

DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- At the beginning of the video, Professor Douds states that, “President Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg address is one of the most famous speeches ever given. It is stunning in its brevity - ten sentences, 272 words, and delivered in just over two minutes ... few have said more with less.” Why do you think that the Gettysburg Address is so famous? Why do you think that the speech is so short, especially in comparison to other presidential speeches? Explain.
- Later in the video, Professor Douds reminds us that, “Lincoln is not in Gettysburg to celebrate the Union victory. Rather, he explains that those who fought were the loyal guardians of the American experiment. With their blood, they watered the tree of liberty. As Lincoln himself knew, how could his words ever compare to that sacrifice. He even speculates that ‘The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.’ Ironically, the world remembers what our sixteenth President said, but do we remember the actions of those who fought at Gettysburg?” What do you think Professor Douds means by ‘loyal guardians of the American Experiment?’ Explain. Do you think that most people today know why President Lincoln gave the Gettysburg Address? If yes, why? If no, why not? Do you think people today should know why President Lincoln gave the Gettysburg Address? Why or why not?
- Interpreting a passage late in the address, Professor Douds explains that, “Those who fought and died, shouldered our nation’s enduring values through the refining fire of Gettysburg and the Civil War. Lincoln points to them, and challenges the living. Are we prepared to heed their example to do what is necessary to advance the founding ideals of the Declaration of Independence?” What exactly are the ideals of the Declaration of Independence? What do you think Professor Douds means, specifically, when joining President Lincoln in asking if we are ‘prepared to heed their example [referring to the Union soldiers who died fighting]’ and ‘do what is necessary’ to advance those ideals? How would you answer their question? Explain.
- Towards the end of the video, Professor Douds notes that, “The Union won the Civil War. Slavery ended. And with it, the values of liberty and equality were given a ‘new birth. However, the struggle for liberty and equality continued ... and persists today.” In what ways, specifically, did the Union winning the war renew the values of liberty and equality? In what ways does the struggle for liberty and equality persist in modern society? Explain.

EXTEND THE LEARNING:

CASE STUDY: The Battle of Gettysburg

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article “Battle of Gettysburg,” then answer the questions that follow.

- What were General Lee’s main objectives in advancing his troops farther north? Why did President Lincoln place Major General Meade in charge of the Army of the Potomac? What were the consequences of Commander Ewell’s choice to not attack Cemetery Hill? What happened before, during, and after ‘Pickett’s Charge?’ How many men did the Confederates lose in the battle? How many men did the Union forces lose in the battle? What was the significance of the Union victory at Gettysburg, in terms of the overall war?
- Does knowing more details about the Battle of Gettysburg change how you view President Lincoln’s speech? Why or why not? Why do you think President Lincoln chose to commemorate the troops of this particular battle?
- Do you think it is important for modern day Americans to know about what happened in the American Civil War? Why or why not? In what ways might the outcomes of the Battle of Gettysburg and the speech that President Lincoln gave be relevant and important to Americans today?



QUIZ

HOW LINCOLN CHANGED THE WORLD IN TWO MINUTES

- 1. President Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address is comprised of just _____ sentences and _____ words.**
 - a. six; 232
 - b. eight; 252
 - c. ten; 272
 - d. twelve; 302

- 2. Other than the United States, what other countries have been founded on a commitment to liberty and equality?**
 - a. None.
 - b. Two.
 - c. Seven.
 - d. Nine.

- 3. What was President Lincoln's reason for being in Gettysburg?**
 - a. To celebrate the Union victory.
 - b. To campaign for re-election.
 - c. To dedicate a national military cemetery.
 - d. To visit grieving relatives.

- 4. In three days of fighting the Battle of Gettysburg, _____ Americans on both sides—Union and Confederate—were killed, wounded, captured, or missing.**
 - a. 5,000
 - b. 23,000
 - c. 47,000
 - d. 51,000

- 5. The Union won the Civil War.**
 - a. True
 - b. False



QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

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Battle of Gettysburg



The Battle of Gettysburg, fought from July 1 to July 3, 1863, is considered the most important engagement of the American Civil War. After a great victory over Union forces at Chancellorsville, General Robert E. Lee marched his Army of Northern Virginia into Pennsylvania in late June 1863. On July 1, the advancing Confederates clashed with the Union's Army of the Potomac, commanded by General George G. Meade, at the crossroads town of Gettysburg. The next day saw even heavier fighting, as the Confederates attacked the Federals on both left and right. On July 3, Lee ordered an attack by fewer than 15,000 troops on the enemy's center at Cemetery Ridge. The assault, known as "Pickett's Charge," managed to pierce the Union lines but eventually failed, at the cost of thousands of rebel casualties, and Lee was forced to withdraw his battered army toward Virginia on July 4.

Battle of Gettysburg: Lee's Invasion of the North

In May 1863, Robert E. Lee's Confederate Army of Northern Virginia had scored a smashing victory over the Army of the Potomac at Chancellorsville. Brimming with confidence, Lee decided to go on the offensive and invade the North for a second time (the first invasion had ended at Antietam the previous fall). In addition to bringing the conflict out of Virginia and diverting northern troops from Vicksburg, where the Confederates were under siege, Lee hoped to gain recognition of the Confederacy by Britain and France and strengthen the cause of northern "Copperheads" who favored peace.

