

Predict what Lincoln will say in his second inaugural address

Timeline

1860: Lincoln Elected President, South Secedes, War Begins

1861: Lincoln imposes a naval blockade of south (April), Confederate Victory at First Battle of Bull Run (July), First Confiscation Act (August)

1862: Union Victory at Battle of Shiloh (April), Homestead Act (May), Morrill Land Act (July), Second Confiscation Act (July), Confederate Victory at Second Battle of Bull Run (August), Battle of Antietam (September), Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation (September), Confederate Victory at Battle of Fredericksburg

1863: Emancipation Proclamation (January), Confederate Victory at Battle of Chancellorsville (May), Union victory at Battle of Gettysburg

1864: Ulysses S. Grant takes command (March), Surrender of Atlanta (September), Lincoln Reelected (November), Sherman's March to the Sea (Nov-Dec)

1865: Thirteenth Amendment outlaws slavery (January), Lee surrenders (April), Lincoln Dies (April)

Grant Takes Command

Directions: After reading "Grant Takes Command", answer the following question in the space provided.

"Grant Takes Command" (March 1864-March 1865):

[http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=122]

In March 1864, Lincoln gave Ulysses S. Grant command of all Union armies. Vowing to end the war within a year, Grant launched three major offenses. General Philip H. Sheridan's task was to lay waste to farm land in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, a mission he completed by October. Meanwhile, General William Tecumseh Sherman advanced southeastward from Chattanooga and seized Atlanta, a major southern rail center, while Grant himself pursued Lee's army and sought to capture Richmond, the Confederate capital. Grant started his offensive with 118,000 men; by early June, half of his men were casualties. But Lee's army had been reduced by a third to 40,000 men. In a month of fighting in northern and eastern Virginia, Grant lost almost 40,000 men, leading Peace Democrats to call him a "butcher." But Confederate losses were also heavy—and southern troops could not be replaced. At the Battle of the Wilderness, in northern Virginia, Lee's army suffered 11,000 casualties; at Spotsylvania Court House, Lee lost another 10,000 men. After suffering terrible casualties at Cold Harbor—12,000 men killed or wounded—Grant advanced to Petersburg, a rail center south of Richmond, and began a nine-month siege of the city.

At the same time that Grant was pursuing Lee's army, Sherman, with a force of 100,000 men, marched toward Atlanta from Chattanooga, and captured the rail center on September 2, 1864. After leaving Atlanta in flames, Sherman's men marched across Georgia toward Savannah. In order to break the South's will to fight, Sherman had his men destroy railroad tracks, loot houses, and burn factories. Sherman seized Savannah December 21, and then drove northward, capturing Charleston and Columbia, South Carolina, then heading through North Carolina to Virginia. Sherman summed up the goal of his military maneuvers in grim terms: "We cannot change the hearts of those people, but we can make war so terrible...[and] make them so sick of war that generations would pass away before they would again appeal to it."

Question Answer on your paper

What evidence do you find in this article that the Union is winning in late 1864 and early 1865 and that the South is collapsing?

Letter to John Bright

Directions: Read the following document and answer the questions that follow.

Charles Sumner, Excerpt from a Letter to John Bright (March 13, 1865):

Charles Sumner was a U.S. Senator from Massachusetts and leading member of the Radical Republicans during the Civil War. Throughout the Civil War, Sumner corresponded with fellow abolitionist John Bright (1811-1889), a progressive member of the British Parliament and a Quaker who advocated universal suffrage and the abolition of slavery.

I have yr good & most suggestive letter. I concur in it substantially. A practical difficulty is this; can Emancipation be carried out without using the lands of the slave-masters. We must see that the freedmen are established on the soil & that they may become proprietors. From the beginning I have regarded confiscation only as ancillary to Emancipation. The great plantations, which have been so many nurseries of the rebellion, must be broken up, & the freedmen must share the pieces. It looks as if we were on the eve of another agitation. I insist that the rebel States shall not come back except on the footing of the Decltn of Indep. with all persons equal before the law, & govt. founded on the consent of the governed. In other words, there shall be no discrimination on account of color. If all whites vote, then must all blacks; but there shall be no limitation of suffrage for one more than the other.

It is sometimes said "what—let the freedmen yesterday a slave vote?" I am inclined to think that there is more harm in refusing than in conceding the franchise [i.e., the vote]. It is said that they are as intelligent as the Irish just arrived.

But the question has become immensely practical in this respect. Without their votes, we cannot establish stable govts. in the rebel states. Their votes are as necessary as their muskets. Of this I am satisfied. Without them, the old enemy will reappear &, under the forms of law, take possession of the govts.—choose magistrates & officers—&, in alliance with the Northern democracy [i.e., "Peace" Democrats in the Northern States], put us all in peril again, postpone the day of tranquility, & menace the national credit by assailing the national debt. To my mind, the nation is now bound by self-interest—aye, self-defence—to be thoroughly just.

