

U.S. History Module

Did Abraham
Lincoln really want
to free the slaves?

Project Directors

John Lee, North Carolina State University
Kathy Swan, University of Kentucky
SG Grant, Binghamton University

Project Writers

Lauren Colley
Stephen Day
Rebecca Muller
Emma Thacker

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Design by Macklin Frazier



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Module at a Glance

Grade Level

Summative Performance Task



High School



Argumentative Essay

Compelling Question

Did Abraham Lincoln really want to free the slaves?

Supporting Question 1

What was Lincoln's position on slavery before he became president?

Formative Performance Task I

Identify evidence that supports Lincoln's belief that abolition was not a simple process.

Historical Sources

- A. 1837 Protest
- B. 1849 DC Abolition Bill
- C. 1854 speech in Peoria (excerpt)
- D. 1858 speech in Ottawa (excerpt)

Supporting Question 2

What was President Lincoln's position on slavery as the war began?

Formative Performance Task II

Identify evidence that supports Lincoln's *tolerance* of slavery in attempts to protect the Union.

Historical Sources

- A. 1861 Inaugural Address (excerpt)
- B. 1861 letter to Orville Browning
- C. 1862 letter to Horace Greeley
- D. 1862 message to Congress (excerpt)*

Supporting Question 3

What was President Lincoln's position on slavery as the war intensified?

Formative Performance Task III

Identify evidence that supports Lincoln's abolition of slavery in attempts to protect the Union.

Historical Sources

- A. 1863 Emancipation Proclamation
- B. 1863 Gettysburg Address
- C. 1864 letter to Albert Hodges
- D. 1865 Inaugural Address

Summative Performance Task: Argumentative Essay

Did Abraham Lincoln really want to free the slaves? After reading the Emancipation Proclamation, Second Inaugural Address, and additional works by Lincoln, write an essay that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the texts. Be sure to acknowledge competing views.

Overview

This module integrates Common Core reading and writing standards into social studies instruction. It draws upon texts from Common Core ELA Appendix B and the Library of Congress and culminates in an argumentative essay that utilizes the Literacy Design Collaborative's Template Task Collection. By completing this module, students will build their social studies content knowledge as well as their reading and writing skills.

Compelling Question

Asked what they know about Abraham Lincoln, students generally respond, "he freed the slaves." This module begins with a compelling question that asks students to dig more deeply into that assumption and develop a more complex understanding of Lincoln's views and actions regarding slavery. To thoughtfully answer the question "did Lincoln really want to free the slaves?" students will examine Lincoln's words over the course of his political career as they consider the pressure on an elected official to satisfy diverse constituencies, the impact of context on an individual's actions, and how an individual's point of view can change over time. By the end, students will hopefully see that "Lincoln freed the slaves" is far too simple a description of a complicated man leading during a complicated time.

Supporting Questions and Formative Performance Tasks

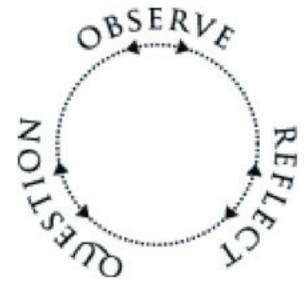
This module introduces students to texts that paint Lincoln in a light quite different from typical public sentiment, so opportunities for discussion (small group or whole class) and tools to help students organize information are important. Although specific instructional decisions are left to the teacher, suggestions are provided throughout the narrative. For example, if students have a limited background in document analysis, teachers might use tools provided in Tools for Historical Thinking that will help students read and analyze primary sources. Considering the number of sources and the importance of chronology in this module, some students might benefit from the construction of a timeline that will allow students to see the sources in relation to each other and historical context. A graphic organizer to which students can add over the course of the module may also prove helpful. One suggestion would be an organizer that helps students synthesize the sources presented for each supporting questions. Such an organizer might include a requirement for students to note the main ideas and key details from each document and to synthesize the arguments put forward in a group of sources. Another suggestion is for students to generate topics to organize ideas and details from the sources (e.g., the role of border-states, constitutional limitations on the government's actions, the purpose of the Civil War). Such an organizer can assist students as they complete the formative performance tasks and the analytical essay.

