**The Gettysburg Address**

**Directions:** Read and annotate Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address,” then answer the questions that follow.

**Four score 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.**

**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 that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.**

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

**Abraham Lincoln  
November 19, 1863**

**The Gettysburg Address – Text Analysis Questions**

1. What happened “four score and seven years ago”?
2. What is being tested by this war?
3. What impact does starting the second paragraph with "now" have on its meaning?
4. When Lincoln says the nation was "so conceived and so dedicated" what is he referring to?
5. What if Lincoln had used the verb "start" instead of "conceive?"
6. What are the people who are assembled at Gettysburg there to do?
7. What did those who fought at Gettysburg do that those who have gathered cannot?
8. What is the impact of starting the third paragraph with "but"?
9. What does Lincoln describe as the impact of those who fought at Gettysburg?
10. What does Lincoln mean by "the great task remaining"?
11. What is the unfinished work that those listening to the speech are asked to achieve?
12. How does Lincoln use the idea of "unfinished work" to assign responsibility to his listeners?
13. What specific ideas does Lincoln ask his listeners to commit themselves to at the end of his speech?
14. "Increased devotion to that cause". What cause is this?
15. How does the meaning of the word "dedicate" change over the course of the text, and what does it reveal about the Gettysburg address?

**Discussion Question**

Lincoln begins the Gettysburg Address with the assertion that the American founding fathers forged the new American nation “conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.” Given that slavery was legal in six of the thirteen states in 1776 when Thomas Jefferson penned the “all men are created equal” assertion in the Declaration of Independence, and given that women and men without property, not to mention slaves, could not vote, is Lincoln correct in his assertions that the nation was “conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal?”  Why or why not?