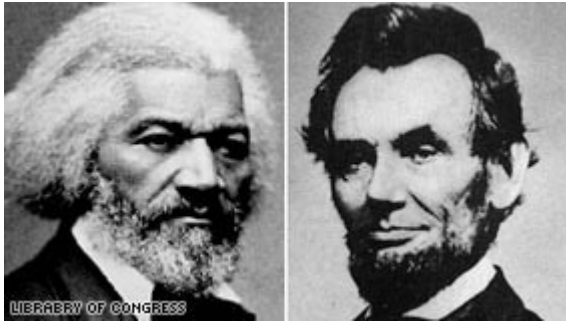


## Social Studies (CC) Lesson Plan:

Grades:

11, 12

By creating a newscast or playing the role of friends discussing an upcoming election, students analyze speeches in order to identify the speaker's purpose and explore how style and content advance that purpose.



Frederick Douglass, left, and President Abraham Lincoln

## Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-CCR.6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-CCR.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

## Objective:

Students will be able to analyze important historic speeches to determine whether and how style and content make the speech effective. Students will be able to defend their analysis by citing and explaining textual evidence.

## Prerequisites:

Exploration, in history or language arts class, of the various positions on slavery leading up to the Civil War, particularly those of abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass and more moderate anti-slavery leaders such as Abraham Lincoln. Depending on students' reading comprehension levels, some in-class exploration and discussion of the texts before this activity may also be helpful. Give assignment before class.

## **Assignment:**

Read "What, to the Slave, is the Fourth of July?" by Frederick Douglass as excerpted<sup>1</sup> and "Speech at New Haven" by Abraham Lincoln (teacher may excerpt portions)<sup>2</sup>. Write in your notes what you think each speaker's purpose was. Note or highlight passages where the content and style of the speech effectively achieves that purpose.

## **Activities:**

1. Divide students into groups of five to six. Groups may choose one of two performance tasks.
  1. *Newscast*: Students host a news analysis show in the style of post-State of the Union address commentaries (viewing an exemplar on video will be helpful). Student roles are anchor (1 or 2), pro-Lincoln commentator (2), pro-Douglass commentator (2). Newscast includes: 1. Neutral summary of Douglass speech in which the anchor describes the purpose and key arguments made, using quotes from the text. 2. Douglass supporter's commentary, citing key content and style elements from the text and noting their effectiveness. 3. Lincoln supporter's commentary, also noting strengths of the speech but pointing out key differences of opinion between the two orators and any ineffective content or style elements. 4-6. Same cycle focusing on Lincoln speech. Throughout, all characters are encouraged to connect their comments to the purpose of the speech and the context of the time, indicating why these ideas are important. 7. Q&A led by anchor, final summary, and/or a look ahead to the presidential election of 1860.
1. *Friends meeting before the election*. Friends who live in different parts of the U.S. have gathered on the eve of the 1860 presidential election. Student roles are: Lincoln supporters (2), Douglass supporters disappointed in Lincoln's candidacy (2), undecided voter(s) (1 or 2). The undecided voters ask their friends questions in an effort to decide their vote. Friends, each having attended one of the two speeches, cite the speeches, including references to purpose, style and content (as in option a above), along with key agreements and differences of opinion between the two orators. The undecided voters then summarize what they have learned, declare and defend their vote. Using their notes and requirements provided by the teacher, students work together to outline or script their performances. Teacher circulates to scaffold. Depending on time and teacher preference, groups may present performances in class or create videos.

## **Assessment:**

Notes on purpose and selection of quotes may be assessed. Performance task is assessed based on a teacher-provided rubric which focuses on the students' demonstrated understanding of purpose and success in citing passages and connecting style and content with purpose. Both performance and written outline/script may be considered. An individual writing assignment based on the performance tasks may also be included.