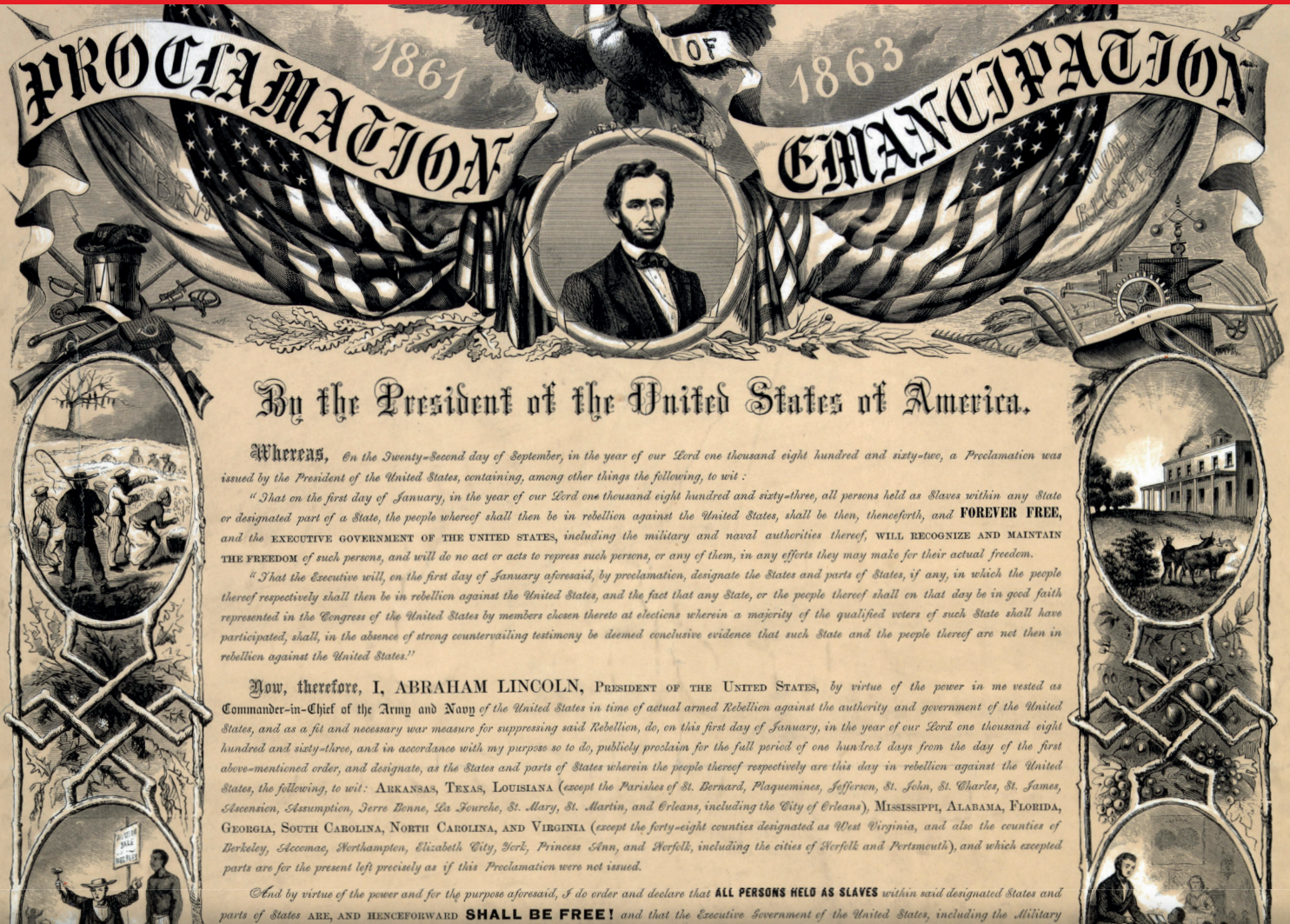




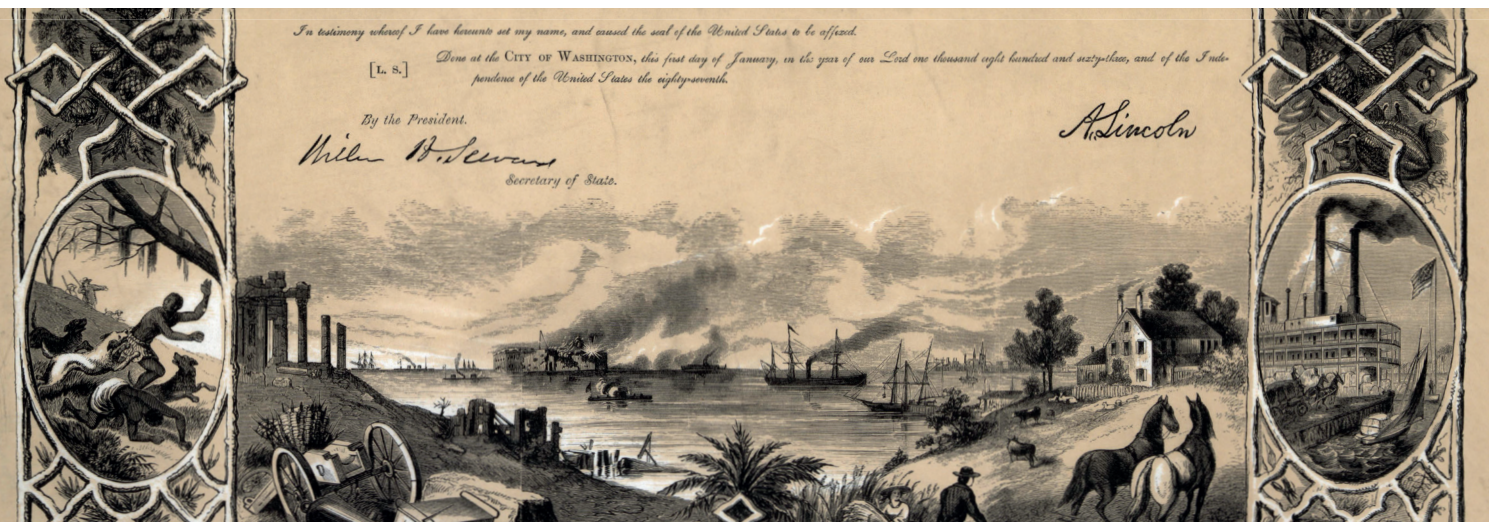
# THIS DAY IN HISTORY

## STUDY GUIDE



## SEP. 22, 1862: LINCOLN ISSUES EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

*Biographies, discussion questions, suggested activities and more*





# SLAVERY

## Setting the Stage

Abraham Lincoln believed that slavery was morally wrong, but saw a major hurdle to abolition: It was sanctioned by the Constitution. The nation's founding fathers, who also struggled with how to address slavery, did not explicitly write the word "slavery" in the Constitution, but they did include key clauses protecting the institution, including a fugitive slave clause and the three-fifths clause, which allowed Southern states to count slaves for the purposes of representation in the federal government. In a three-hour speech in Peoria, Illinois, in the fall of 1854, Lincoln clearly presented his moral, legal and economic opposition to slavery—and then admitted he didn't know exactly what should be done about it within the current political system.

America's abolitionists, by contrast, had extremely strong feelings about what should be done about it: They believed slavery should be immediately abolished, and freed slaves should be incorporated as equal members of society. They didn't care about working within the existing political system, or under the Constitution, which they saw as unjustly protecting slavery and slave owners. Though Lincoln saw himself as working alongside the abolitionists on behalf of a common anti-slavery cause, he did not count himself among them. Only with emancipation, and with his support of the eventual 13th Amendment, would Lincoln finally win over the most committed abolitionists.

But the decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation was not based only on morality; it was very much a military policy. By the late summer of 1862, the war was not going well for the Union. More and more, Lincoln realized that emancipation would help him weaken his opponent and draw blacks to fight for the Union army. According to his secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, Lincoln described emancipation as a "military necessity" and said that America's slaves were "undeniably an element of strength to those who had their service, and we must decide whether that element should be with us or against us."

Cover photo: Emancipation Proclamation Reproduction Engraving by W. Roberts.

# SEP. 22, 1862

# LINCOLN ISSUES EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION



First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation by Abraham Lincoln. Painting by Francis Bicknell Carpenter, 1864

**O**n this day in 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issues a preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, which sets a date for the freedom of more than 3 million black slaves in the United States and recasts the Civil War as a fight against slavery.

When the Civil War broke out in 1861, shortly after Lincoln's inauguration as America's 16th president, he maintained that the war was about restoring the Union and not about slavery. He avoided issuing an anti-slavery proclamation immediately, despite the urgings of abolitionists and radical Republicans, as well as his personal

belief that slavery was morally repugnant. Instead, Lincoln chose to move cautiously until he could gain wide support from the public for such a measure.

In July 1862, Lincoln informed his cabinet that he would issue an emancipation proclamation but that it would exempt the so-called border states, which had slaveholders but remained loyal to the Union. His cabinet persuaded him not to make the announcement until after a Union victory. Lincoln's opportunity came following the Union win at the Battle of Antietam in September 1862. On September 22, the president announced that slaves in areas

still in rebellion within 100 days would be free.

On January 1, 1863, Lincoln issued the final Emancipation Proclamation, which declared “that all persons held as slaves” within the rebel states “are, and henceforward shall be free.” The proclamation also called for the recruitment and establishment of black military units among the Union forces. An estimated 180,000 African Americans went on to serve in the army, while another 18,000 served in the navy.

After the Emancipation Proclamation, backing the Confederacy was seen as favoring slavery. It became impossible for anti-slavery nations such as Great Britain and France, who had been friendly to the Confederacy, to get involved on behalf of the South. The proclamation also unified and strengthened Lincoln’s party, the Republicans, helping them stay in power for the next two decades.

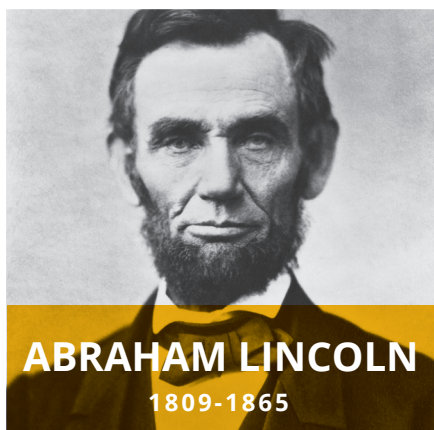
The proclamation was a presidential order and not a law passed by Congress, so Lincoln then pushed for an antislavery amendment to the U.S. Constitution to ensure its permanence. With the passage of the 13th Amendment in 1865, slavery was eliminated throughout America, although blacks would face another century of struggle before they truly began to gain equal rights.

Lincoln’s handwritten draft of the final Emancipation Proclamation was destroyed in the Chicago Fire of 1871. Today, the original official version of the document is housed in the National Archives in Washington, D.C. □

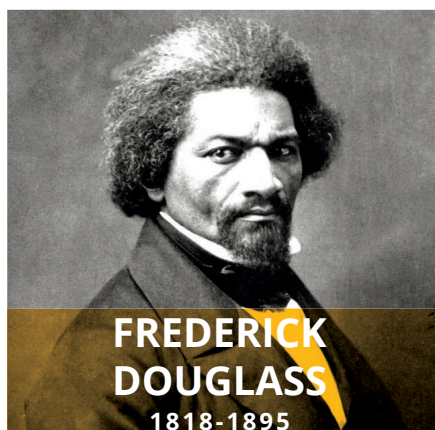
## **DID YOU KNOW?**

**The Emancipation Proclamation didn’t immediately free a single slave, as the only places it applied--the Southern states in rebellion against the Union--were places where the federal government had no control.**

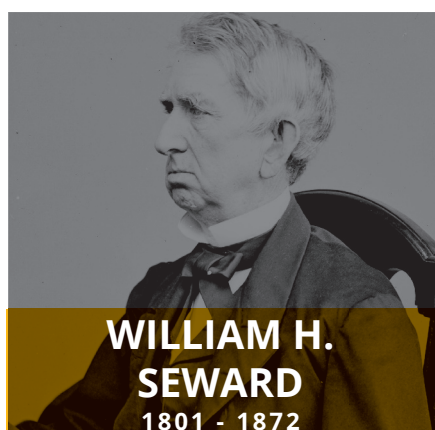
# PEOPLE TO KNOW



Abraham Lincoln, a self-taught lawyer, legislator and vocal opponent of slavery, was elected the 16th U.S. president in November 1860, shortly before the outbreak of the Civil War. Lincoln proved to be a shrewd military strategist and a savvy leader: His Emancipation Proclamation paved the way for slavery's abolition, while his Gettysburg Address stands as one of the most famous pieces of oratory in American history. In April 1865, with the Union on the brink of victory, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated by Confederate sympathizer John Wilkes Booth; his untimely death made him a martyr to the cause of liberty, and he is widely regarded as one of the greatest presidents in U.S. history.



Born a slave, Douglass became a prominent American abolitionist, author and orator. He was a powerful and outspoken critic of slavery and racism and a beacon of hope for African Americans. After meeting with the president in August 1863, Douglass was convinced of Lincoln's ultimate morality and goodness, but remained frustrated with Lincoln's deliberately slow movement toward abolition and the treatment of black soldiers by the Union Army. One month after the Emancipation Proclamation, Douglass shared his thoughts on it in a speech in New York, saying: "We are all liberated by this proclamation. Everybody is liberated. The white man is liberated, the black man is liberated, the brave men now fighting the battles of their country against rebels and traitors are now liberated... I congratulate you upon this amazing change—the amazing approximation toward the sacred truth of human liberty."



Seward served as governor of New York, as a U.S. senator and as secretary of state under Abraham Lincoln. He worked as a lawyer before winning a seat in the New York State Senate in 1830. An ardent abolitionist, Seward was a leading anti-slavery activist as a senator. After failing to win the 1860 Republican presidential nomination, Seward was appointed to Lincoln's cabinet. He would eventually become one of Lincoln's closest advisers. Seward was a strong supporter of the Emancipation Proclamation, though he urged Lincoln to wait to issue it until after a Union victory, arguing that "...such a proclamation ought to be 'borne on the bayonets of an advancing army, not dragged in the dust behind a retreating one.'"



# SEE IT

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

Handwritten Emancipation Proclamation

# CONCURRENT EVENTS



## DYNAMITE

In 1867, Swedish chemist and engineer Alfred Nobel invented dynamite, a powerful explosive used in mining and in the construction of roads, railways and canals. Nobel discovered how to make a powerful--but extremely dangerous and unstable--new explosive called nitroglycerin safer to handle. Nobel found that by mixing nitroglycerin with a substance called kieselguhr, it became much safer to use. He called the resulting compound dynamite after the Greek word for power, "dynamis." In addition to inventing other, even more powerful explosives, Nobel held more than 350 patents and owned some 90 ammunition and explosives factories. Upon his death, he directed that his sizeable fortune be used to fund the Nobel prize, now considered to be the world's most prestigious award, in the fields of physics, chemistry, literature, medicine and peace.



## TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD

In 1869, the Transcontinental Railroad was completed, linking the East and West coasts of the United States. The rail route took seven years to complete, in part because of the interruption caused by the outbreak of the American Civil War. The railroad allowed Americans to travel and transport goods across the country in just a few days and at far lower prices than before--ticket prices plummeted from around \$1,000 to about \$150. The railroad allowed for the growth of western cities and the expansion of the American economy.



## SUEZ CANAL

After 10 years of construction plagued by labor disputes and a cholera outbreak, the Suez Canal opened to navigation in November 1869. The canal, which connected the Red and Mediterranean seas, would become one of the most heavily trafficked shipping lanes in the world. Before the opening of the canal, goods had to be shipped over land or by sea around the southern tip of Africa. Today, more than 300 million tons of goods pass through the Suez Canal every year.