The Declaration of Indep. has pledges which have never been redeemed. We must redeem them, as least as regards the rebel states which have fallen under our jurisdiction. Mr Lincoln is slow in accepting truths. I have reminded him that if he would say the word we might settle this question promptly & rightly. He hesitates.

...

That has been much misunderstood in Europe. It has been supposed sometimes as a menace of subjugation. Nothing further from my mind—at least in any offensive sense. I felt that the rebel region must for a while pass under the jurisdiction of Congress, in order to set up the necessary safeguards for the future; & I have labored to this end.

Nothing has been heard of Sherman for weeks,—but Mr Stanton has no anxiety about him. He will re-appear in North Carolina. Grant is very cheerful. But for the moment the curtain is down. It may lift any day.

...

Congress has separated in good humor, without anxiety for the future, & indeed confident that we are on the verge of peace. My desire is that England should do something to take out the bitterness from the American heart—before the war closes . . .

Questions Answers on your paper

What does Sumner propose should be done with the land of former slave-owners in the South?

What reasons does Sumner give for securing “suffrage” or the vote to the freedmen?

What ultimate benefit does this bestow upon the United States?

What other proposals that Sumner offers in his letter would be seen as hostile by white southerners?

Describe the attitude Sumner has toward “the rebel states” and provide evidence for your answer?

Jefferson Davis, “African Church Speech”

Directions: After reading Confederate President Jefferson Davis’s “African Church Speech” (February 6, 1865), answer the following questions.

Jefferson Davis, “African Church Speech” (February 6, 1865)

Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America, delivered one of his last public speeches of the Civil War in the African Church of Richmond. Although it had housed a black Baptist congregation since the 1840s, it was the largest auditorium in the Confederate capital and was used by whites during the week for social and political events. The following is a transcript of the speech as recorded by the Richmond Sentinel (February 8, 1865).

The President [Jefferson Davis] said that if he were there to assist in celebrating some great and decisive victory to our arms, or in hailing the establishment of peace, he should have been most happy. But, in times like those which are now upon us—when dangers confront us and our path is beside the lee-shore and the breakers—to witness the manifestation of such a spirit on the part of his countrymen as was there displayed, was more than happiness—it was ecstatic joy! He had always looked with pride upon his countrymen. He had rejoiced in their patriotism and their courage. But he was prouder still when he contemplated the fortitude which plucks flowers from reverses, and beats high with hope in the presence of fresh calls upon its courage and endurance.

The President said it was meet [i.e., fitting] that the spirit which inspired this meeting, should find its first utterance in Richmond. Here every day were heard the cannons of the enemy. Innumerable hillocks in the neighboring cemeteries, tell of the brave men from every State in the Confederacy who have given their lives for their country. On one of the hills of this city stands that sacred building, in which Patrick Henry and his compatriots, pledged life for liberty. Here, too, was the capitol of the Confederacy, and of that proud old State, which had been truly termed “the mother of statesmen.” If the spirit which has been here indicated shall meet with a general response, and prove to be the universal sentiment of the land, of which he did not doubt, then, indeed, would he feel that we are on the very verge of success.—[Loud cheers.] We should not again be insulted by such terms of peace as the arrogance of the enemy has lately proposed*; but ere many months had elapsed, our successes would cause them to feel that when talking to us they were talking to their masters.—[Great applause.]

Does any one, he inquired, who has seen the Confederate soldiers, believe they are willing to fail? If so, the suspicion is most unjust! Go to our camps; go to our guarded lines; go where our pickets hold their dangerous watch, and to the posts where our sentinels tread their weary rounds, and you will find in none of those the place for grumbings and complaints. The resolutions of our soldiers exclaim with Patrick Henry, “Victory or death!” It is in the crowded mart, where these are found whose pockets are stuffed with ill-gotten gains, that you find the persons who grumble and complain. [Applause] The Permission is granted to educators to reproduce this worksheet for classroom use 4progress of events had, however, brought a pressure even upon these which would urge them to their duty. Their treasure is in danger, and their only security for it is in performing their duty to their country.

