

## *The Emancipation Proclamation*

Overview: Students will examine both an early draft of the Emancipation Proclamation and the final draft and will debate the impact of the document. One side will argue that the Emancipation Proclamation was a groundbreaking document that drastically changed the country, while the other side will argue that it was “too little too late”.

Materials: (a) The final draft of the Emancipation Proclamation  
<[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/scsm:@field\(DOCID+|prbscsmscm1016\)>](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/scsm:@field(DOCID+|prbscsmscm1016)>)

(b) Early draft of the Emancipation Proclamation from July 22, 1862  
<[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/scsm:@field\(DOCID+|prbscsmscm1017\)>](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/scsm:@field(DOCID+|prbscsmscm1017)>)

### Essential Question:

-Was the Emancipation Proclamation a groundbreaking document or was it too little, too late?

### Background Information:

The year is 1862 and the bloodshed continues to pile up for both the Union and Confederacy. It is clear to Lincoln that the scope of the war must be changed. The war must be expanded to include more than the preservation of the Union. Also of great concern to Lincoln is the possible diplomatic alliance between England and the Confederate States of America. Lincoln must prevent this at all costs. Lincoln decides it is time to emancipate the slaves. Now resolved to free the slaves, Lincoln has several critical choices to make: The first decision he must make is whether emancipation will affect ALL slaves in the South and the Border States, or just in the South. This decision is crucial as he cannot dare afford to alienate the loosely neutral Border States. Next, Lincoln must decide if the owners of the soon-to-be free slaves will be compensated or uncompensated. After that, Lincoln must decide if emancipation will be take immediate effect, or if it will be gradually integrated. Finally and perhaps the most difficult, he must decide whether newly freed black slaves will be allowed to fight. The answers to these questions are answered in Lincoln’s first draft of the Emancipation and in the final draft. However, the answers differ depending on the version you look at. Today the differing answers refer to the answers historians give when asked about emancipation. To some, emancipation is a clever political ploy by a master politician, to others it was brilliant military maneuver by an increasing brilliant commander, and to others it was a document that did far too little and was done far too late.

### Objectives:

1. SWBAT compare and contrast Lincoln’s draft of the Emancipation Proclamation to the final document.
2. SWBAT evaluate the impact of the Emancipation on the United States.

3. SWBAT analyze the editing process of Lincoln.

Motivation: Think of an essay you wrote in which you composed a rough draft and final draft. How did the essay change by the end of the process? How did the editing process help you better develop your thoughts?

Procedures:

1. Students will read out loud and dissect the draft of the Emancipation Proclamation with emphasis on the following:
  - What is Lincoln's main point?
  - What is being said explicitly? Implicitly? Why?
  - How powerful is this draft? Explain.
2. Students will then read the final draft of the Emancipation Proclamation out loud and will dissect the document with emphasis on the following:
  - How does Lincoln's main point change? Why is this the case?
  - What words/phrases are inserted/deleted? What do you think was Lincoln's basis for doing this?
  - What is the result of this speech? What actions are being taken?
  - Is the result of the final product drastically different than the result of the draft? Provide an explanation for the change or lack of change.
3. Students will stand in front of the class and present the two conflicting views of the Emancipation Proclamation: It was a groundbreaking document that drastically changed the United States versus it was "too little, too late."
4. Have students research and gather historical evidence to support and refute each argument. Students should visit the school media center, take a class trip to the local library, and/or use internet sources. (Alternative due to lack of resources: teacher can borrow materials from the local library and bring them to students)
5. Split students into random groups and have them draft arguments to support their view.
6. Have the class conduct a Lincoln-Douglass debate (high school) or a round table discussion (middle school) in which they analyze whether the Emancipation Proclamation was groundbreaking or "too little, too late."

Summary Questions:

1. Was the Emancipation Proclamation groundbreaking or "too little, too late"?
2. Why might Lincoln, a great president, need to write several drafts? How does this affect his final message?

3. How was Lincoln aware of the power of words?

Application Questions:

1. How would this country and the events of the Civil War be different if (a) Lincoln never issued the Emancipation Proclamation? (b) Lincoln issued the first draft and never wrote the second draft? Explain.

2. Do you agree with the purpose of the Emancipation Proclamation? Explain.

3. Why do some say it was a military necessity? (High School) Explain.