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

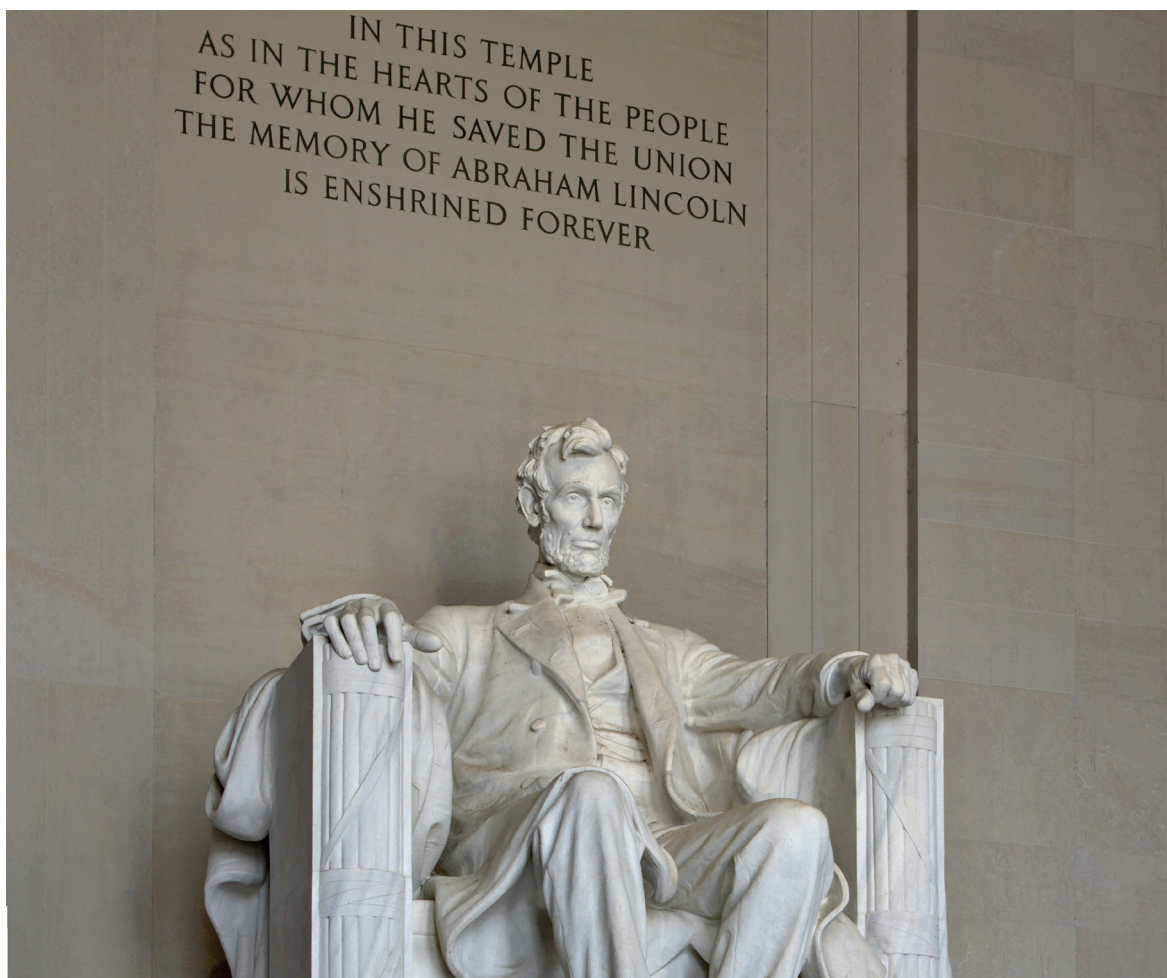


Emancipation Proclamation Centennial Stamp, 1963

- 1 What do you think Frederick Douglass meant when he said of the Emancipation Proclamation, "...We are all liberated by this proclamation. Everybody is liberated. The white man is liberated, the black man is liberated, the brave men now fighting the battles of their country against rebels and traitors are now liberated..."?
- 2 Abraham Lincoln was morally opposed to slavery. When the Civil War broke out, why do you think he chose to frame it as a conflict over preserving the Union rather than a conflict over slavery?
- 3 The Emancipation Proclamation is often described as a military policy. What do you think this means?



# SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C

## FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM

By the end of the Civil War, some 200,000 black men had served in the U.S. Army and Navy. Ask students to research the role, experiences and treatment of black soldiers during the war. Then, have them write three journal entries from the perspective of a black soldier: one about the decision to enlist in the Union army; one about the experiences and living conditions during the war; and one about the Union victory and his or her hopes for life after the war. This assignment could be revisited and added to during the study of Reconstruction.

## MAKE THE ARGUMENT

Ask students to imagine that they were serving in Lincoln's cabinet. Individually or in small groups, have them prepare an argument in favor of issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, using a minimum of three points.

## LINCOLN'S SPEECHES

Lincoln's speeches are some of the most famous in American history. Separate students into groups and assign each group one of Lincoln's speeches. Ask them to research and present the context, meaning and major points of the speech to the class, as well as perform what they believe to be the most important or impactful passage.

# RESOURCES

**Text: Full text of the Emancipation Proclamation**

<https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/emancipation-proclamation/transcript.html>

**Text: Images of Lincoln's handwritten Emancipation Proclamation**

<https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/emancipation-proclamation>

**Video: Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation**

<http://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/emancipation-proclamation/videos/lincoln-issues-the-emancipation-proclamation>

**Video: After the Emancipation Proclamation**

<http://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/emancipation-proclamation/videos/after-the-emancipation>

**Video: The Lincoln Legacy**

<http://www.history.com/topics/us-presidents/abraham-lincoln/videos/the-lincoln-legacy>

**Video: Frederick Douglass**

<http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/frederick-douglass>

**Text: Lincoln's speeches**

<https://www.nps.gov/liho/learn/historyculture/speeches.htm>