

Gettysburg Address Key Facts

Writer: Abraham Lincoln | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Key Facts Full Title: The Gettysburg Address Orator: Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865) Language: English Date Delivered: November 19, 1863 ★★ First Published: 1863 (in various newspapers across the United States) Genre: Political and Moral Speech

Key Facts

- **Full Title:** The Gettysburg Address
- **Orator:** Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865)
- **Language:** English
- **Date Delivered:** November 19, 1863 ★★
- **First Published:** 1863 (in various newspapers across the United States)
- **Genre:** Political and Moral Speech
- **Form:** Public Address (short, formal, philosophical, and patriotic oration)
- **Type of Work:** Dedication Speech for the Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg
- **Period:** American Civil War / Nineteenth-Century American Democracy
- **Narrative Style:** Formal, reflective, concise, and deeply moral prose
- **Tone:** Solemn, reverent, patriotic, and inspiring
- **Climax:** Lincoln urges the living to dedicate themselves to the "unfinished work" of preserving liberty, equality, and the Union, "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."
- **Famous Line:** "Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."
- **Total Words:** 271
- **One-Line Summary:** A brief yet immortal speech by Abraham Lincoln, honoring the fallen soldiers of Gettysburg and reaffirming America's founding ideals of liberty, equality, and democracy.
- **Point of View:** First-person plural ("we" and "our")
- **Setting**

- **Time Setting:** 1863, during the American Civil War, following the Battle of Gettysburg (July 1–3, 1863); A turning point in the war between the Union and the Confederacy.
- **Place Setting:** Soldiers' National Cemetery, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, USA. Here, Lincoln delivered the speech during the dedication ceremony.

Key Notes

Gettysburg Address: The Gettysburg Address is one of the most historic speeches delivered by U.S. President Abraham Lincoln on November 19, 1863, at the dedication ceremony of the Soldiers' National Cemetery in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The main orator of the day, Edward Everett, Governor of Massachusetts, spoke for two hours. Then comes Abraham Lincoln at the request of Edward Everett. Though Lincoln's speech contains only 271 words, it is considered the greatest declaration of democracy, humanity, and freedom in American history. In this speech, Lincoln honored the soldiers who died in the Battle of Gettysburg and reminded the nation that their sacrifice should inspire a renewed commitment to liberty and equality. His famous words, "Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth," remain the eternal definition of democracy. Lincoln urged the nation to dedicate itself to the unfinished work of preserving freedom and unity. Though brief, the Gettysburg Address stands as a timeless symbol of morality, humanity, and national ideals in U.S. history.

American Civil War: The American Civil War (1861–1865) was a devastating conflict in U.S. history between the Union States of the North and the Confederate States of the South. The main causes of the war were the abolition of slavery and the preservation of the Union. The Southern states wanted to maintain slavery, while the Northern states sought to end it. During Abraham Lincoln's presidency, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring the end of slavery. The Battle of Gettysburg (1863) became a turning point in the war, where the Union army achieved a decisive victory. After this bloody battle, Lincoln delivered his immortal Gettysburg Address to honor the fallen soldiers and to reaffirm the ideals of humanity, equality, and freedom. The outcome of the Civil War was the abolition of slavery, the restoration of national unity, and the triumph of democratic ideals.

Emancipation Proclamation: The Emancipation Proclamation was a historic declaration issued by U.S. President Abraham Lincoln, which came into effect on January 1, 1863. Through this proclamation, Lincoln formally began the process of abolishing slavery during the American

Civil War. Its main purpose was to declare all enslaved people living in the Confederate States permanently free. The proclamation had two stages:

- On September 22, 1862, Lincoln issued a preliminary warning stating that if the Confederate states did not surrender by January 1, 1863, all slaves in those areas would be declared free.
- On January 1, 1863, he officially issued the final proclamation, declaring: "All persons held as slaves within the rebellious states are, and henceforward shall be, free."

The Emancipation Proclamation not only marked the beginning of the end of slavery but also gave the Civil War a moral purpose. It turned the war from a political struggle into a fight for human freedom. As a result, many African Americans joined the Union Army and fought for their own liberty. Although the proclamation did not immediately end slavery throughout the entire United States, it laid the foundation for the 13th Amendment, which later completely abolished slavery by law.

13th Amendment (The Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution): The 13th Amendment is one of the most revolutionary laws in American history, as it formally and permanently abolished slavery in the United States. It was the legal continuation of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, giving permanent constitutional recognition to the freedom of enslaved people.

- **Date of Adoption:** December 6, 1865
- **Approval and Ratification:** It was passed by the U.S. Congress on January 31, 1865, and ratified by the required number of states on December 6, 1865.
- **Main Provision:** It states, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

In essence, this amendment ensured that slavery and forced labor (except as a legal punishment for crime) would no longer exist anywhere under the authority of the United States.