



## AP<sup>®</sup> English Language and Composition 2002 Sample Student Responses

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Four years prior to his Second Inaugural Address, President Lincoln had given a speech about war, ~~that~~ "on impending civil war." Now, ~~but~~ after four years of such conflict, the President is issuing a speech of reconciliation, trying to convince his people to come back together with their Southern brethren, and try and heal the grievously wounded nation. A gifted rhetorician, the President used three primary literary tools to make his point: parallel structure to illustrate similarities between Northerner and Southerner, allusions to the Bible to highlight the Christian values so important to both, and personification to paint the war as an evil enemy, and the nation as a wounded ~~at~~ friend.

In the second paragraph, Lincoln concludes with the parallel statements "one... would make war rather than let the nation survive... the other would accept war rather than let it perish, and the war come." While this obviously paints the South as the aggressors, it is far from a condemnation; instead it has the North sharing responsibility for the conflict, through their willingness to "accept war." Later, in the third paragraph, the President states "neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained, neither anticipated that the course of the conflict might cease [before it]... each looked for an easier triumph... both read the Bible and prayed to the same God, and each invoked his aid." Again he re-inforces the similarities between the two sides, in their expectations and wishes for the war, and in their Christian values.

The Christian values shared by both sides is further emphasized by Lincoln through allusions. He says in the third paragraph "let us judge not, ~~lest~~ that we be not judged." This is a direct allusion to Jesus<sup>and</sup> and his statement "judge not lest ye be judged." It reflects <sup>the</sup> Christian values of forgiveness, something North and South share, and that should certainly apply for both in their current situation. Lincoln also quotes the Bible twice in the third paragraph, in the sections "woe... cometh" and "the judgments... righteous altogether." Both these allusions point how the values shared by North and South apply to the current situation. With frequent use of He and Him, Lincoln shows how the war may fall into God's plan; this encourages both sides to not lose faith, and to bear in mind God's teachings should still be followed.

Finally, Lincoln tries to personify both the war and the nation, the

former as a wicked enemy, the latter as a beaten and needy friend. This begins at the end of the second paragraph, where Lincoln says one side would not let "the nation survive," and "the war come." The first quote paints the nation as a living creature whose existence was being threatened, while the second shows the war as an independent entity, that "came" on its own, not brought on by either side. These personifications become even stronger in the third and fourth paragraphs. Here, Lincoln states that none expected "the magnitude [the war] has already attained," again painting it as an independent creature with its own actions and desires. Finally, he expresses hope the war "may speedily pass away," granting it that same characteristic of mortality he already gave the nation. In the fourth paragraph, Lincoln sums up his personification of the nation by urging others to "bind up the nation's wounds," again, he shows the nation as wounded, and in need of our help.

At the dawning of his second term, Lincoln realized the necessity for the reunification of the nation. Using rhetoric, he appealed to the hearts and minds of the people, and tried to mend the rift that had grown between North and South.

President of a torn country, Abraham Lincoln spoke with optimism in his second Inaugural Address. Hoping for reconciliation, he acted as if those devoted to saving the Union and those devoted to dissolving it were actually on the same side, attempting to atone for the sin of slavery. Certainly, the Civil War had ~~wrecked~~ wreaked havoc across the United States, destroying lives, property, and friendships. However, Lincoln's diction, rhetorical devices, and organization enabled <sup>him</sup> to convince listeners that the nation's future was bright.

The president's choice of words gives the impression that the United States is, in fact, still united. In paragraph two, he says that at his first inauguration "all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending Civil War." (17-18) The entire country was "anxious" about the future, implying uneasiness about upcoming fighting. ~~Since~~ Since neither side looked forward to the bloodshed, this makes ~~the~~ the crowd of Northerners ~~(presumably)~~ <sup>(presumably)</sup> Lincoln was addressing more likely to sympathize with the South. After all, human beings are ~~struck~~ struck equally hard by loss. Identifying with an enemy is the first step towards reconciliation, the end Lincoln was trying to achieve. In addition, while the president in the beginning of paragraph three refers to the confederates' attempts to "rend the Union" (35) for the cause of a mere interest, he does not condemn them. He uses the verbs "strengthen, perpetuate, and extend" (33), none of which have negative connotations.

