

Emancipation

NIE Lesson Plan

Lesson Grade Level: High School

Lesson Subject Area: U.S. History

Essential Question: How did newspapers affect public opinion about the Emancipation Proclamation?

Background Information: On September 22, 1862, Abraham Lincoln issued a preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. The Proclamation declared that unless the southern states returned to the Union by January 1, 1863, all slaves in those states "shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free." Of the many challenges Lincoln faced, one of the greatest was trying to prove that the democratic process supported his position that all men are created equal. Lincoln was fighting the generally accepted idea that slavery and democracy were somehow compatible. The Dred Scott decision (1857) and the philosophy of popular sovereignty popularized by Stephen Douglas supported the concept that slavery was supported in the Constitution. After consultation with his cabinet members and other political advisors, the final edited version of the Emancipation Proclamation was issued January 1, 1863.

Acquisition Lesson: Discuss the following quotes by Abraham Lincoln: "We must change our tactics or lose the game." "The moment came when I felt slavery must die that the nation might live."

- Discuss why Lincoln needed to address the concept of emancipation with his skeptics.
- What would a northern abolitionist think about Lincoln's quotes about emancipation of slaves? A southern plantation owner? A northern business owner? A southerner who doesn't own slaves? A slave?

Main Lesson – Document Analysis: Read the Emancipation Proclamation and discuss the following questions:

- How would you describe the tone of this document?
- Why do you think Lincoln, known to be a prolific writer, produced such a document?
- What does the document say?

Log onto the website The Valley of the Shadow at <http://valleyvcdh.virginia.edu>. This website is a digital archive of primary sources that document the lives of people in Augusta County, Virginia, and Franklin County, Pennsylvania during the era of the American Civil War. Here you may explore thousands of original documents that allow you to see what life was like during the Civil War for the men and women of Augusta and Franklin. Four newspapers were documented for this project: the *Staunton Spectator* (Virginia, Whig), the *Republican Vindicator* (Virginia, Democratic), the *Franklin Repository and Transcript* (Pennsylvania, Republican), and the *Valley Spirit* (Pennsylvania, Democratic).

Divide the class into two groups: The first group represents a group of northern abolitionists and the second group represents a group of southern planters and business owners who depend upon cotton for their income. Assign the first group to research reactions to the Emancipation Proclamation in the Pennsylvania newspapers listed above. Assign the second group to research reactions to the Emancipation Proclamation in the Virginia newspapers.

- Debate and discuss different regional perspectives. Differentiate fact and opinion.
- Did the Pennsylvania newspapers welcome or reject the document?
- Do you think Pennsylvania's response was a typical northern reaction?
- Do you think Virginia's response was a typical southern reaction?

Did the response in local newspapers surprise you in any way? Why or why not?

Each student will write a letter to the editor to one of their research newspapers as if it were 1863 praising or criticizing Lincoln's actions. Group one will write from an abolitionist's perspective; group two will write from a planter's perspective. (Each letter should include your name and residence. The date of your letter is January 8, 1863.)

Read Today's Newspaper. Find an article about a national or world issue in today's newspaper. Summarize the issue in three sentences. Identify two leaders with conflicting viewpoints whom you would like to interview to learn more about the issue. Write five interview questions.

Enrichment activity: Students work in pairs. One student will write a brief diary entry role playing a slave in the south and the other student will write a brief diary entry role playing a northern abolitionist. Analyze these diary entries to determine if they have anything in common.

You are either a northern abolitionist or a southern business owner who is dependent upon cotton for income. Write a letter to the editor expressing your views of President Lincoln and his Emancipation Proclamation which was declared last week. (Each letter should include your name and residence. The date of your letter is January 8, 1863.)

Resource:

The Valley of the Shadow at <http://valley.vcdh.virginia.edu>

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PA Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening

1.1.11B, 1.1.11G, 1.4.11C, 1.6.11E, 1.6.11F

PA Academic Standards for History

8.1.12B, 8.1.12C, 8.1.12D, 8.1.9B,
8.1.9C, 8.1.9D, 8.2.9A, 8.2.9B,
8.3.9A, 8.3.9B

PA Academic Standards for Civics and Government

5.2.12A, 5.2.12D, 5.2.12E, 5.3.12B, 5.3.12J

Emancipation Proclamation

January 1, 1863

By the President of the United States of America.

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twenty-second 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, thenceforward, 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 them, 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 the 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. John, 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 forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkeley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and 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.

By the President:
ABRAHAM LINCOLN

WILLIAM H. SEWARD,
Secretary of State.

