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Photos National Archives

## PRIMARY SOURCE

### Lincoln's Emancipation

Proclamation caught many by surprise. Reactions to the bold plan varied around the nation.

"Common sense, the necessities of war, to say nothing of the dictation of justice and humanity have at last prevailed. We shout for joy that we live to record this righteous decrees... "Free forever" oh! long enslaved millions... your deliverance draws nigh! Oh! Ye millions of free and loyal men who have earnestly sought to free your bleeding country from the dreadful ravages of revolution and anarchy, lift up now your voices with joy and thanksgiving for with freedom to the slave will come peace and safety to your country... But read the proclamation for it is the most important of any to which the president of the United States has signed his name."



Frederick Douglass

– Frederick Douglass  
Abolitionist

"President's Emancipation Manifesto much discussed and generally approved, though a few old Democrats (who ought to be dead and buried but persist in manifesting themselves like vampires) scold and grumble. It will do us good abroad, but will have no other effect."

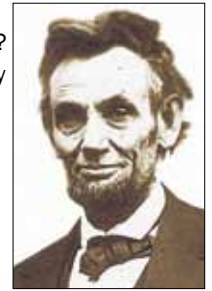
– George Templeton Strong  
New York Lawyer

"I look upon it as a direct bid for insurrection, as a most infamous attempt to incite flight, murder, and rapine on the part of our slave population. I do not think the proclamation will have any effect. But this does not in the least detract from the character of the act, or lessen one iota the enormity of its crime..."

– Charles C. Jones Jr.  
Confederate Soldier

## Role Playing IN HISTORY

During training, black soldiers of the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry received word that they would be paid \$10 per month, \$3 dollars less than white soldiers of the time. As a member of the 54th Massachusetts, how would you have reacted? What would you have done? The soldiers responded by refusing to take any pay whatsoever. Why do you think they did this?



Abraham Lincoln

Besides taking no pay, in what other ways could the soldiers of the 54th Massachusetts have tried to get equal pay?

### An appeal to President Lincoln

One soldier, Private James Henry Gooding, decided on another method of protest. He wrote a personal letter to President Abraham Lincoln:

*"Now the main question is, are we Soldiers, or are we Laborers? We are fully armed, and equipped, have done all the various duties pertaining to a Soldier's life, have conducted ourselves to the complete satisfaction of General Officers, who were, if anything, prejudiced against us, but who now accord us all the encouragement and honors due us. Mr. President, today the Anglo Saxon Mother, Wife, or Sister are not alone in tears for departed Sons, Husbands, and Brothers. The patient, trusting descendant of Africa's Clime have dyed the ground with blood, in defense of the Union, and Democracy. Now your Excellency, we have done a Soldier's duty. Why can't we have a Soldier's pay? The Regt. do pray that they be assured their service will be fairly appreciated by paying them as American Soldiers, not as menial hirelings. If you, as Chief Magistrate of the Nation, will assure us of our whole pay, we are content. Our Patriotism, our enthusiasm will have a new impetus, to exert our energy more and more to aid our Country. Please give this a moment's attention."*

## Critical Thinking

The Emancipation Proclamation along with the official end of slavery through the 13th Amendment was cause for celebration among former slaves, but there were still great difficulties ahead.

Put yourself in the position of a slave who has been freed. What would you do? Where would you go? What problems or challenges might you encounter? How do you think you would be treated? Write a paragraph addressing these questions and share it with the class.

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## VOCABULARY

Place the letter of the vocabulary word on the line next to its definition. Write a sentence using each word.

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|------------------|-------|---|
| A. Contraband    | _____ | 1. A slave; a person viewed as personal property              |
| B. Amendment     | _____ | 2. Northern states fighting to reunite the nation             |
| C. Policy        | _____ | 3. Those who believed in the abolishment of slavery           |
| D. Inaugural     | _____ | 4. A course or general plan of action adopted by a government |
| E. Union         | _____ | 5. Illegal goods seized from the enemy                        |
| F. Legacy        | _____ | 6. To free  |
| G. Futility      | _____ | 7. A president's speech at the beginning of a term in office  |
| H. Racism        | _____ | 8. A public, official announcement                            |
| I. Proclamation  | _____ | 9. Southern states that seceded to form an independent nation |
| J. Abolitionists | _____ | 10. Ineffective or useless                                    |
| K. Ratified      | _____ | 11. Something handed down from the past                       |
| L. Chattel       | _____ | 12. The belief that one race is superior to another           |
| M. Confederacy   | _____ | 13. Given formal approval, put into effect                    |
| N. Emancipate    | _____ | 14. A correction or addition to a document                    |