

“The Gettysburg Address”

Abraham Lincoln

**A Speech on the Occasion of the Dedication of the National Cemetery in
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania**

November 19, 1863

“Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation, so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that the nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate— we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.

It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion – that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain – that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the Earth.”

Descriptive Speech Analysis

Analysis of “GETTYSBURG ADDRESS”

Abraham Lincoln

Contextual Explanation

Lincoln opens his speech by proclaiming the founding of the USA “four score and seven years ago.” He further explains the fact that the creation of the country was based on liberty and the principle that “all men are created equal.” This sets the stage for why the Civil War is taking place

Clarifying the Current Situation

He summarizes the war as “a great civil war, testing whether that nation... can long endure.” This line makes it clear just what is at stake, not the struggle, but the test whether the nation is equal and dedicated to liberty.

Rationale and Case

He adds an uplifting touch to the victims of the war, fawning by saying that the courageous men have dedicated the site way beyond our inefable capability to contribute or subtract, as the consecration is metaphorical, and the glory or prestige is with the deceased.

A Frontier of the Future

At the end, Lincoln explains comprehensively what the broader meaning of the war is and what future he seeks: “that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that the government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish.” This presents the war in the context of a battle to save the Union, but it also presents itself as a rebirth of democracy.

Logical and Ethical Appeal Use

Lincoln works throughout to use logos by practically linking the war to the founding ideas and values of the country by accumulating his position as president and moral commander, which makes sense to the audience, and explains why they have to fight the struggle.