The time for argument, said the President, is passed. The duty that remains is to stand to our arms. He had just made an effort to secure peace, as he has done several times before. He had made it in the cause of humanity and the country. At the very organization of our Government, in Montgomery, his first care was to send Commissioners to Washington. They were rejected. At a later period, he had requested the second officer under the Government (Vice President Stephens,) to seek a conference; the avowed object being to make arrangements for the proper treatment and exchange of prisoners, but in addition to, and behind that, it was the object to institute, if possible, negotiations for peace. But our Vice President was refused an audience; not even allowed to approach the throne. Since that time he had in various ways, and on every proper occasion, proclaimed the desire of this country for peace, and his own anxiety to secure it, but until lately, no opening had presented for an advance toward negotiation. This recent opportunity he had embraced. He did it in the hope that some plan of accommodation might be agreed upon. He would be less than man if he had not felt an earnest desire, a yearning anxiety, to relieve the country from the sufferings of the war, and to send our soldiers to their homes. Anything honorable, and recognizing our independence as a basis, would have been gladly acceded to. The person did not know him who might suppose that, under any circumstance, he would consent to reconstruct the late Union.

We had now learned the terms on which the enemy are willing to accord peace. We are required to make an unconditional surrender. We are not even allowed to go back to them as we came out, but are required to take just what a conqueror may choose to give the conquered.

Man proposes, but God disposes. Relying on the courage and devotion of his countrymen and reverently appealing to Heaven for its aid to our cause, the President said his confidence was firm, that God would abase the arrogance of our enemies, and crown our exertions with triumph.

. . .

. . . History affords no parallel, the President continued, to the struggle which our country is making—to the cheerfulness with which our people have borne sacrifices, and the courage with which our armies have marched to the harvest of death. It was this magnanimous spirit which sustained him in the confidence that we should triumph in the end. We have been chastened, and may be again. Let us profit by the lesson reverses are designed to teach, that we are not to serve a friend merely because he is such, or strike an enemy when we might serve the country.

The President here said that his failing strength admonished him to close his remarks; but he yielded to loud requests to “go on.” We must, he said, lock shields together and go forward to save our country, or sink together to honorable graves. [Loud applause.] He was not of those who had expected no discord and no parties, but if our disagreements result from passion we must exorcise it, and make the good of our country our sole aim. If we will all do our duty, we shall reap a brilliant reward. If the absentees, from our armies will return, and if the local assistance be rendered which may be readily afforded, the noble Army of Northern Virginia will read General Grant a yet severer lesson than it taught him from the Rapidan to the James; while the gallant Beauregard will cause Sherman’s march across Georgia to be his last.

In conclusion, the President said, he had gratifying proofs of the spirit which animated the people whom he addressed. He had seen even the old men upon duty, careless alike of the piercing blast and whistling; and your women have declared that they will fight the battle if you should recoil! God bless your proud spirit and manly fortitude! History will delight to dwell upon your praise!

* At the Hampton Roads Conference (February 3, 1865) with Confederate commissioners, including Vice President Alexander Stephens, President Lincoln and Secretary of State William H. Seward met to discuss terms of peace. During the four-hour meeting, Lincoln was inflexible on the following terms: a “restoration of the National authority throughout all the States”; “No receding . . . on the Slavery question,” including the Emancipation Proclamation; and “No cessation of hostilities short of an end of the war [e.g., no armistice], and the disbanding of all forces hostile to the government.”

Questions Answers on your paper

Is Jefferson Davis hopeful or pessimistic about the Confederate war effort? Give evidence for your answer.

What does Jefferson Davis believe is required for the Confederate cause to succeed at this stage of the conflict? What does he call upon the citizens of the Confederacy to do?

What can you infer from the “African Church Speech” about the status or morale of the Confederate military? Cite an example or two to support your answer.

Is Jefferson Davis open to having the Confederate states rejoin the American union? Explain.

Describe the attitude Davis has towards “the enemy” and provide evidence for your answer.

Now working with your partners predict how Lincoln will address the following in his Second Inaugural Address:

- what he knows to be true about the nation in 1865
- his thoughts on the cause of the war
- a way to put the nation's conflict into perspective
- how he will deal with a nation whose sections are hostile to each other
- where he will lead the country over the next four years
- his goals and vision for the nation

How close were you? Read Lincoln’s Address and identify and explain the differences and similarities between it and your predictions

Abraham Lincoln, Original Manuscript of the Second Inaugural Address (March 4, 1865):

Fellow Countrymen:

At this second appearing to take the oath of the presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention, and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured. On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil-war. All dreaded it — all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war — seeking to dissol[v]e the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came. One eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the Southern half part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it. Neither party expected for the war, the magnitude, or the duration, which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God’s assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men’s faces; but let us judge not that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. “Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!” If we shall suppose that American Slavery is one of those offences which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South, this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offence came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a Living God Permission is granted to educators to reproduce this worksheet for classroom use 8always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope — fervently do we pray — that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue, until all the wealth piled by the bond-man’s two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said f[our] three thousand years ago, so still it must be said “the judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether”

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; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan — to achieve and cherish a lasting peace among ourselves and with the world. to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with the world. all nations.