

Directions: Read the text entitled “from Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln” and read the poem entitled “The Death of Lincoln,” then answer the questions that follow.

from Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln

by Frederick Douglass

1 When, therefore, it shall be asked what we have to do with the memory of Abraham Lincoln, or what Abraham Lincoln had to do with us, the answer is ready, full, and complete. Though he loved Caesar less than Rome, though the Union was more to him than our freedom or our future, under his wise and beneficent rule we saw ourselves gradually lifted from the depths of slavery to the heights of liberty and manhood; under his wise and beneficent rule, and by measures approved and vigorously pressed by him, we saw that the handwriting of ages, in the form of prejudice and proscription, was rapidly fading away from the face of our whole country; under his rule, and in due time, about as soon after all as the country could tolerate the strange spectacle, we saw our brave sons and brothers laying off the rags of bondage, and being clothed all over in the blue uniforms of the soldiers of the United States; under his rule we saw two hundred thousand of our dark and dusky people responding to the call of Abraham Lincoln, and with muskets on their shoulders, and eagles on their buttons, timing their high footsteps to liberty and union under the national flag; under his rule we saw the “independence” of the black republic of Haiti, the special object of slaveholding aversion and horror, fully recognized, and her minister, a colored gentleman, duly received here in the city of Washington; under his rule we saw the internal slave-trade, which so long disgraced the nation, abolished, and slavery abolished in the District of Columbia; under his rule we saw for the first time the law enforced against the foreign slave trade, and the first slave-trader hanged like any other pirate or murderer; under his rule, assisted by the greatest captain of our age, and his inspiration, we saw the Confederate States, based upon the idea that our race must be slaves, and slaves forever, battered to pieces and scattered to the four winds; under his rule, and in the fullness of time, we saw Abraham Lincoln, after giving the slaveholders three months’ grace in which to save their hateful slave system, penning the immortal paper, which, though special in its language, was general in its principles and effect, making slavery forever impossible in the United States. Though we waited long we saw all this and more.

2 Can any colored man, or any white man friendly to the freedom of all men, ever forget the night which followed the first day of January 1863, when the world was to see if Abraham Lincoln would prove to be as good as his word? I shall never forget that memorable night, when in a distant city I waited and watched at a public meeting, with three thousand others not less anxious than myself, for the word of deliverance which we have heard read today. Nor shall I ever forget the outburst of joy and thanksgiving that rent the air when the lightning brought to us the Emancipation Proclamation. In that happy hour we forgot all delay, and forgot all tardiness, forgot that the President had bribed the rebels to lay down their arms by a promise to withhold the bolt which would smite the slave-system with destruction; and we were thenceforward willing to allow the President all the latitude of time, phraseology, and every honorable device that statesmanship might require for the achievement of a great and beneficent measure of liberty and progress.

Reference:

Douglas, F. (2009). from Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln. In California State Department of Education (Author), *Released Test Questions: English -Language Arts Grade 9* (p. 40). Public Domain. <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/css05rtq.asp>

The Death of Lincoln
by William Cullen Bryant

Oh, slow to smite and swift to spare,
Gentle and merciful and just!
Who, in the fear of God, didst bear
The sword of power, a nation’s trust!
5 In sorrow by thy bier we stand,
Amid the awe that hushes all,
And speak the anguish of a land
That shook with horror at thy fall.
Thy task is done; the bound are free;
10 We bear thee to an honored grave,
Whose proudest monument shall be
The broken fetters of the slave.
Pure was thy life; its bloody close
Hath placed thee with the sons of light,
15 Among the noble host of those
Who perished in the cause of Right.

Reference:

Sandburg, C. (1998). Fog. Retrieved March 6, 2013, from Carl Sandburg - Chicago Poems website: <http://carl-sandburg.com/fog.htm>

Answer the following questions using the text entitled "Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln" by Frederick Douglass.

