

Emancipation Proclamation & Reagan Speech at Brandenburg

Activities & Questions

Questions:

Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation

- 1. a) Which branch of government generally makes federal laws that apply to states?** *(the legislative, Congress)*
b) Which branch and what constitutional authority did President Lincoln use in the Emancipation Proclamation? *(the executive branch, he used his authority as commander-in-chief of the armed forces to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation)*
c) What are some reasons Lincoln may have done this? *(The country was in a state of war, so he could not use conventional means to enforce the laws—this gave him the direct ability to use the army and naval forces against the rebelling states. In addition, it asserted Lincoln's authority as President of the U.S. since the nation was divided and the Confederacy had its own President, Jefferson Davis)*
- 2. What was the North's main objective in the Civil War?** *(to preserve the Union, prevent the South from seceding from the Union)*
- 3. What new goal did the Emancipation Proclamation outline?** *(the abolition of slavery)*
- 4. Although the Emancipation Proclamation did not immediately end slavery, do you think it was an important step towards the abolition of slavery? Why or why not?** *(Yes. It made the abolition of slavery a war objective for the North, and thus an outcome if the North won. It also allowed Union soldiers to free slaves when they advanced in the South. In addition, the Proclamation secured European support for the North, preventing Great Britain and France from financially supporting the Confederacy, where their economic interests depended on the South's ability to produce cotton for their textile industry. Furthermore, many states abolished slavery after the Emancipation Proclamation, and the document ultimately led to the development of the 13th amendment of the Constitution.
No. Several states had already abolished slavery, and others would eventually have moved towards it. Especially since the abolitionist movement was growing during this time period, particularly in the Northern Republican Party. In addition, since the Emancipation Proclamation did not free many slaves, its impact was not monumental, and it was more symbolic than practical.)*

Ronald Reagan Speech at Brandenburg

- 5. Throughout the speech, what does Reagan say are the major differences between communism and democracy?** *(Communist states are totalitarian, "backwards," and impede economic prosperity. They destroy the human spirit and hinder the arts, sciences, and development, by nature. Democracies, which are free societies, flourish economically, prosper scientifically, and allow for innovation and creativity.)*
- 6. What "force" does Reagan say will eventually take down the wall that divides Berlin?** *(Freedom! Reagan shows how freedom leads to economic prosperity and peace, and concludes that it will always prevail.)*

7. **What is a necessary step Gorbachev must make, in order to move towards liberalization, peace, prosperity, and “freedom for all mankind”?** *(He must tear down the wall and move from the current totalitarian regime to a free, democratic one)*

Comparing/ Connecting Themes

8. **Compare and contrast the freedom Lincoln calls for in the Emancipation Proclamation, with the freedom Reagan calls for in his speech at Brandenburg.** *(Lincoln grants slaves, who had been considered property in the Supreme Court decision Dred v. Scott, freedom of their persons. They are no longer property but free individuals. Reagan calls for political, economic, and social freedom, which are products of a democratic and free society. The totalitarian Soviet Union, by its very nature, was contrary to the essence of freedom, limiting freedom of worship, expression, press, assembly, mobility, etc)*
9. **What factors shattered the national “unity” that Lincoln attempted to restore in the United States and Reagan in Eastern Europe?** *(Lincoln aimed to preserve the Union between the North and South. Economic and political tensions led to the South’s declaration of secession, which resulted in the outbreak of the Civil War. The most significant economic issue centered on the question slavery. The South feared the victory of the Republican Party in 1860 would mean the abolition of slavery, which their economy depended on. The government was already acting to restrict the expansion of slavery. The issue of tariffs was also key. Southern states, who imported a wide variety of foreign products, were vehemently opposed to the high tariffs that the national government placed on imported goods. In addition, the issue of states’ rights was central to the South’s decision to secede, resenting laws passed by Washington that disadvantaged the South and benefited the North. Reagan attempted to restore unity in Germany, which had been divided into an East and West. On a broader level, Reagan wanted to restore unity in Europe and in the rest of the world, which was divided between “the East” (communist) and “the West” (free democracies). He wanted to lift “the Iron Curtain” across Europe, concluding that the freedom of humanity was threatened by the expansion of communism. To Reagan, democracy and freedom represented promising forces of global unity.)*