

Teaching **Lincoln's Gettysburg Address**

PART THREE: The Words that Touch the Soul of America

- A. Invitation for Lincoln to offer "a few appropriate remarks"
 - 1. Public duties seemingly would preclude his coming'
 - 2. Personal reasons likely to prevent it... yet he came!
 - 3. Dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery
- B. Would he say? Presumably, not much.
 - 1. Yet every phrase, each word was carefully chosen
 - 2. Key repeated words and concepts
 - a. "Great": the importance of the moment
 - b. "New": we don't have to be stuck in a bad situation
 - c. "Here": history always has a place.
 - d. "Nation": what is at stake
 - e. "People": their concern is what it's all about
 - f. "We": we are all in this together
 - g. "Dedicated": the essential attitude
 - h. "Consecrated": this is holy ground
 - i. "Devotion": our commitment to freedom
 - j. "Dead": the grievous reality
 - k. "Living": what we do with our lives makes a difference
 - l. "But": a change in direction
 - m. "Cannot": not everything is possible, but remember what is
 - 3. Mostly very simple words
 - 4. The scope of the issue being addressed
 - a. Local focus
 - b. Yet a national issue
 - c. With global implications
 - 5. The inevitable flow of time and events
 - a. Past
 - b. Near past
 - c. Present

- d. Near future
- e. Future
- 6. Contrast between birth/life and death/dying
- 7. Other subtle images
 - a. Birth, christening, and coming of age
 - b. The marriage union

PART FOUR: The Ramifications

- A. The uncertainty of the outcome
 - 1. A precarious future
 - 2. Yet God is somehow involved
 - 3. What others did. What we must do.
- B. An important shift occurring
 - 1. Not just an effort to save the Union
 - 2. Now the effort to preserve its principles
 - a. Vibrant democracy
 - b. Liberty for all
 - c. Equality
- C. The challenge that now faces us
 - 1. An unfinished work
 - 2. The great task remaining
- D. The hope of a nation renewed
 - 1. Its constitution in accord with its principles
 - 2. Truly one people
 - 3. Freedom fully formed: democracy, equality, union

Recommended reading