



4-1-2014

# The Emancipation Proclamation: The nation's Blessing or the Nation's Burden?

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## Recommended Citation

Andre, Donald, "The Emancipation Proclamation: The nation's Blessing or the Nation's Burden?" (2014). *Lesson Plans*. Paper 2.  
<http://via.library.depaul.edu/tps-lesson-plans/2>

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## Using Primary Sources in the Elementary Classroom

The Emancipation Proclamation:  
The Nation's Blessing or the Nation's Burden?

### I. Overview:

This lesson seeks to engage fifth grade students to read and analyze the varied reactions of diverse groups of both the Northern and Southern society to the Emancipation Proclamation using primary sources on the Library of Congress Web Site and other sources.

### II. Goal of lesson:

The goal of this lesson is to give the students the opportunity to examine primary source documents of the Library of Congress, primary sources at other locations and other sources; and to have the students develop and apply an age appropriate understanding of the Emancipation Proclamation and its effects on both Northern and Southern societies while in the midst of a civil war.

### III. Objectives:

After completing the lesson the students will be able to:

- A. show a basic understanding of what the Emancipation Proclamation is and is not
- B. explain what the Emancipation Proclamation did and did not do
- C. dramatize the reactions of contrasting segments of both Northern and Southern cultures during the Civil War

### IV. Investigative Inquiries

- A. What were the reasons for the variety of reactions in the Northern and Southern states as well as the Border States?
- B. How did this document change the focus and nature of the war?
- C. Were there similar reactions that crossed to both sides of the conflict?

### V. Learning to use primary sources

- A. Inquiry discussion as to where to find information for research
- B. Model the use of the Library of Congress for a class read/study of the Emancipation

Proclamation.

C. For practice do a small group Treasure Hunt; a work sheet on a related topic using the Library of Congress and other sources.

## VI. Important Instructional Items

A. Time required: 4 to 5 class periods of one hour each

B. Recommended grade range for this lesson: 5th to 8th grades

C. Subjects areas covered in lesson:

1. Social Science

2. English and Language Arts

3. Fine Arts

## VII. Illinois Learning Standards Addressed

<http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ILS/html/descriptors.htm>

### A. Social Science

STATE GOAL 14: Understand political systems, with an emphasis on the United States.

14.A.2 Explain the importance of fundamental concepts expressed and implied in major documents including the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and the Illinois Constitution.

14.D.2 Explain ways that individuals and groups influence and shape public policy.

14.F.2 Identify consistencies and inconsistencies between expressed United States political traditions and ideas and actual practices (e.g., freedom of speech, right to bear arms, slavery, voting rights).

STATE GOAL 16: Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States and other nations.

16.A.2b Compare different stories about a historical figure or event and analyze differences in the portrayals and perspectives they present.

16.A.2c Ask questions and seek answers by collecting and analyzing data from historic documents, images and other literary and non-literary sources.

16.B.2c (US) Identify presidential elections that were pivotal in the formation of modern political parties.

16.B.2d (US) Identify major political events and leaders within the United States historical eras since the adoption of the Constitution, including the westward expansion, Louisiana Purchase, Civil War, and 20th century wars as well as the roles of Thomas Jefferson,

Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

## B. English and Language Arts

STATE GOAL 1: Read with understanding and fluency.

1.A.2b Clarify word meaning using context clues and a variety of resources including glossaries, dictionaries and thesauruses.

1.B.2a Establish purposes for reading; survey materials; ask questions; make predictions; connect, clarify and extend ideas.

1.C.2b Make and support inferences and form interpretations about main themes and topics.

1.C.2c Compare and contrast the content and organization of selections.

1.C.2d Summarize and make generalizations from content and relate to purpose of material.

STATE GOAL 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.

3.B.2b Establish central idea, organization, elaboration and unity in relation to purpose and audience.

STATE GOAL 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.

4.A.2a Demonstrate understanding of the listening process (e.g., sender, receiver, message) by summarizing and paraphrasing spoken messages orally and in writing in formal and informal situations.

4.A.2b Ask and respond to questions related to oral presentations and messages in small and large group settings.

4.B.2a Present oral reports to an audience using correct language and nonverbal expressions for the intended purpose and message within a suggest organizational format.

4.B.2b Use speaking skills and procedures to participate in group discussions.

STATE GOAL 5: Use the language arts to acquire, assess and communicate information.

5.A.2a Formulate questions and construct a basic research plan.

5.A.2b Organize and integrate information from a variety of sources (e.g., books, interviews, library reference materials, web- sites, CD/ROMs).

5.B.2a Determine the accuracy, currency and reliability of materials from various sources.

5.B.2b Cite sources used.

5.C.2b Prepare and deliver oral presentations based on inquiry or research.

## C. Fine Arts

STATE GOAL 26: Through creating and performing, understand how works of art are produced

26.A.2b Drama: Describe various ways the body, mind and voice are used with acting, scripting and staging processes to create or perform drama/theatre.

26.B.2b Drama: Demonstrate actions, characters, narrative skills, collaboration, environments, simple staging and sequence of events and situations in solo and ensemble dramas.

## VIII. Materials

### Primary Sources

Examples of Primary Sources:

The search of primary sources for this lesson begins with “American Memory” in the Library of Congress and centers on the three topics shown below. Use the key word(s): emancipation proclamation, emancipation, reaction to emancipation, etc.

