

Practice Cold-Read Task

Read Abraham Lincoln's *"Second Inaugural Address."* Then answer the questions.

"Second Inaugural Address" 1865

Abraham Lincoln

Fellow Countrymen

At this second appearing to take the oath of the presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention, and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil-war. All dreaded it—all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war -- seeking to dissolve the Union and divide effects by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish, and the war came.

One eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the Southern half part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was somehow the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union even by war, while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it. Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already

attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces, but let us judge not that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come, but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" If we shall suppose that American Slavery is one of those offences which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offence came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a Living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said "the judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether."

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace, among ourselves and with all nations.

[Endorsed by Lincoln:]

Original manuscript of second Inaugural presented to Major John Hay.

A. Lincoln

April 10, 186

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1. Part A:

Read this sentence from paragraph 2:

While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to *saving* the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to *destroy* it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union and divide effects by negotiation.

What is the meaning of the phrase *insurgent agents* as it is used in paragraph 2?

- a. those looking for an easy victory in the war
- b. those attempting to overthrow the law of the land
- c. those desiring to end the war as quickly as possible
- d. those attempting to resolve the conflict at any cost

Part B:

What phrase from paragraph 2 best helps in understanding the meaning of the phrase *insurgent agents*?

- a. “sought to avert it”
- b. “devoted altogether to *saving* the Union”
- c. “seeking to dissolve the Union”
- d. “would *accept* war rather than let it perish”

2. How do the word choices and sentence structures of paragraph 2 support its meaning?

- a. The use of phrases *saving* the Union, *destroy* it, *make* war, and *accept* war emphasize Lincoln's inner conflict about the war, and the structure of each sentence includes details that reveal this inner conflict.
- b. The phrases *saving* the Union, *destroy* it, *make* war, and *accept* war are used to reinforce the contrasts in the positions/attitudes of people in the north and the south, and sentences two through four use parallelisms that reflect this contrast.
- c. Each sentence is structured with parallelisms such as "one of the would *make* war" and "the other would *accept* war" that illustrate and point out the differences in the two sides in the war.
- d. The use of words such as *all* and *both* and the parallel construction of most sentences are designed to emphasize the commonalities of the opposing views of Americans at the time and suggest these views are closer than most people realize.

3. **Part A:**

Read this sentence from paragraph 3:

It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces.

What is the meaning of the metaphor "wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces"?

- a. desiring an end to conflict
- b. pleading for help while doing malicious deeds
- c. heaping curses on one's enemy
- d. benefitting from the labor of slaves

Part B:

What phrase from paragraph 3 **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- a. "... dare to ask a just God's assistance"
- b. "... the woe due to those by whom the offenses came!"
- c. "... this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away."
- d. "... the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil"

4. Part A:

What central idea is related to the line, "until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword" in paragraph 3?

- a. Those who unjustly enslave fellow citizens will be dishonored in bloody battle.
- b. The only valid reason for a nation to resort to war would be for the purpose of setting right the injustices of many years.
- c. There is a kind of justice that balances the blood spilled by slaves with the blood spilled in a war to free slaves.
- d. The end of the present conflict will only come when soldiers put down their weapons and accept the end of an unjust system.

Part B:

What other sentence in paragraph 3 also supports the central idea in Part A?

- a. "Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other."
- b. "Let us judge not, that we be not judged."
- c. "Woe unto the world because of offenses; it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to the man by whom the offense cometh."

d. "Fondly do hope, fervently do we pray, that this might scourge of war may speedily pass away."

5. Part A:

Which best states Lincoln's primary purpose in the speech?

- a. to point out that the end to slavery and the punishment of all those who supported it will come
- b. to remind his audience that finding a way to end the suffering caused by slavery and the war is the most important national priority
- c. to emphasize that those who have supported slavery will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law
- d. to explain in detail the history of the war and why it proved to be much more difficult and terrible than anyone could have imagined

Part B:

Which **two** pieces of evidence from the address best support the answer to Part A?

- a. "The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself, and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all." (paragraph 1)
- b. "One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it." (paragraph 3)
- c. "Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained." (paragraph 3)
- d. "...He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came...." (paragraph 3)
- e. "Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away." (paragraph 3)
- f. "American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove." (paragraph 3)
- g. "... with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds...." (paragraph 4)

6. **Part A:**

What irony is introduced in paragraph 3?

- a. Lincoln admits that slavery has benefitted both people who want it and people who object to its use.
- b. Lincoln notes that the war has inflicted suffering on those who both oppose and advocate slavery.
- c. Lincoln observes that each side in the conflict engages in the same religious practices.
- d. Lincoln points out that the war was caused by differences in beliefs about owning slaves.

Part B:

Which quotation from paragraph 3 **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- a. "To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union even by war"
- b. "Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other."
- c. "That of neither has been answered fully."
- d. "Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword...."

7. Which **two** quotations from the address **best** provide support for Lincoln's views about the influence of God's will in matters of justice, war, and politics?

- a. "The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself, . . ." (paragraph 1)
- b. "Both parties deprecated war, but one of them would *make* war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would *accept* war rather than let it perish, and the war came." (paragraph 2)
- c. "Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other (paragraph 3)
- d. "The Almighty has His own purposes." (paragraph 3)
- e. "If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come," (paragraph 3)
- f. " ... so still it must be said "the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." (paragraph 3)
- g. "...with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, ..." (paragraph 4)

8. Part A:

Which statement **best** describes Lincoln's purpose in pointing out similarities between the North and the South in paragraph 3?

- a. By pointing out that both sides failed to foresee a long, vast war, both asked the same God for victory, and neither had its requests fully answered, Lincoln hoped to draw the sides together.
- b. By emphasizing that both North and South now suffer war because slavery allowed both unjustly to benefit from the work of slaves, Lincoln intended for each side to accept its responsibility for the conflict.
- c. By reminding North and South that both sides desired an easier resolution to the conflict than war, Lincoln wanted to draw the opposing sides together to end the war.
- d. By acknowledging that both sides failed to anticipate a war that would last so long and cause so much death and destruction, Lincoln hoped to appeal to each side's desire to end the war.

Part B:

Which quote from paragraph 3 **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- a. "All knew that this interest was somehow the cause of the war."
- b. "...He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came"
- c. "Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away."
- d. "...so still it must be said 'the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'"

9. Write an extended response that analyzes Lincoln's repeated use of religious language throughout his Second Inaugural Address. Include an explanation of Lincoln's purpose for his word choices. Support your ideas with evidence from the address. Observe the conventions of standard English in your writing.

Cold-Read Task Answer Sheet

1. _____ Part A

_____ Part B

2. _____

3. _____ Part A

_____ Part B

4. _____ Part A

_____ Part B

5. _____ Part A

_____, _____ Part B

6. _____ Part A

_____ Part B

7. _____, _____

8. _____ Part A

_____ Part B

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