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**Title of Lesson Plan: The Gettysburg Address: Timeless & Universal**

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# Lesson Overview:

This lesson is designed to enable students to analyze key principles from an original text from President Abraham Lincoln in order to gain a better understanding of the how the principles put forth by Lincoln in the Gettysburg Address are universal and connect to people of different historical eras and to all people regardless of historical era or location. Students will use the text as evidence to support their viewpoints in answering the essential questions:

1. Who was Lincoln’s intended audience for the Gettysburg Address?

2. How did Lincoln craft the Gettysburg Address so that it applied across generational and geographic boundaries, making it both timeless and universal?

This lesson is designed to meet the objectives of both the Common Core Standards and the Social Studies Standards adopted by the state of Ohio.

## Lesson Objectives:

Students will be able to:

* Identity words related to time or place.
* Distinguish between different applications of time: past, near past, present, near future, and future.
* Distinguish between different applications of place: local, national, and global.
* Explain how the use of vocabulary and context shapes the meaning of the Lincoln’s message.
* Analyze how the use of vocabulary and context changes the intended audience.

## Number of Class Periods:

One class period of 45 minutes

## Grade Level:

10th Grade American History or 11th grade American Government

## Standards:

**Common Core State Standards**

* CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific detail to an understanding of the text as a whole.
* CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
* CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3: Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence. . . .
* CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social studies.

**Ohio Government Standards**

* Basic Principles of the U.S. Constitution 9. The Reconstruction Era prompted Amendments 13 through 15 to address the aftermath of slavery and the Civil War.
* Role of the People 16. In the United States, people have rights that protect them from undue governmental interference. Rights carry responsibilities that help define how people use their rights and that require respect for the rights of others.

**Ohio: American History Standards**

* Historical Thinking & Skills 3. Historians develop theses and use evidence to support or refute positions.
* Historical Thinking & Skills 4. Historians analyze cause, effect, sequence and correlation in historical events, including multiple causation and long- and short-term causal relations.
* Historic Documents 7. Problems facing the national government under the Articles of Confederation led to the drafting of the Constitution of the United States. The framers of the Constitution applied ideas of Enlightenment in conceiving the new government.

## Historical Background/Context:

On November 19, 1863, thousands of people crowded the top of Cemetery Hill southeast of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Just over four months earlier the same hillside was the location of one of the largest and most decisive battles of the Civil War. This time the crowds were gathered to dedicate a national cemetery for the battlefield dead. Music was played, prayers were given and the featured speaker delivered a classical oration. But it is what happened after those events that is most remembered.

Invited to deliver only a few appropriate remarks, Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address is widely recognized as one of the most famous and influential speeches in American History. Its importance is heightened due to the context in which it was delivered: on the site of the bloodiest battle in the bloodiest war in American history. It is possible to argue that the Gettysburg Address helped define what it means to be American almost as much as the Civil War itself.

High school students are at least vaguely familiar with the Gettysburg Address and will recognize certain words and phrases although they may not be able to identify the details. Great orations such as MLK, Jr.’s “I Have A Dream”, JFK’s Inaugural Address, and Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address are often described as embracing a wider audience than those actually in attendance.

Can students identify how Lincoln was able to frame his words and build a speech that embodied sentiments that stretch across time and place? Can students recognize how Lincoln attempted to speak not only to those gathered around him, but to future generations across the nation and even the world? How does Lincoln speak to those students sitting in our classrooms today?

## Materials:

Examples of instructional materials for the lesson could include the following:

* Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address

Lincoln, Abraham. "Gettysburg Address." Teaching American History, Web. 04 July 2016. <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/gettysburg-address/>

* Computers, laptops, or tablets
* Paper copies of Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address if internet access or electronic aids are not available.
* Graphic organizer #1 for “Time & Place”.

## Procedures:

1. Hook: Begin class by stating “Four score and…” and invite students to continue. Once it is established that students have identified the speech as Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, ask the students to identify (in general terms, not specific names) to whom Lincoln was speaking to that day. Ask what was the occasion for which Lincoln was speaking.
2. Divide the class into pairs. This opportunity can be used to either partner learners of similar levels or to partner learners with special needs with those who can model good analytical skills.
3. Provide the students with either the web address for Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address or paper copies if computers or internet access is not available.
4. Explain to the students that they will be reading the Gettysburg Address and attempting to identify Lincoln’s intended audience.
5. Provide students with Graphic Organizer “Time & Place”.
   1. Students with special needs may be supplied with a copy of the Address or a Graphic Organizer that already has some words identified or highlighted.
6. Direct the students to work in pairs to identify terms that relate to either place or location. Provide the students with an example of each such as “here”.
7. Once students have completed their lists, direct the students discuss and answer the evaluative questions.
8. Circulate through the room and observe students as they work. Offer thoughts or questions to encourage them to think deeper.

**Assessment and Summary:**

* Engage students in whole class discussion by first asking them to share some of the words they have identified.
* Ask if their discoveries changed or supported their thoughts on the essential questions.
* Wrap up by restating the essential question with a summary of the student responses.

## Text:

The Gettysburg Address

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 battle-field 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 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 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.

Abraham Lincoln

November 19, 1863

Lincoln, Abraham. "Gettysburg Address." Teaching American History, Web. 04 July 2016. <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/gettysburg-address/>

## Graphic Organizers: “Time & Place”

We use many words everyday to indicate time and place - when and where. “Your homework is due *tomorrow*.” “Students in the *first row* should pass out folders *now*.” Sometimes we include multiple times and places at once. “*Work* on your homework from *yesterday* so you can turn it in by *tomorrow*.” Work - present; yesterday - past; tomorrow - present.

**Directions**: Your challenge is to categorize Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address for Time & Place. Lincoln spoke to people and addressed issues from of different times and paces. Use the categories below to identify any words or phrases Lincoln used that indicate time or place.

**Time**

Distant Past - Years ago

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Near Past - Recent months & years (Lincoln’s Presidency?)

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Present - Right now

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Near Future - Next days, weeks, and months

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Distant Future - Future years and generations

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**Place**

Local -

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Global -

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**Evaluate:** How does Lincoln’s use time and place to change his meaning or audience?

1. Using evidence from the text, explain two examples where the message or principle changes as the vocabulary reflecting time changes.
2. Using evidence from the text, explain two examples where the message or principle changes as the vocabulary reflecting place changes.

3. Does the overall theme or tone of Lincoln’s message change when you consider the changes in time and place? Explain why or why not.

4. How do the changes in time and place affect what the Gettysburg Address means to you?