

Cold-Read Task

Read “The Gettysburg Address” by Abraham Lincoln. Then answer the questions.

President Abraham Lincoln’s Speech The Gettysburg Address, 1863

1. Four score¹ 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. 3. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. 4. 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. 5. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

6. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate²—we cannot hallow—this ground. 7. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. 8. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.

9. 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. 10. 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.

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¹ twenty

²² declare a place sacred

1. **Part A**

What is the meaning of the word *proposition* as it is used in sentence 1 of the address?

- a. something imagined
- b. something suggested
- c. a scheme or plan
- d. an argument or claim

Part B

What evidence **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- a. the reference to the American Revolutionary War
- b. the reference to the equality of all men
- c. the use of the term *conceived*
- d. the use of the term *dedicated*

2. Read sentence 2 from the address:

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.

Part A

How does this sentence contribute to the development of ideas in the address?

- a. It broadens the scope of Lincoln's ideas to include any country founded on the same principles that the United States was.
- b. It creates interest in Lincoln's subject by establishing a contrast to the historical reference in the first sentence.
- c. It introduces the idea of how a country might have a reasonable chance of succeeding for more than a brief period of history.
- d. It suggests that the experiment that started with the founding of the United States might be at risk of failing.

Part B

What evidence from the address **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- a. the reference to "our fathers brought forth" in sentence 1
- b. the idea that the country was established "in Liberty" in sentence 1
- c. the reference to "our poor power" in sentence 7
- d. the idea that a government may be "by the people, for the people" in sentence 10

3. Trace Lincoln's use of the word *dedicate(d)* over the course of his address.

Part A

Which meaning of the word *dedicated* is used in sentences 1 and 2?

- a. to require full attention
- b. to give single-minded loyalty to
- c. to make an intense personal commitment to
- d. to set apart or separate as sacred

Part B

Which meaning of the word *dedicate* is used in sentences 4 and 6?

- a. to require full attention to
- b. to give single-minded loyalty to
- c. to make an intense personal commitment to
- d. to set apart or separate as sacred

Part C

Which meaning of the word *dedicated* is used in sentences 9 and 10?

- a. to require full attention to
- b. to give single-minded loyalty to
- c. to make an intense personal commitment to
- d. to set apart or separate as sacred

Part D

Which sentence **most accurately** states the cumulative impact of Lincoln's use of the word *dedicate*?

- a. The repetition of the word prompts listeners to think about those killed in the war, which will help them remember his other points.
- b. The context of each use moves its meaning from the general to the individual, making listeners realize the importance of settling the country's conflict.
- c. Each use links historical events to the current events, which would help listeners to see that the past plays a large part in the present.
- d. Each use adds to the lyrical quality of Lincoln's rhetorical style, making the speech worthy of committing to memory.

4. Part A

How does Lincoln’s use of the expressions “brought forth” and “conceived” in sentence 1 contribute to the forcefulness of his main idea?

- a. They prompt the audience to remember ancestors who were fought and died during the American Revolution and to think about the dead buried at Gettysburg.
- b. They support what he is saying about the current conflict being about a nation in which all people can be born free.
- c. They connect the nation’s rebellion against an oppressive ruler to the nation’s present struggle to reinterpret the meaning of freedom to extend to the ending of slavery.
- d. They provide balance to the harsh reality of the deaths of the men who are buried at Gettysburg with the hope for a new beginning.

Part B

What evidence from the address **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- a. the reference to the “great civil war” in sentence 2
- b. the comment about the “great battlefield” where the people are gathered in sentence 3
- c. the mention of the “final resting place for those who here gave their lives” in sentence 4
- d. the use of the phrase “new birth of freedom” in sentence 10

5. Create a summary of Lincoln’s address by selecting an option that **best** states the focus of each paragraph.

Part A

- a. Lincoln reminds his listeners that they have gathered at a special place being set aside for those who died in the war.
- b. Lincoln defends his decision to designate the graveyard a special place to honor the dead.
- c. Lincoln draws attention to the nation’s beginnings and its expressly stated purpose.
- d. Lincoln reminds listeners of the origins of the nation and the importance of the place where they have gathered.

Part B

- a. He praises the men who were brave enough to give their lives fighting in the current war.
- b. He points out that the deeds of the dead will be remembered longer than his speech.
- c. He asks his listeners to pledge to remember the men who have died fighting in this war.
- d. He explains how the lives of the men who fought have already made the ground sacred.

Part C

- a. He calls for all to pledge to devote themselves to achieving a rebirth of freedom.
- b. He reminds listeners that they each have a responsibility to ensure liberty for all men.
- c. He encourages listeners to let the brave acts of those fallen in battle inspire them to join in the fight.
- d. He explains how those who died can inspire listeners to support the cause.

6. Write a multiparagraph essay that analyzes the shift in focus that occurs in paragraph 3 of the “Gettysburg Address” and explains what Lincoln thinks is the task left to his hearers. Use evidence from the address to support your analysis. Be sure to observe the conventions of standard English.