The Library of Congress> American Memory Home> Presidents

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/ListSome.php?category=Presidents>

The Library of Congress> American Memory Home> Government, Law

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/ListSome.php?category=Government,+Law>

The Library of Congress> American Memory Home> War, Military

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/ListSome.php?category=War,+Military>

Examples of Primary sources from the Library of Congress/American Memories/Presidents/Lincoln papers

1. Nashville, Tennessee Telegraph to Lawrence A. Gobright, Friday, January 09, 1863 (Telegram reporting reaction to Emancipation Proclamation in Kentucky)

<http://memory.loc.gov/cgi->

[bin/ampage?collId=mal&fileName=mal1/211/2110900/malpage.db&re](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=mal&fileName=mal1/211/2110900/malpage.db&re)

2. James W. Stone to Abraham Lincoln, Tuesday, September 23, 1862 (Telegram concerning reaction to Emancipation Proclamation)<http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=mal&fileName=mal1/186/1860300/malpage.db&re>

3. Benjamin Rush Plumly to Abraham Lincoln, Thursday, January 01, 1863 (Reaction to Emancipation Proclamation in Philadelphia)  
<http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=mal&fileName=mal1/208/2088100/malpage.db&recNum=0>

4. The war not for emancipation: speech by Hon. Garrett Davis, of Kentucky. African slavery the cornerstone of the Southern confederacy. Speech by Hon. Alex. H. Stephens, of Georgia. (From a book)  
<http://memory.loc.gov/>

Examples of Primary sources from the Library of Congress/American Memories/Government, law

1. U.S. Citizens to Abraham Lincoln, September 1862 (Petition supporting Emancipation Proclamation)  
<http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=mal&fileName=mal1/187/1877600/malpage.db&recNum=0>

2. California Senate, Monday, January 26, 1863 (Resolution approving Emancipation Proclamation)  
<http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=mal&fileName=mal1/213/2134900/malpage.db&recNum=0>

Examples of Primary source(s) from the Library of Congress/American Memories/War, Military

1. No State Compensation for slaves. It is now conceded that emancipation in Maryland is certain. The question open is, shall it be with state compensation or without  
[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbpebib:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(rbpe+0310100b\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbpebib:@field(NUMBER+@band(rbpe+0310100b)))

2. The emancipation problem in Maryland ... Brantz Mayer. Baltimore, 17th June, 1862.  
[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbpebib:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(rbpe+03101400\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbpebib:@field(NUMBER+@band(rbpe+03101400)))

Sources other than the Library of Congress

Harper's Weekly

1. South Reacts to Emancipation Proclamation

<http://www.sonofthesouth.net/leefoundation/civil-war/1862/october/south-reacts-emancipation.htm>

Civil War Primary Documents

1. Civil War Primary Documents, Personal Diaries, Journals, Letters, Cartoons, Art, Images, Poetry, Literature, & Music

[http://www.teacheroz.com/Civil\\_War\\_Documents.htm](http://www.teacheroz.com/Civil_War_Documents.htm)

2. Title: The war not for emancipation [sic]:: speech by Hon. Garrett Davis, of Kentucky. African slavery the corner-stone of the Southern confederacy. Speech by Hon. Alex. H. Stephens, of Georgia. From "Making of America"

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=moa;idno=ACK9312>

3. Booker, James, 1840-1923 . Letter to Chloe Unity Blair

Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia Library

<http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/Boo2k24.html>

Other sources:

If the student has anything from home that could contribute to either the research or discussions will be encouraged to bring in and share. These can be either textual, mementos or something from family archives.

Additional Sources Used or To Be Used

Davis, William C. Lincoln's Men. New York: The Free Press, 1999.

Fehrenbacher, Don E. ed. Abraham Lincoln - Speeches and Writings 1859-1865. Vol. II. New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1989.

Goodwin, Doris Kearns. Team of Rivals. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2005.

Guelzo, Allen C. Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation - the End of Slavery in America. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004.

Kunhardt, Philip B. Jr., et al. Lincoln an Illustrated Biography. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992.

Shenk, Joshua Wolf. Lincoln's Melancholy. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2005.

Wilson, Douglas L. Lincoln's Sword. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006.

IX. Technology Resources

A. Class room internet access

B. Tablets for each student

C. Teacher laptop for demonstration with LCD Projector

D. Networked printer in classroom

E. One CD per student (if needed).

F. Tech aide if needed

## X. Procedures

Day 1: The students will listen to the teacher read Abe's Honest Words: The Life of Abraham Lincoln by Doreen Rappaport. Inquiry based discussion centered on words and/or phrases such as: emancipation, proclamation, resolution, state compensation etc. Students broken into pairs to research various individuals or groups of individuals from both the North and South during the Civil War. (The class having been already divided for a Civil War simulation that is already in progress in class.)

Day 2: I will be using an interactive Power Point presentation (developed and created by Scot Mortensen) to guide the class during the opening session of the lesson. Then, if needed search for topics, step by step to the Library of Congress web site and topics for practice using a worksheet as a guide in order to further familiarize the students with both the procedures and the site(s).

Days 3&4: These two days will be used to gather information on note cards for a simulated debate between the two sides, North and South. (Beginning with the reading of The Emancipation Proclamation by The Honorable Abraham Lincoln.)

Day 5: The students having practiced (and will, if desired, dress as the part portrayed) will engage in a controlled debate monitored by a teacher and aide representing the respective sides in the conflict.

## Extensions

It will be possible from this point on to have the students to further explore the Library of Congress as we come into other units of study. For example, The Immigration Experience, each of the decades of the twentieth century highlighting the events and people who shaped our future,

The Great Depression and World War II just to name a few.