

From Common Core Unit: **A Close Reading of Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address** ([www.achievethecore.org](http://www.achievethecore.org))

A Sampling of Questions from the Unit

Text Under Discussion	Text-Dependent Guiding Questions
<p>“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.”</p>	<p><i>What does Lincoln mean by “four score and seven years ago”? Who are “our fathers”?</i></p>
	<p><i>What does conceived mean?</i></p>
	<p><i>What does proposition mean?</i></p>
	<p><i>What is he saying is significant about America? Is he saying that no one has been free or equal before? So what is new?</i></p>
	<p><i>When was “four score and seven years ago”?</i></p>
	<p><i>What does Lincoln tell us in this first sentence about what happened 87 years ago?</i></p>
<p>“Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.”</p>	<p><i>What impact does starting the sentence with “now” have on its meaning?</i></p>
	<p><i>When Lincoln says the nation was “so conceived and so dedicated” what is he referring to?</i></p>
	<p><i>What is the point including the phrase “or any nation so conceived and so dedicated” – what would the sentence mean without it?</i></p>
	<p><i>The impact of a word choice: What if Lincoln had used the verb “start” instead of “conceive?”</i></p>
<p>(Review entire speech)</p>	<p><i>Look carefully at Lincoln’s speech; which verb does he use the most (sometime he uses it in the past tense)? Circle the verb each time it appears in the text.</i></p>
<p>“Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and <b>dedicated</b> to the proposition that all men are created equal.</p> <p>Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so <b>dedicated</b>, can long endure.”</p>	<p><i>What does the word “dedicate,” mean the first two times Lincoln uses it, and what other verb is closely linked to it the first two times it appears?</i></p>
<p>“We have come to <b>dedicate</b> 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.</p> <p>But, in a larger sense, we can not <b>dedicate</b>—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground.”</p>	<p><i>How is “dedicate” used the next two times, and how does it relate to the word consecrate? Who is now doing the dedicating?</i></p>