1. Read the sentence from paragraph 1.

"Though he loved Caesar less than Rome, though the Union was more to him than our freedom or our future, under his wise and beneficent rule we saw ourselves gradually lifted from the depths of slavery to the heights of liberty and manhood;..."

The details in this sentence reveal that Douglass believed Lincoln's main objective was to:

- A. Achieve liberty and manhood
 - B. Preserve the Union
 - C. Rule wisely
 - D. Lift the depths of slavery
2. Paragraph 2 suggests that Frederick Douglass celebrated:
 - A. Liberty and progress
 - B. The president's phraseology
 - C. Lincoln's statesmanship
 - D. A memorable night

3. Read this excerpt from paragraph 2.

"though the Union was more to him than our freedom or our future, under his wise and beneficent rule we saw ourselves gradually lifted from the depths of slavery to the heights of liberty and manhood; under his wise and beneficent rule, and by measures approved and vigorously pressed by him, we saw that the handwriting of ages, in the form of prejudice and proscription, was rapidly fading away from the face of our whole country;..."

In this sentence, the word beneficent means:

- A. Decisive
- B. Good
- C. Patriotic
- D. Ostentatious

4. Read this excerpt from paragraph 1.

"under his wise and beneficent rule, and by measures approved and vigorously pressed by him, we saw that the handwriting of ages, in the form of prejudice and proscription, was rapidly fading away from the face of our whole country; under his rule, and in due time, about as soon after all as the country could tolerate the strange spectacle, we saw our brave sons and brothers laying off the rags of bondage, and being clothed all over in the blue uniforms of the soldiers of the United States;..."

Which three words from this excerpt convey the author's intent to capture the sense of discrimination?

You must select all three correct words for your answer to be correct.

- A. pressed
- B. prejudice
- C. proscription
- D. tolerate
- E. spectacle
- F. bondage

5. Which sentence best expresses the main idea of paragraph 1?

- A. Frederick Douglass believed Lincoln lifted Africans from the depths of slavery to the heights of liberty and manhood and achieved the “independence” of the black republic of Haiti.
- B. Frederick Douglass believed Lincoln abolished the slave trade, abolished slavery in the District of Columbia, and hanged the first slave-trader like a pirate or a murderer.
- C. Frederick Douglass believed Lincoln scattered the beliefs of the Confederate States to the four winds.
- D. Frederick Douglass believed Lincoln preserved the Union, reduced prejudice in many forms, encouraged blacks to fight for the union, and established liberty for all African Americans.

6. Read this excerpt from paragraph 1.

“under his rule we saw the “independence” of the black republic of Haiti, the special object of slaveholding aversion and horror, fully recognized, and her minister, a colored gentleman, duly received here in the city of Washington; under his rule we saw the internal slave-trade, which so long disgraced the nation, abolished, and slavery abolished in the District of Columbia; under his rule we saw for the first time the law enforced against the foreign slave trade, and the first slave-trader hanged like any other pirate or murderer;...”

The description of President Lincoln relates to readers because they:

- A. Understand the decisions a president has to make during his presidency
- B. Recognize the usefulness of being the nation’s chief executive
- C. Can visualize many of the problems Lincoln had to solve during his presidency
- D. Can sense how overwhelming it must have been for the slaves during his presidency

7. Refer to the entire passage to answer this question. The reader may best infer that Frederick Douglass:

- A. Learned what it means to be a free citizen of the United States
- B. Had lived through the oppressions of slavery and celebrated liberty and progress
- C. Frequently celebrated the Lincoln presidency
- D. Was determined to improve the slave system

8. Read this sentence and answer the question.

"Nor shall I ever forget the outburst of joy and thanksgiving that rent the air when the lightning brought to us the Emancipation Proclamation."