The sources suggested in the formative performance tasks should lead students to make inferences such as – 1) abolishing slavery was a complex issue, even for someone who disagreed with slavery, 2) Lincoln cared deeply about the Union and considered its preservation his key responsibility as president, and 3) as the war progressed, it became clear to Lincoln that the Union would not survive if slavery continued. The formative performances tasks should also focus students on key periods of time in the evolution of Lincoln's position on slavery. The range of sources should also help students recognize some of the contextual influences on Lincoln's actions and determine the degree to which Lincoln's views evolved over time. Given the general framework suggested in each formative performance tasks, teachers may assess students using graphic organizers, one-paragraph written responses, or summaries of group discussions.

Supporting Question and Formative Performance Task #1

What was Lincoln's position on slavery before becoming president?

This question asks students to consider Lincoln's views on slavery from his earliest public statements in the late 1830s to his election as president in 1860. Examining the texts chronologically will aid students' efforts to assess the consistency of Lincoln's views and actions. The first supporting question serves as a baseline for comparison. Students will examine four sources, including (A) Lincoln's protest in the Illinois legislature over a slavery bill, (B) Lincoln's bill proposing the abolition of slavery in Washington D.C., (C) an excerpt from Lincoln's 1854 debate with Stephen Douglas, and (D) an excerpt from Lincoln's 1858 debate with Stephen Douglas. Each document affirms Lincoln's distaste for slavery as an institution, but provides three caveats to that view: the federal government cannot abolish slavery where it currently exists, slave owners should be compensated, and the two races are not socially equal. Analysis of these sources should be supported by discussing Lincoln's views on national power, the significance of slavery to territorial expansion, and the correlation between abolition and racial equality. Students can be supported in their document analysis using the Library of Congress primary source analysis tool



Library of Congress primary
source analysis tool

Supporting Question and Formative Performance Task #2

What was Lincoln's position on slavery as the war began?

The second supporting question serves as the first point of comparison as students must consider the influence that representing the nation (as opposed to a state) and the secession of Southern states had on Lincoln. Students will examine four sources: (A) an excerpt from Lincoln's First Inaugural Address, (B) a letter from Lincoln to Orville Browning, and (C) a letter from Lincoln to Horace Greeley, along with (D) an excerpt from Lincoln's 1862 Message to Congress. Lincoln's commitment to preserving the Union is evident in each document, but so too is his hesitancy to alienate slave-holders evident in his commitment to returning fugitive slaves, his reprimand of a Union general for freeing slaves, and his proposal of a gradual and compensated process for abolition. Analysis of these sources should be supported by discussing concerns that led to Southern secession, Lincoln's personal and political values, and the early outcomes of the Civil War.

Supporting Question and Formative Performance Task #3

What was Lincoln's position on slavery as the war intensified?

The third supporting question focuses on the final years of Lincoln's presidency and the words most often associated with Lincoln. Again, students will examine four historical sources: (A) The Emancipation Proclamation, (B) The Gettysburg Address, (C) a letter from Lincoln to Albert Hodges, (D) and Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address. (The Gettysburg Address and Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address are also suggested texts from the Common Core ELA Standards' Appendix B.) These sources demonstrate the continued evolution of Lincoln's position on slavery as the war unfolded, as Lincoln encouraged freedmen to enlist in the Union Army and emphasized the centrality of equality and liberty in the nation's founding. Lincoln even suggested that God was punishing the nation for its reliance on slavery. Analysis of these sources should be supported by discussing turning points in the Civil War, the military justifications of abolition, and social and economic consequences of war.

Summative Performance Task

In this task, students will write a fully developed essay answering the compelling question – Did Lincoln really wanted to free the slaves? By this point in the investigation, students have examined many of Lincoln’s statements regarding slavery and have considered the larger context in which those statements were made. The summative performance task requires students to take a stand on the question but also allows for multiple interpretations.

Teachers might have their students create graphic organizers as part of a pre-writing activity. Students might need additional help developing a thesis and selecting the most useful supporting evidence to include in their essays. Although upon first reading, the question might have elicited a simple yes or no response, after a close examination of the sources, students should be able to come at this question from many angles including the following:

- Lincoln did want to free the slaves, but he had to wait for the right time
- Lincoln did not want to free the slaves and manipulated the issue of slavery in his quest to get elected or save the Union
- Lincoln might not have been completely committed to the task at the beginning of his political career, but was a passionate advocate for abolition by the end of the Civil War.

