

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address

by Abraham Lincoln

President Abraham Lincoln gave his most famous speech, the Gettysburg Address, on November 19, 1863. At that time, the U.S. was in the middle of the Civil War. Lincoln gave the speech at the dedication of a cemetery for the soldiers who had died during the Battle of Gettysburg.

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, upon 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 here on a great battle field of that war. We are now have come to dedicate a portion of it as the a final resting place of for those who here gave their lives that that 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 can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they have, thus far, so nobly carried on. 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 the that cause for which they here gave gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation shall have a new birth of freedom; and that this government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Questions

1. If "score" means 20 years, how many years was President Lincoln speaking of when he said, "Four score and seven years ago..."?

2. If he gave the speech in 1863, what exact year was he referring to when he said, "Four score and seven years ago..."? What important event happened in the United States that year?

3. What does "proposition" mean in this phrase: "dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal"?
 - A. the Constitution
 - B. an invitation
 - C. an idea
 - D. people

4. What does President Lincoln mean by "the last full measure of devotion" when he said, "they here gave the last full measure of devotion"?