

# Exploring the Gettysburg Address

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**Listen to the Gettysburg Address:** Click “Listen” to hear actor Liam Neeson reading the Gettysburg Address.

- While listening, you can continue to look around the document, read highlights, or switch between the transcript and the original document.

**Discover the stories behind the words:** Click on a highlight to discover the stories behind seven different parts of the speech.

- When you open the document, you should see sections highlighted. If you do not see highlights, click “Start Over.”

**Read the transcripts:** The full transcript of this copy of the Gettysburg Address is available in English and Spanish.

- The transcripts match line-for-line with the original handwritten version.
- Click [here](#) to view another version of the transcript, which you can copy and paste. ([http://americanhistory.si.edu/documentsgallery/exhibitions/gettysburg\\_address\\_2.html](http://americanhistory.si.edu/documentsgallery/exhibitions/gettysburg_address_2.html)).

## Examine the document

- The zoom in feature allows you to see the words of the Address down to Lincoln’s individual pen strokes. Click on any part of the document to display a new view, centered on the spot where you clicked and zoomed in.
- In order to zoom out, you must click on the minus symbol under the word ZOOM.
- You can adjust the position of the view (move left, right, up, or down) by dragging.
- Use the fullscreen mode (in the upper right-hand corner) to enlarge the area you can use to view the interactive and hide all of the other windows on your screen.
- Exit the fullscreen mode at any time by pressing “Esc” on your keyboard.

## Discussion Questions

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The following questions can be used for in-class discussion or short written responses from students after covering the Gettysburg Address:

- What events in American history does Abraham Lincoln refer to in the Gettysburg Address?
- What are the main ideas of the Gettysburg Address?
- Why was Abraham Lincoln asked to speak at Gettysburg, PA?
- Read the Gettysburg Address again, but this time read it from the perspective of one of these people:
  - a slave living in a border state
  - a Confederate soldier
  - the wife of a Union soldier

- The Gettysburg Address was considered a surprisingly short speech. Use one of Abraham Lincoln’s sentences as a topic sentence for a paragraph, expanding on the idea in Lincoln’s sentence with additional supporting details.
- What is the most memorable speech you have ever heard? How did you hear it—on TV, on the radio, in person? How is the Gettysburg Address like or unlike the speech you remember?
- Compare the Gettysburg Address to another famous speech from history, such as the “I Have a Dream” speech by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. or The Inaugural Address by John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

## Related Resources

For more objects, information and activities about Abraham Lincoln, visit the new exhibition “Abraham Lincoln: An Extraordinary Life” at the National Museum of American History from January 2009 to January 2011 and online at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/lincoln>.

Click [here](#) to examine more of Lincoln’s written works, visit “America’s New Birth of Freedom” at the National Museum of American History from January 2009 to March 22, 2009 and online at ([http://americanhistory.si.edu/documentgallery/exhibitions/americas\\_new\\_birth\\_of\\_freedom\\_1.html](http://americanhistory.si.edu/documentgallery/exhibitions/americas_new_birth_of_freedom_1.html)).

## Connections to Resources on Thinkfinity.org

If you would like to lead your class in deeper discovery of the Gettysburg Address, consider using these free online resources from our partners at [Thinkfinity.org](http://Thinkfinity.org) along with the Interactive Gettysburg Address.

- Engaging Students in a Collaborative Exploration of the Gettysburg Address  
[http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=888](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=888)
- Myth and Truth: The Gettysburg Address  
[http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=885](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=885)
- The Gettysburg Address (1863)—Defining the American Union  
[http://edsitement.neh.gov/view\\_lesson\\_plan.asp?id=764](http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=764)
- Inventing and Presenting Unit 2: Effective Speeches and Building the Invention  
[http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=162](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=162)

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<http://americanhistory.si.edu/signup>.