Although all three of the above interpretations can be supported by textual evidence, historians would not necessarily consider them of equal value. The “best” answers will account for context and change over time, both in the nation and within Lincoln himself. In this light, a response that argues that Lincoln might not have been completely committed to freeing the slaves at the beginning of his political career but became a passionate advocate by the end of the Civil War would find more support among historians than one that presents a more static argument (e.g., Lincoln never wanting the free the slaves and using the issue in a manipulative way throughout his political career).

Through their careful reading of the texts and their consideration of the module tasks, students should come to a nuanced understanding of Lincoln’s views on slavery, enabling them to successfully complete the argumentative task. [CC_ELA Writing Standards: WHST.9-10.1, WHST.9-10.4, WHST.9-10.8, WHST.9-10.9]

Scoring Rubric for Argumentative Essay

The following criteria and rubric can be used to determine the quality of students’ work.

	Proficient	Advanced	Developing	Under Developed
Clear	Argument focuses clearly and completely on the task, purpose, and audience	Argument includes attention to the task, purpose, and audience.	Argument is limited regarding task, purpose, and audience.	Argument lacks task, purpose, and audience.
Coherent	Argument regularly uses precise and knowledgeable claims.	Argument includes precise and knowledgeable claims.	Argument has limited precise and knowledgeable claims.	Argument lacks precise and knowledgeable claims.
Convincing	Argument regularly uses facts and concrete details from the source.	Argument is supported by facts and concrete details from the source.	Argument has limited support by facts and concrete details from the source.	Argument misuses or does not include facts and concrete details from the source.
Craft	Argument regularly utilizes inferences, claims, and evidence.	Argument offers some inferences, claims, and evidence.	Argument put forward limited inferences, claims, and evidence.	Argument does not include inferences, claims, and evidence.

Supporting Question 1 - Source A

Protest in Illinois Legislature on Slavery Abraham Lincoln March 3, 1837

Resolutions upon the subject of domestic slavery having passed both branches of the General Assembly at its present session, the undersigned hereby protest against the passage of the same.

They believe that the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy; but that the promulgation of abolition doctrines tends rather to increase than to abate its evils.

They believe that the Congress of the United States has no power, under the constitution, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the different States.

They believe that the Congress of the United States has the power, under the constitution, to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia; but that that power ought not to be exercised unless at the request of the people of said District.

The difference between these opinions and those contained in the said resolutions, is their reason for entering this protest.

Supporting Question 1 - Source B

A Bill for Abolishing Slavery in the District of Columbia Abraham Lincoln January 1849

A bill for an act to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, by the consent of the free white people of said District, and with compensation to owners--

Section 1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled: That no person not now within the District of Columbia, nor now owned by any person or persons now resident within it, nor hereafter born within it, shall ever be held in slavery within said District--

Section 2. That no person now within said District, or now owned by any person, or persons now resident within the same, or hereafter born within it, shall ever be held in slavery without the limits of said District: Provided, that officers of the government of the United States, being citizens of the slave-holding states, coming into said District on public business, and remaining only so long as may be reasonably necessary for that object, may be attended into, and out of, said District, and while there, by the necessary servants of themselves and their families, without their right to hold such servants in service, being thereby impaired--

Section 3. That all children born of slave mothers within said District on, or after the first day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand, eight hundred and fifty shall be free; but shall be reasonably supported and educated, by the respective owners of their mothers or by their heirs or representatives, and shall owe reasonable service, as apprentices, to such owners, heirs and representatives until they respectively arrive at the age of ... years when they shall be entirely free; and the municipal authorities of Washington and Georgetown, within their respective jurisdictional limits, are hereby empowered and required to make all suitable and necessary provisions for enforcing obedience to this section, on the part of both masters and apprentices--

Section 4. That all persons now within said District lawfully held as slaves, or now owned by any person or persons now resident within said District, shall remain such, at the will of their respective owners, their heirs and legal representatives: Provided that any such owner, or his legal representative, may at any time receive from the treasury of the United States the full value of his or her slave, of the class in this section mentioned, upon which such slave shall be forthwith and forever free: and provided further that the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of the Treasury shall be a board for determining the value of such slaves as their owners may desire to emancipate under this section; and whose duty it shall be to hold a session for the purpose, on the first monday of each calender month; to receive all applications; and, on satisfactory evidence in each case, that the person presented for valuation, is a slave, and of the



class in this section mentioned, and is owned by the applicant, shall value such slave at his or her full cash value, and give to the applicant an order on the treasury for the amount; and also to such slave a certificate of freedom--

