



A Comparison of Lincoln's Inaugural Addresses

Author: Cathryn R. Goble-Smith, Davenport, FL

Grade Level: High School, AP U.S. History

Length: Two 45-minute class periods

Introduction:

Students will learn to annotate a historical speech (Lincoln's first and second inaugural address) to identify and articulate the author's point of view, purpose, historical context and intended audience. Activity will culminate in an AP Short Answer Comparison question on the 2 speeches.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will analyze primary source speeches for historical context, intended audience, purpose and point of view. Students will utilize outside evidence and historical thinking skills to compare the two speeches.

Guiding Questions:

- How does Lincoln's tone differ from his first inaugural address to his second?
- How does the changing status of the Civil War shape Lincoln's two messages?

Common Core Standards:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.9](#) - Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (including The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address) for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.6](#) - Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2](#) - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

C3 Framework

- [C3 Standards \(PDF\)](#)
- D1.1.9-12. Explain how a question reflects an enduring issue in the field.
- D2.His.1.9-12. Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.
- D3.3.9-12. Identify evidence that draws information directly and substantively from multiple sources to detect inconsistencies in evidence in order to revise or strengthen claims.

- D4.1.9-12. Construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses.

Florida Sunshine State Standards:

- [SS.912.A.1.2](#) - Utilize a variety of primary and secondary sources to identify author, historical significance, audience, and authenticity to understand a historical period.
- [SS.912.A.2.1](#) – Review causes and consequences of the Civil War.

Materials:

- Student copies of Lincoln’s First Inaugural Address
(http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/lincoln1.asp)
 - Student copies of Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address
(http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/lincoln2.asp)
 - Pencils, pens, and highlighters
- Note:** Number the lines of each speech to facilitate round-robin reading.

Procedures:

Lesson Activity One: Lincoln’s First Inaugural

- Each student will receive a copy of Lincoln’s First Inaugural Address. Teacher will begin to read speech aloud and go round-robin around the classroom reading the speech. After the conclusion of the reading teacher will guide students through annotation and analysis.

Lesson Activity Two: Lincoln’s Second Inaugural

- Each student will receive a copy of Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address. Students will read speech in groups of 4. Students will then annotate and analyze speech in their group.

Lesson Activity Three: AP Short Answer Question

- Students will answer an AP Short Answer question using excerpts from the Lincoln’s first and second inaugural.

Lesson Activity One (~45 minutes): *Lincoln’s First Inaugural*

- Give each student a copy of Lincoln’s First Inaugural Address.
- Set the context with MAP (Media, Author, Place and Time)
- Ask students what is going on in the U.S. and the world when Lincoln gives this speech. Build background knowledge.
- Teacher will start by reading the first line and students will go round robin reading the document. Teacher will assist students when and if they struggle.
- After reading teacher and students will go back through the document line by line and break down what Lincoln is saying.
- Teacher will assist students with annotating the document using HAPPY (Historical Context, Audience, Purpose, Point of View, and Why is this important)

Lesson Activity Two: Lincoln's Second Inaugural

- Give each student a copy of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address.
- Students will be divided into groups of 4. This may be adjusted based on class size. Students will read Lincoln's Second Inaugural in their group.
- Students will use tools learned in yesterday's reading to analyze and annotate Lincoln's Second Inaugural. (Give students 20-25 minutes to complete.)
- MAP HAPPY (Media, Author, Place/Time – Historical Context, Audience, Purpose, Point of View, Why is this important?)
- Teacher will call on groups to explain their answers to the MAP HAPPY questions and to explain their reasoning.
- Teacher will facilitate a brief, summative discussion about how Lincoln's first and second inaugural addresses are different and why.

Assessment: AP Short Answer

To assess for understanding, students will use the historical thinking skills developed in the close reading of these two speeches and their knowledge of historical evidence to answer the following AP U.S. History Short Answer Question.

In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the Government, while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect, and defend" it.

I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

~ Abraham Lincoln, First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1861

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...

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 lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

~ Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address March 4, 1865

Using the excerpts, briefly explain (a), (b), and (c)

- A. One important similarity between Lincoln's first and second inaugural addresses.
- B. One important difference between Lincoln's first and second inaugural addresses.
- C. One specific policy of Abraham Lincoln that substantiates either A or B.