



The Gettysburg Address

INFORMATIONAL TEXT

Abraham Lincoln

1863

Introduction

studysync

Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865) was the 16th president of the United States. On November 19, 1863, Lincoln delivered one of the most famous speeches in American history. Evoking the spirit of the nation's founding fathers, Lincoln stood beside the quiet Civil War battlefield of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and consecrated the hallowed ground to the sacrifice of the soldiers who fought and died there. Reasserting the commitment to preserve the Union and the pursuit of the principles for which it was founded, the elegant words of the Gettysburg Address stand as testament to the greatest challenge in American history.

“Four score and seven years ago . . .”

NOTES



Skill:
Arguments
and Claims

Lincoln claims the country was created based on liberty and equality. As evidence, he quotes from the Declaration of Independence.



Skill:
Connotation
and Denotation

“Final resting place” is another term for *grave* or *cemetery*. Substituting either of those words in this context sounds cold and unfeeling. “Final resting place” has a more positive, peaceful connotation.

1 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.

2 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.

3 But in a larger sense, we cannot 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.

4 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 at the Gettysburg Address, painting by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris

