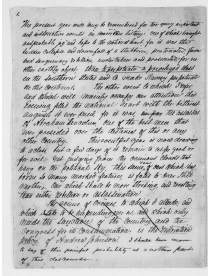


## Teaching with Primary Sources Lesson Outline

**Grade Level:** High School (9-10)

**Standard(s) or Objectives:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.5: Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.

### Library of Congress or Morris Special Collections Resources:



**Frederick Douglass, "Abraham Lincoln, a Speech." 1865**

<https://www.loc.gov/item/mfd.22015/>

Specific pages used:

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/mfd.22015/?sp=15>

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/mfd.22015/?sp=16>

### Topic Background:

On April 11, 1865, Abraham Lincoln gave his last public speech. He advocated extending the vote to "very intelligent" African American citizens and veterans. Before this speech, no president had ever publically endorsed even limited suffrage for African Americans.

John Wilkes Booth was in the crowd. He turned to his co-conspirator, Lewis Powell, and exclaimed, "That is the last speech he will ever make." Three days later Booth assassinated the president.

Excerpted from: <http://americanhistory.si.edu/changing-america-emancipation-proclamation-1863-and-march-washington-1963/1863/lincoln%E2%80%99s-death>

### Source(s) Used:

In this speech, Frederick Douglass reflected on how the outpouring of joy at the conclusion of the Civil War turned to mourning with Lincoln's assassination. His death, according to Douglass was not only tragic, but also prevented recently freed slaves and African Americans from gaining the ear of a wise and well-intentioned leader. Towards the end of his speech, Douglass pondered how life would have been different had Lincoln not perished in April, lamenting that his death was a great blow against African American rights.

Excerpt from: <http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/node/812>

### Answer Key:

Question 1: B

Question 2: A

## Frederick Douglass, “Abraham Lincoln, a Speech.” 1865 [Excerpt]

Our work was prepared beforehand. We had among us a gigantic system of bondage. And offense against the enlightened judgement of mankind, one which we were required by our relations to the outside world to put out of the way or give up the experiment of free Government. We have decided to do the former...

During the tremendous struggle for national life, so fierce so [?], so long protracted and so desperate, we have illustrated both extremes of human possibilities- exemplifying the noblest qualities which can distinguish human nature as well as those which most disgrace it.

Perhaps the history of our war in order to its full effect upon ourselves who had fought under our flag and second to the very intelligent part of the colored population South. This declaration of his part though it seemed to mean but little meant a great deal. It was like Abraham Lincoln. He never shocked prejudices unnecessarily...He saw the absurdity of asking men to fight for a Government which should degrade them and the meanness of enfranchising enemies and disenfranchising friends. He was a progressive man, a humane man, and honorable man, and at heart an antislavery man...I assume therefore had Abraham Lincoln been spared to see this day, the negro of the South would have more than a hope of enfranchisement and no rebels would hold the reins of Government in any one of the late rebellious states. Whosoever else have cause to mourn the loss of Abraham Lincoln, to the colored people of the country his death is an unspeakable calamity.

### Questions:

- 1) Which statement from Douglass best illustrates his thoughts on Lincoln? (CCSS-RH9-10.2)
  - a. “We had among us a gigantic system of bondage. And offense against the enlightened judgement of mankind.”
  - b. “He was a progressive man, a humane man, and honorable man, and at heart an antislavery man.”
  - c. “Had Abraham Lincoln been spared to see this day, the negro of the South would have more than a hope of enfranchisement.”
  - d. “He never shocked prejudices unnecessarily...He saw the absurdity of asking men to fight for a Government which should degrade them.”
  
- 2) Why does Douglass end his speech with “Whosoever else have cause to mourn the loss of Abraham Lincoln, to the colored people of the country his death is an unspeakable calamity”? (CCSS-RH9-10.5)
  - a. Douglass believed that Lincoln’s death would threaten African Americans’ recent freedom and right to vote.
  - b. Douglass believed that Lincoln’s death would extend the Civil War, and increase the number of African Americans fighting in the war.
  - c. Douglass believed that Lincoln’s death would keep white southerners from regaining control of their states.
  - d. Douglass believed that Lincoln’s death would cause the U.S. to lose support abroad, and possibly control of their free Government.