Lincoln uses parallel structure and an appeal to the authority of God to achieve his purpose. Sentences such as, "Both read the same Bible... against the other" (42-44) show that both sides have quite a lot in common. They didn't expect the war to be so long and difficult, they justified their fighting in the same ways,

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they both felt like the cause for the conflict had been lost. By using words like "neither," (37, 39) "both" (24, 42), and "each" (41), Lincoln sets up the parallel structure and positive comparisons. Finally, by mentioning in line 63 that the people of God must do what God wills, Lincoln persuades the reader to follow through on the war effort, <sup>and not become disheartened</sup> knowing that God rewards the faithful. Lincoln's rhetoric lays the groundwork for reconciliation.

Lincoln's opening paragraph ~~begins~~ <sup>ends</sup> with optimism, discussing "high hope for the future" (14-15). From there, he moves into the second paragraph talking about the background of the war, making a slight jab at the South in the process for making war instead of letting the nation survive. From this anti-South view, he begins the third paragraph by stating that slavery, which is "localized in the [South]" (30) caused the war. There is a break at this section, after which he starts acting less hostile to the insurgents and more brotherly. He ends the fourth paragraph by saying that they are working towards the same end—appeasing God. He closes by making a plea for reconciliation and healing America's gaping wounds. This organization of increased sympathy for the South as the paper continues invites northerners in by starting with a negative viewpoint on the rebels. It is from this point that Lincoln starts to work to persuade them. He effectively does this with his extensive command of the English language.

In ~~A~~ United States President, Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, Lincoln uses many rhetorical strategies to achieve his point. <sup>Lincoln uses</sup> Religious allusions to God and the bible <sup>to</sup> connect ~~the~~ ~~readers~~ two opposing readers (North and South), strong ~~strong~~ adjectives and verbs to show the terrible magnitude the war reached, and <sup>and complex</sup> complex sentences that ~~that~~ explain his thoughts, to convey his hopeful and forgiving tone.

"Both parties deprecated war, but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would accept war rather than let it perish, and the war came" This is just one example of a compound/complex sentence that Lincoln uses in his essay. Complex sentences and Compound/complex sentences give detail and illusions to the statement preceding it. In the sentence above the first statement is "Both parties deprecated war..." That is a general statement but proceeding it is a description of what each side views of the war. These sentences show thought and also show research on Lincoln's behalf. He appears more ~~more~~ credible to the listener because he expands on his ideas and follows them up with factual information.

"Powerful" and "terrible" ~~are~~ are two very meaningful words that Lincoln uses in his speech. Now why would Lincoln choose these words? Strong adjectives give a work depth and puts a visual picture into the readers

mind. Strong diction can ~~be~~ personify and make ordinary words stand out. The adjectives that Lincoln uses are mostly related to the Civil War. This makes the reader see that Lincoln does not agree with the war and views it as "this terrible war". The citizens who were listening to this speech were still angry and these words helped them realize that the war truly was an awful occurrence.

Religious allusions overpowered all of the other rhetorical strategies in this speech, such as "...in the ~~providen~~ providence of God", "if God ~~is~~ wills that it continue..." "God and the "Almighty" ~~are~~ is something that both the North and the South can agree on. Lincoln uses his references to god not only to make his words just but also to form a common ground between the two opposing sides of the war. "Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God" Lincoln was trying to rebuild his country and form peace among everyone. His allusions to god also showed his points to be meaningful. He says that the war was wrong under the eyes of God. ~~Is~~ If God sees the war as wrong and immoral then is it right? Lincoln knows the people of his country think so, so he uses these allusions.

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Question 1

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The Civil War was a time of turmoil and sorrow. The Second Inaugural Address gave the people of The United States hope ~~and~~ for a better world in the years to come.