The author uses figurative language in this sentence to show that the Emancipation Proclamation:

- A. Struck African Americans with surprise
- B. Was a positive influence on ending slavery
- C. Was important for African Americans
- D. Lead our nation to freedom

9. Which of the following words does NOT contribute to the general tone of the oration?

- A. Admiring
- B. Excited
- C. Sarcastic
- D. Heartfelt
- E. Fervent

10. Which of the following words does NOT contribute to the characterization of President Lincoln?

- A. Prudent
- B. Persistent
- C. Repugnant
- D. Intrepid
- E. Decisive

11. The structure of this passage is best described as:

- A. Compare/Contrast and Cause/Effect
- B. Narrative
- C. Cause/ Effect and Point of View
- D. Problem/ Solution and Chronological
- E. Spatial and Descriptive

12. Which of these phrases from Frederick Douglass's speech is slightly critical toward Lincoln?

- A. "Thought the Union was more to him than our freedom or our future"
- B. "responding to the call of Abraham Lincoln"
- C. "making slavery forever impossible in the United States"
- D. "the outburst of joy and thanksgiving that rent the air"

"The Death of Lincoln" by William Cullen Bryant

Answer the following questions using the text entitled "The Death of Lincoln"

1. Which statement best describes the meaning of this poem?

- A. A citizen is demoralized and experiencing a great loss of a powerful man.
- B. A citizen is proud of the broken fetters of slavery.
- C. A citizen honors Lincoln as a man who died in his noble fight to free the slaves.
- D. A citizen is in anguish and horror by the sword of power and the nations' trust.

2. In the poem entitled "The Death of Lincoln", Bryant primarily employs:
- A. Personification
 - B. Allegory
 - C. Blank verse
 - D. Quatrain
3. Bryant's poem conveys the nation's attitude towards Lincoln by:
- A. Describing the scene in the nation's capital
 - B. Creating rhymes at the end of each line
 - C. Beginning the poem with a series of salutations exalting Lincoln
 - D. Eliminating use of any type of similes or metaphors
4. Read these lines from the poem entitled "The Death of Lincoln".

**"In sorrow by thy bier we stand,
Amid the awe that hushes all,
And speak the anguish of a land
That shook with horror at thy fall."**

The word bier most nearly means:

- A. River
- B. Horse wagon
- C. Casket
- D. Train

5. Read these lines from the poem entitled “The Death of Lincoln.”

**“And speak the anguish of a land
That shook with horror at thy fall.
Thy task is done; the bound are free;
We bear thee to an honored grave,
Whose proudest monument shall be
The broken fetters of the slave.”**

The word fetters most likely means:

- A. Lives
 - B. Chains
 - C. Families
 - D. Minds
6. From the information in the poem, we can logically infer that the speaker is:
- A. An ebullient U.S. senator expressing effusive thoughts about Lincoln
 - B. An admirer attending Lincoln’s funeral
 - C. A relative at the funeral of Lincoln
 - D. The wife of Lincoln
7. Which of these the following describes the rhyme and meter used in the poem entitled “The Death of Lincoln”?
- A. Iambic tetrameter
 - B. Iambic pentameter
 - C. Free verse
 - D. Blank verse
8. The speaker’s tone in “The Death of Lincoln” poem is:
- A. Whimsical
 - B. Scornful
 - C. Romantic
 - D. Poignant

9. Read this line of Bryant's poem entitled "The Death of Lincoln".

"Oh, slow to smite and swift to spare,"

This line illustrates the poet's use of:

- A. Personification
- B. Alliteration
- C. Metaphor
- D. Allusion

10. Read this line of Bryant's poem entitled "The Death of Lincoln".

**"Whose proudest monument shall be
The broken fetters of the slave."**

This line illustrates the poet's use of:

- A. Metaphor
- B. Simile
- C. Allusion
- D. Onomatopoeia

11. Read this line of Bryant's poem entitled "The Death of Lincoln".

**"Pure was thy life; its bloody close
Hath placed thee with the sons of light,"**

This line illustrates the poet's use of:

- A. Simile
- B. Allusion
- C. Onomatopoeia
- D. Imagery

12. Read these lines of Bryant's poem entitled "The Death of Lincoln".

**"In sorrow by thy bier we stand,
Amid the awe that hushes all,
And speak the anguish of a land
That shook with horror at thy fall."**

Which is the best synonym for the word anguish in this poem?