Section 5 That the municipal authorities of Washington and Georgetown, within their respective jurisdictional limits, are hereby empowered and required to provide active and efficient means to arrest, and deliver up to their owners, all fugitive slaves escaping into said District--

Section 6 That the election officers of within said District of Columbia, are hereby empowered and required to open polls at all the usual places of holding elections, on the first monday of April next, and receive the vote of every free white male citizen above the age of twentyone years, having resided within said District for the period of one year or more next preceding the time of such voting, for, or against this act; to proceed, in taking said votes, in all respects not herein specified, as at elections under the municipal laws; and, with as little delay as possible, to transmit correct statements of the votes so cast to the President of the United States. And it shall be the duty of the President to canvass said votes immediately, and, if a majority of them be found to be for this act, to forthwith issue his proclamation giving notice of the fact; and this act shall only be in full force and effect on, and after the day of such proclamation--

Section 7. That involuntary servitude for the punishment of crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted shall in no wise be prohibited by this act--

Supporting Question 1 - Source C

Peoria Debate with Stephen Douglas Abraham Lincoln October 16, 1854

...This *declared* indifference, but as I must think, covert *real* zeal for the spread of slavery, I cannot but hate. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world – enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites – causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity, and especially because it forces so many really good men amongst ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty – criticizing the Declaration of Independence, insisting that there is no right principle of action but *self-interest*.

Before proceeding, let me say I think I have no prejudice against the Southern people. They are just what we would be in their situation. If slavery did not now exist amongst them, they would not introduce it. If it did now exist amongst us, we should not instantly give it up. This I believe of the masses north and south. Doubtless there are individuals, on both sides, who would not hold slaves under any circumstances; and others who would gladly introduce slavery anew, if it were out of existence. We know that some southern men do free their slaves, go north, and become tip-top abolitionists; while some northern ones go south, and become most cruel slave-masters.

When southern people tell us they are no more responsible for the origin of slavery, than we; I acknowledge the fact. When it is said that the institution exists; and that it is very difficult to get rid of it, in any satisfactory way, I can understand and appreciate the saying. I surely will not blame them for not doing what I should not know how to do myself. If all earthly power were given me, I should not know what to do, as to the existing institution. My first impulse would be to free all the slaves, and send them to Liberia, --- to their own native land. But a moment's reflection would convince me, that whatever of high hope, (as I think there is) there may be in this, in the long run, its sudden execution is impossible. If they were all landed there in a day, they would all perish in the next ten days; and there are not surplus shipping and surplus money enough in the world to carry them there in many times ten days. What then? Free them all, and keep them among us as underlings? Is it quite certain that this betters their condition? I think I would not hold one in slavery, at any rate; yet the point is not clear enough for me to denounce people upon. What next? Free them, and make them politically and socially, our equals? My own feelings will not admit of this; and if mine would, we well know that those of the great mass of white people will not. Whether this feeling accords with justice and sound judgment, is not the sole question, if indeed, it is any part of it. A universal feeling, whether well or ill-founded, cannot be safely disregarded. We cannot then, make them equals. It does seem to me that systems of gradual emancipation might be adopted; but for their tardiness in this, I will not undertake to judge our brethren of the south.

Lincoln, Abraham. (1854, October 16). Peoria Speech, October 16, 1854.

Supporting Question 1 - Source D

Ottawa Debate with Stephen Douglas Abraham Lincoln August 21, 1858

...This is the whole of it, and anything that argues me into his idea of perfect social and political equality with the negro, is but a specious and fantastic arrangement of words, by which a man can prove a horse-chestnut to be a chestnut horse. I will say there, while upon this subject, that I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so. I have no purpose to introduce political and social equality between the white and the black races. There is a physical difference between the two, which, in my judgment, will probably forever forbid their living together upon the footing of perfect equality, and inasmuch as it becomes a necessity that there must be a different, I, as well as Judge Douglas, am in favor of the race to which I belong having the superior position. I have never said anything to the contrary, but I hold that, notwithstanding all this, there is no reason in the world why the negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence, the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I hold that he is as much entitled to these as the white man. I agree with Judge Douglas he is not my equal in many respects – certainly not in color, perhaps not in moral or intellectual endowment. But in the right to eat the bread, without the leave of anybody else, which his own hand earns, *he is my equal and the equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of every living man...*

