errors in capitalization or punctuation, but the essay is still easy to read.	Author makes a few errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and interrupt the flow.	Author makes several errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and interrupt the flow.	