

FREEDOM AND YOU



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Freedom is a key American value. We hear the term freedom being used quite often in American life. But do we really understand freedom? Please answer the following two questions:

1. What does freedom mean to you?
2. Where does freedom come from? What guarantees our freedom?

Point – Freedom is a key American value on which our Founding Fathers based the nation. Freedom, liberty, and equality are what all Americans are meant to enjoy. However, the reality of American life is not everyone has had freedom from day one. Many people(s) have been denied freedom throughout our nation’s history. However, by issuing the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, President Abraham Lincoln took a big step in guaranteeing freedom for all. Let’s examine Lincoln’s legacy.

THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

The impact and legacy of President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation is felt by all Americans. Please watch the following oral history video(s) to hear what some notable individuals have to say about it. What does Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation mean to each?

- Dr. Harold L. Martin Sr.
- Bishop George W. Brooks
- Governor Edward G. Rendell

BREAKING DOWN THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

Please read the Emancipation Proclamation and answer the following questions:

1. When does Lincoln issue the proclamation?
2. In which states does Lincoln free individuals held as slaves? In which states does slavery remain?
3. What is Lincoln's reasoning behind issuing the proclamation?
4. What does Lincoln recommend the freed peoples do going forward?
5. What does Lincoln say about prospective military service for freed individuals?
6. To what extent did the Emancipation Proclamation free individuals held as slaves in the United States?

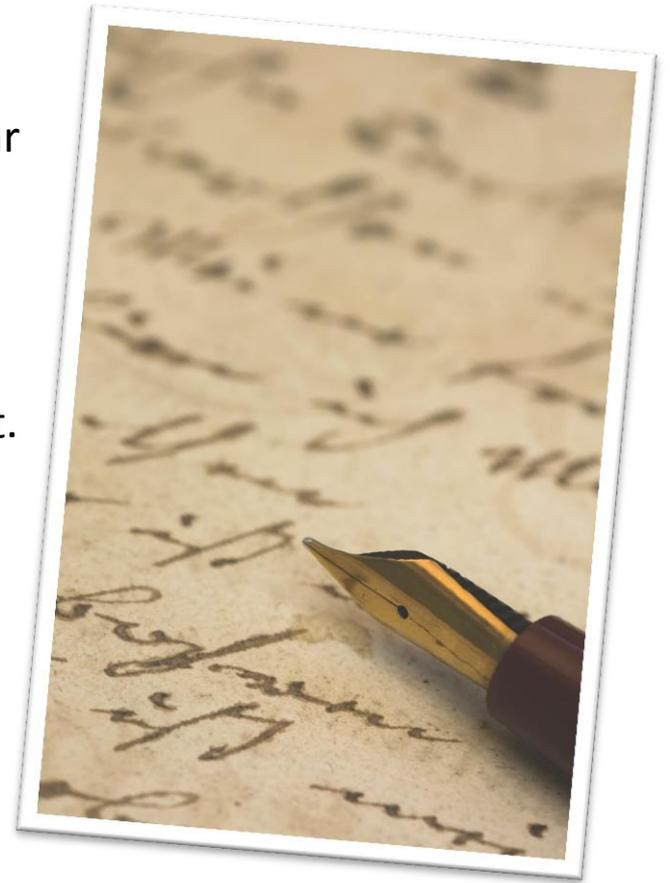
UNDERSTANDING THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

Now that you've read the EP, let's make sure we fully understand it.

- Lincoln's stated objective when the war began was not the abolition of slavery, but to keep the union together.
- However, as war progressed Lincoln concluded that Emancipation (freeing of slaves) was a military and political necessity. The union could use black soldiers and wanted to keep Britain from helping the South.
- Irony: It did not actually free many slaves because it only applied to areas behind Confederate lines, outside of Union control.
- Had massive symbolic importance – now the war isn't simply about preserving the union – now it is about ending slavery, transforming Southern life, and redefining what freedom truly means in America.

THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION: A PUBLIC HEARING ACTIVITY

When President Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation, his ideas were well received by some and blatantly criticized by others. By no means was it a popular decision, rather a controversial and divisive act. As a class will be holding a public hearing on the Emancipation Proclamation designed to allow us to see how varying groups of Americans would have differing views on it. Please follow the directions in the accompanying handout.



EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION: DRAWING CLOSURE

Please answer the following question in a well written response:

What does the Emancipation Proclamation “say” about President Abraham Lincoln’s presidential leadership and legacy?