I say, and I have said, that I believe we shall not have peace upon the question until the opponent of slavery arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or, on the other hand, that its advocates will push it forward until it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South. Now, I believe if we could arrest the spread, and place it where Washington, and Jefferson, and Madison placed it, it *would be* in the course of ultimate extinction, and the public mind *would*, as for eighty years past, believe that it was in the course of ultimate extinction. The crisis would be past and the institution might be let alone for a hundred years, if it should live so long, in the States where it exists, yet it would be going out of existence in the way best for both the black and the white races...

Lincoln, Abraham. (1858, August 21). First Debate: Ottawa Illinois.

Supporting Question 2 - Source A

First Inaugural Address Abraham Lincoln March 1861

Apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern States, that by the accession of a Republican Administration, their property, and their peace, and personal security, are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed, and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declare that “I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so.” Those who nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I had made this, and many similar declarations, and had never recanted them. And more than this, they placed in the platform, for my acceptance, and as a law to themselves, and to me, the clear and emphatic resolution which I now read:

“Resolved, That the maintenance inviolate of the rights of the States, and especially the right of each State to order and control its own domestic institutions according to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to that balance of power on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depend; and we denounce the lawless invasion by armed force of the soil of any State or Territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of crimes

I now reiterate these sentiments: and in doing so, I only press upon the public attention the most conclusive evidence of which the case is susceptible, that the property, peace and security of no section are to be in anywise endangered by the now incoming Administration. I add too, that all the protection which, consistently with the Constitution and the laws, can be given, will be cheerfully given to all the States when lawfully demanded, for whatever cause – as cheerfully to one section, as to another.

There is much controversy about the delivering up of fugitives from service or labor. The clause I now read is as plainly written in the Constitution as any other of its provisions:

“No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.”

It is scarcely questioned that this provision was intended by those who made it, for the reclaiming of what we call fugitive slaves; and the intention of the law-giver is the law. All members of Congress swear their support to the whole Constitution -- to this provision as much as to any other. To the proposition, then, that slaves whose cases come within the terms of this clause, “shall be delivered up,” their oaths are unanimous.

Lincoln, Abraham. (1861, March). First Inaugural Address, Final Version.

Supporting Question 2 - Source B

Letter to Orville Browning Abraham Lincoln September 22, 1861

My dear Sir:

Yours of the 17th is just received; and, coming from you, I confess it astonishes me. That you should object to my adhering to a law which you had assisted in making and presenting to me less than a month before, is odd enough. But this is a very small part. Gen. Fremont's proclamation as to confiscation of property, and the liberation of slaves, is purely political, and not within the range of military law, or necessity. If a commanding General finds a necessity to seize the farm of a private owner, for a pasture, an encampment, or a fortification, he has the right to do so, and to so hold it, as long as the necessity lasts; and this is within military law, because within military necessity. But to say the farm shall no longer belong to the owner, or his heirs, forever; and this as well when the farm is not needed for military purposes, as when it is, is purely political; without the savor of military law about it. And the same is true of slaves. If the General needs them he can seize them, and use them; but when the need is past, it is not for him to fix their permanent future condition. That must be settled according to laws made by lawmakers, and not by military proclamations. The proclamation, in the point in question, is simply "dictatorship." It assumes that the General may do anything he pleases -- confiscate the lands and free the slaves of loyal people, as well as of disloyal ones. And going the whole figure, I have no doubt would be more popular with some thoughtless people, that which has been done! But I cannot assume this reckless position; nor allow others to assume it on my responsibility. You speak of it as being the only means of saving the government. On the contrary, it is itself the surrender of the government. Can it be pretended that it is any longer the government of the U. S. -- any government of constitution and laws, -- wherein a General, or a President, may make permanent rules of property by proclamation?

I do not say Congress might not with propriety, pass a law, on the point, just such as General Fremont proclaimed. I do not say, I might not, as a member of Congress, vote for it. What I object to, is, that I, as President, shall expressly or impliedly, seize and exercise the permanent legislative functions of the government.

