

## The Gettysburg Address: A Close Reading

After reading *The Gettysburg Address* silently and then aloud, translate the **first paragraph** into your own words (1-2 sentences).

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### Discussion Questions (First & second paragraphs)

1. What does Lincoln mean by “four score and seven years ago”? Who are “our fathers”?
2. In the opening sentence, what words does Lincoln use to describe the United States? What does this sentence tell you about Lincoln’s concept of government?
3. Explain the meaning of “conceived in liberty”. How would the meaning change if Lincoln had used the verb “start” instead of “conceive”?
4. What important thing happened in 1776?
5. What is the impact of Lincoln referring to such a famous date (1776)?
6. What impact does starting the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph with “now” have on its meaning?

After questions above have been discussed and answered, **rewrite** your translation of Lincoln’s first paragraph based on what you have learned.

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Explain how your translation changed:

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7. After re-reading the second paragraph, explain the sections of the following sentence:

“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...”

After reading the third paragraph silently and then aloud, translate the **third paragraph** into your own words (1-2 sentences).

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Discussion Questions (Third paragraph)

8. What is the impact of starting the paragraph with “but”?
9. What does Lincoln describe as the impact of those who fought at Gettysburg?
10. What does the word “rather” mean in this sentence?
11. How does Lincoln use the idea of “unfinished work” to assign responsibility to his listeners?
12. What four specific ideas does Lincoln ask his listeners to commit themselves to at the end of the speech?

After questions above have been discussed and answered, **rewrite** your translation of Lincoln’s third paragraph based on what you have learned.

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Explain how your translation changed:

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