- A. Shrewdness
- B. Misery
- C. Warmth
- D. Comfort

13. Read these lines of Bryant's poem entitled "The Death of Lincoln".

**"In sorrow by thy bier we stand,
Amid the awe that hushes all,
And speak the anguish of a land
That shook with horror at thy fall.
Thy task is done; the bound are free;
We bear thee to an honored grave,"**

Which four words from this excerpt convey the author's tone to convey a sense of bereavement?

All answers must be correct to receive full credit for this question.

- A. sorrow
- B. bier
- C. amid
- D. awe
- E. shook
- F. horror
- G. bound
- H. grave

14. The point of view of Bryant’s poem entitled “The Death of Lincoln” can best be described as:

- A. First Person, Lincoln
- B. Second Person, to Lincoln
- C. Third Person, Lincoln
- D. Third Person Omniscient

15. The main purpose of the poem is to:

- A. critique Lincoln
- B. capture Lincoln’s personal experience
- C. honor Lincoln
- D. explain Lincoln’s achievements

16. Read this line of Bryant’s poem entitled “The Death of Lincoln”.

**“Who, in the fear of God, didst bear
The sword of power, a nation’s trust!”**

In this line, the “sword of power” is an example of:

- A. Irony
- B. Figurative language
- C. Alliteration
- D. Personification

Comparison of “Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln” and “Death of Lincoln”

Answer the following questions comparing both passages.

1. How does the poem entitled “The Death of Lincoln” give greater emphasis to the theme of loss than Douglass’s speech?
 - A. The poem describes Lincoln in detail.
 - B. The poem expresses a desire for vengeance.
 - C. The poem uses brief, powerful images.
 - D. The poem promises a peaceful future.

2. Which of the following best describes the different attitudes expressed in the poem entitled “The Death of Lincoln” by William Cullen Bryant compared to “Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln”?
 - A. The poem is a joyful celebration of Lincoln, while the tone of the speech is sad.
 - B. The poem idealizes Lincoln, while the speech critically appraises his actions.
 - C. The poem stresses the future, while the speech focuses on the present.
 - D. The poem is personal, while the speech is abstract.

3. Which phrase best describes both the writer in the “Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln” by Frederick Douglass and the speaker in the poem entitled “The Death of Lincoln” by William Cullen Bryant?
 - A. Passionate and honoring
 - B. Informative and matter of fact
 - C. Pessimistic and witty
 - D. Frustrated and gloomy

4. Which best expresses the general theme of both the “Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln” by Frederick Douglass and the poem entitled “The Death of Lincoln” by William Cullen Bryant?
 - A. Duty – the ethics of killing for duty
 - B. Escape – escape from family pressures, escaping social constraints
 - C. Alienation – creating emotional isolation
 - D. Patriotism – devoted love and support for one’s country

5. Which best expresses the similarities between the “Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln” by Frederick Douglass and the poem entitled “The Death of Lincoln” by William Cullen Bryant?
- A. Both emphasize the Civil War.
 - B. Both describe Lincoln’s life.
 - C. Both honor Lincoln’s achievements.
 - D. Both explain the relationship between congress and Lincoln.
6. Based upon the “Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln” by Frederick Douglass and the poem entitled “The Death of Lincoln” by William Cullen Bryant:
- A. Both authors believe Lincoln to be an honorable president.
 - B. Both authors have antipathy for Lincoln’s actions.
 - C. Both authors admire the actions of the nation.
 - D. Both authors mourn Lincoln’s death.
7. Based upon the “Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln” by Frederick Douglass and the poem entitled “The Death of Lincoln” by William Cullen Bryant, both authors expand the reader’s knowledge by:
- A. Describing Lincoln’s passionate words
 - B. Being mournful about Lincoln’s death
 - C. Commenting on horrors of slavery
 - D. Describing Lincoln’s accomplishments