So much as to principle. Now as to policy. No doubt the thing was popular in some quarters, and would have been more so, if it had been a general declaration of emancipation. The Kentucky Legislature would not budge till that proclamation was modified; and Gen. Anderson telegraphed me³ that on the news of Gen. Fremont having actually issued deeds of manumission, a whole company of our volunteers threw down their arms and disbanded. I was so assured as to think it probable that the very arms we had furnished Kentucky, would be turned against us. I think to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game. Kentucky gone, we cannot hold Missouri, nor as I think, Maryland. These all against us, and the job on our hands is too large for us. We would as well consent to separation at once, including the surrender of this capitol. On the contrary, if you will give up your restlessness for new positions, and back me manfully on the grounds upon which you and other kind friends gave me the election, and have approved in my public documents, we shall go through triumphantly.

You must not understand I took my course on the proclamation because of Kentucky. I took the same ground in a private letter to ~~the~~ General Fremont, before I heard from Kentucky.

You think I am inconsistent because I did not also forbid Gen. Fremont to shoot men under the proclamation. I understand that part to be within military law; but I also think, and so privately wrote Gen. Fremont that it is impolitic in this, that our adversaries have the power, and will certainly exercise it, to shoot as many of our men as we shoot of theirs. I did not say this in the public letter, because it is a subject I prefer not to discuss in the hearing of our enemies.

There has been no thought of removing Gen. Fremont on any ground connected with his proclamation; and if there has been any wish for his removal on any ground, our mutual friend, Sam. Glover, can probably tell you what it was. I hope no real necessity for it exists on any ground.

Suppose you write to Hurlbut and get him to resign.

Your friend as ever,
A. Lincoln

Supporting Question 2 - Source C

Letter to Horace Greeley Abraham Lincoln August 22, 1862

DEAR SIR: I have just read yours of the 19th, addressed to myself through the New York Tribune. If there be in it any statements, or assumptions of fact, which I may know to be erroneous, I do not now and here controvert them. If there be in it any inferences which I may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not now and here argue against them. If there be perceptible in it an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an old friend whose heart I have always supposed to be right.

As to the policy I “seem to be pursuing,” as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt.

I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored the nearer the Union will be “the Union as it was.” If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing *any* slave I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do *not* believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors; and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my view of *official* duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free. Yours,

A. LINCOLN.

Lincoln, Abraham. (1862, August 22). Abraham Lincoln to Horace Greeley, Friday, August 22, 1862
(Clipping from August 23, 1862 New York Tribune).

Supporting Question 2 - Source D

Annual Message to Congress Abraham Lincoln December 1, 1862

Our national strife springs not from our permanent part; not from the land we inhabit: not from our national homestead. There is no possible severing of this but would multiply and not mitigate evils among us. In all its adaptations and aptitudes it demands union and abhors separation. In fact, it would ere long force reunion, however much of blood and treasure the separation might have cost. Our strife pertains to ourselves—to the passing generations of men—and it can without convulsion be hushed forever with the passing of one generation.

In this view I recommend the adoption of the following resolution and articles amendatory to the Constitution of the United States: Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two—thirds of both Houses concurring), That the following articles be proposed to the legislatures (or conventions) of the several States as amendments to the Constitution of the United States, all or any of which articles, when ratified by three—fourths of the said legislatures (or conventions), to be valid as part or parts of the said Constitution, viz:

ART.—. Every State wherein slavery now exists which shall abolish the same therein at any time or times before the 1st day of January, A. D. 1900, shall receive compensation from the United States as follows, to wit:

The President of the United States shall deliver to every such State bonds of the United States bearing interest at the rate of per cent per annum to an amount equal to the aggregate sum of _____ for each slave shown to have been therein by the Eighth Census of the United States, said bonds to be delivered to such State by installments or in one parcel at the completion of the abolishment, accordingly as the same shall have been gradual or at one time within such State; and interest shall begin to run upon any such bond only from the proper time of its delivery as aforesaid. Any State having received bonds as aforesaid and afterwards reintroducing or tolerating slavery therein shall refund to the United States the bonds so received, or the value thereof, and all interest paid thereon. ART.—All slaves who shall have enjoyed actual freedom by the chances of the war at any time before the end of the rebellion shall be forever free; but all owners of such who shall not have been disloyal shall be compensated for them at the same rates as is provided for States adopting abolishment of slavery, but in such way that no slave shall be twice accounted for.

