

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 can not 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.

~ Abraham Lincoln on November 19, 1863 at the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery in Gettysburg, PA

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**YES, YOU HAVE TO MEMORIZE ALL OF IT, WORD FOR WORD, OTHERWISE IT'S NOT MEMORIZED.**

## **What? How am I going to memorize ALL THAT??**

- REPEAT, REPEAT, REPEAT and then REPEAT, REPEAT, REPEAT again.
- Memorize a piece at a time then put the pieces together as you go.
- Look for word patterns (big -> small, i.e. continent, nation; civil war, battlefield, portion of)
- The last paragraph is the hardest, practice it the most.

## **Why should I memorize ALL THAT!?**

1. It's one of the most eloquent speeches in the history of our country...and the world, really!
2. Your memory is like any muscle, it gets stronger with exercise.
3. It'll go on your grade! (I probably should've put that as #1.)

## **How is it going to be graded?**

- You will say the memorized speech in class. It'll take you about 3 minutes to say. Since you only get one chance, make sure you have it memorized before you attempt it.
- You can earn up to 100 points, depending on how well you have memorized it.
- I will allow 5 mistakes (drop/add/change a word). After that, you will lose a point per mistake.

This is due on **February 12, 2019**. (Abraham Lincoln's 210th birthday!)

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Complete the following on another paper and staple it to this paper:

1. What does Lincoln mean by "four score and seven years ago"?
2. Who are "our fathers"?
3. What important event happened in 1776?
4. What impact does starting the second paragraph with "now" have on its meaning?
5. When Lincoln says the nation was "so conceived and so dedicated" what is he referring to?
6. Paraphrase the third sentence of the second paragraph:
7. What is significant about the phrase, "The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here"?
8. How does Lincoln use the idea of "unfinished work" to assign responsibility to his listeners?
9. What four specific ideas does Lincoln ask his listeners to commit themselves to at the end of his speech?
10. **Choose one the following to answer in paragraph form (2 paragraphs, use text as support):**

**A.** Lincoln never mentions the word "union" over the course of his speech, instead repeatedly referring to the "nation" instead. What is the effect of selecting this one word instead of the other?

**B.** What is another word one might expect Lincoln to use in a speech during the Civil War that does not appear in the speech? What is the effect of it not being mentioned?

**C.** What do you make of Lincoln's choice to name the Declaration of Independence as the moment of the birth of the nation?

**D.** How does the meaning of "dedicate" change over the course of the text, and what does this reveal about the Gettysburg Address? Include the impact of the meaning that has built up over the course of the speech in your answer.