On the Union side, President Abraham Lincoln had lost confidence in the Army of the Potomac's commander, Joseph Hooker, who seemed reluctant to confront Lee's army after the defeat at Chancellorsville. On June 28, Lincoln named Major General George Gordon Meade to succeed Hooker. Meade immediately ordered the pursuit of Lee's army of 75,000, which by then had crossed the Potomac River into Maryland and marched on into southern Pennsylvania.

Battle of Gettysburg Begins: July 1

Upon learning that the Army of the Potomac was on its way, Lee planned to assemble his army in the prosperous crossroads town of Gettysburg, 35 miles southwest of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. One of the Confederate divisions in A.P. Hill's command approached the town in search of supplies early on July 1, only to find that two Union cavalry brigades had arrived the previous day. As the bulk of both armies headed toward Gettysburg, Confederate forces (led by Hill and Richard Ewell) were able to drive the outnumbered Federal defenders back through town to Cemetery Hill, located a half mile to the south.

Seeking to press his advantage before more Union troops could arrive, Lee gave discretionary orders to attack Cemetery Hill to Ewell, who had taken command of the Army of Northern Virginia's Second Corps after Lee's most trusted general, Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, was mortally wounded at

Chancellorsville. Ewell declined to order the attack, considering the Federal position too strong; his reticence would earn him many unfavorable comparisons to the great Stonewall. By dusk, a Union corps under Winfield Scott Hancock had arrived and extended the defensive line along Cemetery Ridge to the hill known as Little Round Top; three more Union corps arrived overnight to strengthen its defenses.

Battle of Gettysburg, Day 2: July 2

As the next day dawned, the Union Army had established strong positions from Culp's Hill to Cemetery Ridge. Lee assessed his enemy's positions and determined—against the advice of his defensively minded second-in-command, James Longstreet—to attack the Federals where they stood. He ordered Longstreet to lead an attack on the Union left, while Ewell's corps would strike the right, near Culp's Hill. Though his orders were to attack as early in the day as possible, Longstreet didn't get his men into position until 4 pm, when they opened fire on the Union corps commanded by Daniel Sickles.

Over the next several hours, bloody fighting raged along Sickles' line, which stretched from the nest of boulders known as Devil's Den into a peach orchard, as well as in a nearby wheat field and on the slopes of Little Round Top. Thanks to fierce fighting by one Minnesota regiment, the Federals were able to hold Little Round Top, but lost the orchard, field and Devil's Den; Sickles himself was seriously wounded. Ewell's men had advanced on the Union forces at Culp's Hill and East Cemetery Hill in coordination with Longstreet's 4 pm attack, but Union forces had stalled their attack by dusk. Both armies suffered extremely heavy losses on July 2, with 9,000 or more casualties on each side. The combined casualty total from two days of fighting came to nearly 35,000, the largest two-day toll of the war.

Battle of Gettysburg, Day 3: July 3

Early on the morning of July 3, Union forces of the Twelfth Army Corps pushed back a Confederate threat against Culp's Hill after a seven-hour firefight and regained their strong position. Believing his men had been on the brink of victory the day before, Lee decided to send three divisions (preceded by an artillery barrage) against the Union center on Cemetery Ridge. Fewer than 15,000 troops, led by a division under George Pickett, would be tasked with marching some three-quarters of a mile across open fields to attack dug-in Union infantry positions.

Despite Longstreet's protests, Lee was determined, and the attack—later known as “Pickett's Charge”—went forward around 3 pm, after an artillery bombardment by some 150 Confederate guns. Union infantry opened fire on the advancing rebels from behind stone walls, while regiments from Vermont, New York and Ohio hit both of the enemy's flanks. Caught from all sides, barely half of the Confederates survived, and Pickett's division lost two-thirds of its men. As the survivors stumbled back to their opening position, Lee and Longstreet scrambled to shore up their defensive line after the failed assault.

Battle of Gettysburg: Aftermath and Impact

His hopes of a victorious invasion of the North dashed, Lee waited for a Union counterattack on July 4, but it never came. That night, in heavy rain, the Confederate general withdrew his decimated army toward Virginia. Though the cautious Meade would be criticized for not pursuing the enemy after Gettysburg, the battle was a crushing defeat for the Confederacy. Union casualties in the battle numbered 23,000, while the Confederates had lost some 28,000 men—more than a third of Lee's army. The North rejoiced while the South mourned, its hopes for foreign recognition of the Confederacy erased.

Demoralized by the defeat at Gettysburg, Lee offered his resignation to President Jefferson Davis, but was refused. Though the great Confederate general would go on to win other victories, the Battle of Gettysburg (combined with Ulysses S. Grant's victory at Vicksburg, also on July 4) irrevocably turned the tide of the Civil War in the Union's favor.