ART.—Congress may appropriate money and otherwise provide for colonizing free colored persons with their own consent at any place or places without the United States. I beg indulgence to discuss these proposed articles at some length. Without slavery the rebellion could never have existed; without slavery it could not continue.

Among the friends of the Union there is great diversity of sentiment and of policy in regard to slavery and the African race amongst us. Some would perpetuate slavery; some would abolish it suddenly and without compensation; some would abolish it gradually and with compensation: some would remove the freed people from us, and some would retain them with us; and there are yet other minor diversities. Because of these diversities we waste much strength in struggles among ourselves. By mutual concession we should harmonize and act together. This would be compromise, but it would be compromise among the friends and not with the enemies of the Union. These articles are intended to embody a plan of such mutual concessions. If the plan shall be adopted, it is assumed that emancipation will follow, at least in several of the States.

Supporting Question 3 - Source A

Emancipation Proclamation Abraham Lincoln January 1, 1863

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twentysecond day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

“ That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thence forward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of the m, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

“That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be, in good faith, represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States.”

Now, therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief, of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days, from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit:

Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, (except the Parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. Johns, St. Charles, St. James Ascension, Assumption, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the City of New-Orleans) Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South-Carolina, North-Carolina, and Virginia, (except the fortyeight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth-City, York, Princess, Ann, and Norfolk, including the Cities of Norfolk, & Portsmouth; and which excepted parts are, for the present, left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.



And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free; and that the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

Supporting Question 3 - Source B

Gettysburg Address Abraham Lincoln November 19, 1863

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that “all men are created equal.”

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of it, as a final resting place for those who died here, that the nation might live. This we may, in all propriety do. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow, this ground—The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have hallowed it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here; while it can never forget what they did here.

It is rather for us, the living, we here be dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that, from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here, gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve these dead shall not have died in vain; that the nation, 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.

Lincoln, Abraham. (1863, November 19). Gettysburg Address – “Nicolay Copy”.

Supporting Question 3 - Source C

Letter to Albert Hodges Abraham Lincoln April 4, 1864

My dear Sir:

You ask me to put in writing the substance of what I verbally said the other day, in your presence, to Governor Bramlette and Senator Dixon-- It was about as follows:

"I am naturally anti-slavery. If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. I cannot remember when I did not so think, and feel. And yet I have never understood that the Presidency conferred upon me an unrestricted right to act officially upon this judgment and feeling. It was in the oath I took that I would, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. I could not take the office without taking the oath. Nor was it my view that I might take an oath to get power, and break the oath using the power. I understood, too, that in ordinary civil administration this oath even forbade me to practically indulge my primary abstract judgment on the moral question of slavery. I had publicly declared this many times, and in many ways. And I aver that, to this day, I have done no official act in mere deference to my abstract judgment and feeling on slavery. I did understand, however, that my oath to preserve the Constitution to the best of my ability, imposed upon me the duty of preserving, by every indispensable means, that government -- that nation -- of which that Constitution was the organic law. Was it possible to lose the nation, and yet preserve the Constitution? By general law life and limb must be protected; yet often a limb must be amputated to save a life; but a life is never wisely given to save a limb. I felt that measures, otherwise unconstitutional, might become lawful, by becoming indispensable to the preservation of the Constitution, through the preservation of the nation. Right or wrong, I assumed this ground, and now avow it. I could not feel that, to the best of my ability, I had even tried to preserve the Constitution, if, to save slavery, or any minor matter, I should permit the wreck of government, country, and Constitution all together. When, early in the war, Gen. Fremont attempted military emancipation, I forbade it, because I did not then think it an indispensable necessity. When a little later, Gen. Cameron, then Secretary of War, suggested the arming of the blacks, I objected, because I did not yet think it an indispensable necessity. When, still later, Gen. Hunter attempted military emancipation, I again forbade it, because I did not yet think the indispensable necessity had come. When, in March, and May, and July 1862 I made earnest, and successive appeals to the border states to favor compensated emancipation, I believed the indispensable necessity for military emancipation, and arming the blacks would come, unless averted by that measure. They declined the proposition; and I was, in my best judgment, driven to the alternative of either surrendering the Union, and with it, the Constitution, or of laying strong hand upon the colored element. I chose the latter. In choosing it, I hoped for greater gain than loss; but of this, I was not entirely confident. More than a year of trial now shows no loss by it in our foreign relations, none in our home popular sentiment, none in our white military force, -- no loss by it anyhow, or anywhere. On the contrary, it shows a gain of quite a hundred and thirty thousand soldiers, seamen, and laborers. There are palpable facts, about which, as facts, there can be no cavilling-- We have the men; and we could not have had them without the measure.

