

The Emancipation Proclamation

Directions: Please do the following:

1. Number the paragraphs of the text, 2. Read the expository (informational) text below. 3. After each paragraph, please stop and choose 2 phrases to highlight that you feel are key and important. Please annotate the text by coding the phrases (see list at the bottom of the paper) and writing a good response in the margin.

Background:

President Abraham Lincoln had begun the Civil War with the intent to bring the Southern rebellious states back into the United States and to preserve the Union. At first, setting slaves free had not been his objective. However, as the Civil War continued, Lincoln was under pressure from abolitionists who wanted emancipation (freedom) for the enslaved. Lincoln was not sure if the U.S. Constitution gave him the power as President to free slaves and he was concerned that if he freed all slaves that the border states (Missouri, Delaware, Kentucky and Maryland) would decide to join the Confederates.

However, Lincoln did not approve of slavery himself and realized that since slaves were helping to grow food that was supporting the Confederate army that he could issue an order that would help the North win the war and be legally justified in doing so.

The order

After the North won the Battle of Antietam in Sept. 1862, Lincoln had a position of strength and issued an executive order of the Emancipation Proclamation on Sept 22, 1862. It stated that if the Confederacy did not return to the Union by January 1, 1863, then their slaves would be set free. The South continued fighting the war and paid no attention to Lincoln's command. Therefore, on January 1st, slaves were set free.

However, not all slaves were freed. The only ones emancipated were those in the Confederacy. The border state slaves were not set free due to Lincoln wanting to make sure those states remained for the North. The Confederacy obviously would not set slaves free so the only way that slaves were set free was when Union soldiers arrived in their area, took control, thereby freeing them.

The importance

If the Emancipation Proclamation did not set all slaves free, was it useless? Not at all!! It now added a moral purpose to the war. The war now becomes about ending slavery in the United States, as well as bringing the Southern states back in to the Union. In addition, slaves were given hope that their freedom was coming! Many slaves began to be bold and to escape to Union military lines.

In this order by Lincoln, he also stated that African-Americans were welcome to serve in the U.S. military. Many took this opportunity eventually, wanting to experience the pride of serving in this capacity. The Proclamation definitely had an impact!