And now let any Union man who complains of the measure, test himself by writing down in one line that he is for subduing the rebellion by force of arms; and in the next, that he is for taking these hundred and thirty thousand men from the Union side, and placing them where they would be but for the measures he condemns. If he cannot face his case so stated, it is only because he cannot face the truth.

I add a word which was not in the verbal conversation. In telling this tale I attempt no compliment to my own sagacity. I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me. Now, at the end of three years struggle the nation's condition is not what either party, or any man devised, or expected. God alone can claim it. Whither it is tending seems plain. If God now wills the removal of a great wrong, and wills also that we of the North as well as you of the South, shall pay fairly for our complicity in that wrong, impartial history will find therein no new cause to attest and revere the justice and goodness of God.

Yours truly,
A. Lincoln

Lincoln, Abraham. (1864, April 4). Abraham Lincoln to Albert G. Hodges, Monday, April 4, 1864
(Lincoln's position on slavery).

Supporting Question 3 - Source D

Second Inaugural Address Abraham Lincoln April 10, 1865

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 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 bond-man'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.

Tools for Historical Thinking - Appendix A

To successfully complete these modules, students must think like a historian, but that does not always come easily to students. Several resources exist that can support students as they analyze documents and develop their ability to think historically. While this is not an exhaustive list, consider using the following as you implement these modules.

In “[What Does it Mean to Think Historically?](#)” Andrews and Burke (2007) outline what they call the Five C’s of Historical Thinking: Change over Time, Context, Causality, Contingency, and Complexity. The goal of the Five C’s is to give students and teachers a glimpse into how historians think. Furthermore, Andrews and Burke (2007) provide examples of how these Five C’s might be implemented in authentic and meaningful ways in modern classrooms.

(<http://www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2007/0701/0701tea2.cfm>)

[Library of Congress](#): Provides teacher and student tools both for general analysis and the analysis of specific types of sources (e.g. photographs and prints, maps, sound recordings). Also provides guidance for teachers on how to use primary sources in the classroom. (<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources>)

[National Archives - Docs Teach](#): Similar to the Library of Congress, provides suggestions for integrating primary sources into the classroom along with tools to help students analyze specific types of sources. (<http://docsteach.org>)

[SCIM-C](#): Provides a structure for interpreting historical sources that asks students to Summarize, Contextualize, Infer, Monitor, and Corroborate and demonstrates the SCIM-C process with three example sources. (<http://www.historicalinquiry.com/>)

[DBQ-Project](#): Provides a process for students to read and analyze sources as they prepare to write an essay answering a document-based question. The DBQ Project has curriculum for both middle school and high school students but could be adapted for other levels as well. (<http://www.dbqproject.com>)

[Historical Thinking Project](#): The historical thinking project provides tools for analyzing primary sources and discusses six historical thinking concepts: historical significance, cause & consequence, historical perspective-taking, continuity and change, the use of primary source evidence, and the ethical dimension of history. (<http://historicalthinking.ca>)

In addition, there is a wealth of books written with the idea of using historical inquiry with students, using primary sources to teach history. These are definitely worth a look:

Brophy, J., & VanSledright, B.A. (1997). Teaching and learning history in elementary schools. New York, NY: Teachers College.

Levstik, L. S. & Barton, K. C. (2011). Doing history: Investigating with children in elementary and middle schools. New York, NY: Routledge.

Seixas, P. & Morton, T. (2013). The big six historical thinking concepts. Scarborough, ON: Nelson Education.

Wineburg, S., Martin, D., & Monte-Sano, C. (2011). Reading like a historian: Teaching literacy in middle and high school history classrooms. New York, NY: Teachers College.