

EMANCIPATION BY REBECCA HINSON

(HISTORY/NONFICTION)

Questions for *Emancipation* by Rebecca Hinson

LEVEL 1: What does it say?

General Understanding

- Slavery was legal in the United States of America for 246 years. What does the text say and imply caused the end of this institution?

Key Details

- What are two main ideas in *Emancipation* and what specific details from the text help support those ideas?
1. Abraham Lincoln stated, "In 1841 you and I had together a tedious low-water trip, on a Steam Boat from Louisville to St. Louis. You may remember, as I well do, that from Louisville to the mouth of the Ohio there were, on board, ten or a dozen slaves, shackled together with irons. That sight was a continual torment to me; and I see something like it every time I touch the Ohio, or any other slave-border." According to the text, does this statement reflect Lincoln's reason for going to war with the Confederate States of America? If not, what reason does the text give?
- A political movement is a social group that operates together to obtain a political goal, on a local, regional, national, or international scope. Cite specific information from the text to explain how a political movement was the catalyst for emancipation.

LEVEL 2: How does it work?

Vocabulary

- What is a *presidential proclamation*? Explain the Emancipation Proclamation.
- What is an *amendment*? Explain the Thirteenth Amendment.

Structure

Compare and contrast the chronological structures of *Emancipation* and *Independence* by the author.

Author's Craft

- As the reader considers each work of art, the author describes each depicted event as if it is just happening. How does she accomplish this? How do her descriptions of art change in *Emancipation*?

LEVEL 3: What does it mean?

Author's Purpose

- The author's Great-Grandfather Isham Hinson served in Company C, Regiment 20, North Carolina State Troops. He was captured by Union soldiers and imprisoned. Her mother's family lived in Illinois, a Union state. Is the author more sympathetic to the Union or the Confederacy? What evidence do you find in the text?

Intertextual Connections

- In *Southern Slavery and the Bible*, Mr. Thompson and T.R.R. Cobb make a case for slavery. What evidence do they cite?

"...I mean, the organization of human society, and the dependences of the poor classes upon the rich. This form of slavery exists to a greater or less extent in all countries, where African slavery does not. At the North, you make slaves of the poor people, instead of supporting them voluntarily, as we do. You enslave your unfortunate kindred who become dependent upon you for support. The truth is, the world never has, and never can exist without slavery in some form. T. R. R. Cobb, an able writer on this subject says: 'In every organized community there must be a laboring class to execute the plans devised by wiser heads; to till the ground, and to perform the menial offices necessarily connected with social life.' It therefore follows, as a consequence, that where Negro slavery does not exist, the rich will enslave the poor of their own race.

"The curse pronounced by God, through Noah, upon Ham and his descendants, is subject to no such restrictions and limitations as governed enslaved Hebrews. It was to extend from generation to generation, to be perpetual. Hence you see Abraham 'the father of the faithful, the friend of God,' was the owner of a large number of slaves. Some were 'born in his house,' and some were 'bought with his money.' So it is evident that slavery was common in those days; and the domestic slave trade, so much abhorred by the abolitionists, and which affords themes of such bitter denunciations against the South, was also practiced, even by the very best men."

LEVEL 4: What does it inspire you to do?

Opinion with Evidence or Argument

- Did the country's division over slavery make the war inevitable? Integrate information from Hinson's text and the following texts to support your answer.

The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln:

"I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so."

History.com:

Lincoln did believe that slavery was morally wrong, but there was one big problem: It was sanctioned by the highest law in the land, the Constitution. The nation's founding fathers, who also struggled with how to address slavery, did not explicitly write the word "slavery" in the Constitution, but they did include key clauses protecting the institution, including a fugitive slave clause and the three-fifths clause, which allowed Southern states to count slaves for the purposes of representation in the federal government. In a three-hour speech in Peoria, Illinois, in the fall of 1854, Lincoln presented more clearly than ever his moral, legal and economic opposition to slavery—and then admitted he didn't know exactly what should be done about it within the current political system.

Abolitionists, by contrast, knew exactly what should be done about it: Slavery should be immediately abolished, and freed slaves should be incorporated as equal members of society. They didn't care about working within the existing political system, or under the Constitution, which they saw as unjustly protecting slavery and slave owners. Leading abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison called the Constitution "a covenant with death and an agreement with Hell," and went so far as to burn a copy at a Massachusetts rally in 1854.

Ordinance of Secession, the State of Mississippi:

In their Ordinance of Secession, the State of Mississippi asserts that slave holders' rights were slowly being chipped away. "It has grown until it denies the right of property in slaves, and refuses protection to that right on the high seas, in the Territories, and wherever the government of the United States had jurisdiction. It refuses the admission of new slave States into the Union, and seeks to extinguish it by confining it within its present limits,

denying the power of expansion. It has nullified the Fugitive Slave Law in almost every free State in the Union, and has utterly broken the compact which our fathers pledged their faith to maintain.”

New-York Tribune:

I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored the nearer the Union will be "the Union as it was." If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save Slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy Slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or destroy Slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about Slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save this Union, and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors; and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views. I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty, and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men, everywhere, could be free. Yours,

A. LINCOLN.

- Describe other political movements in the United States of America which changed our country. Which issues divide us as a nation today? Explain conflicting sides of these issues.

Sources

Roy P. Basler, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*

Rebecca Hinson, *Independence*

Abraham Lincoln, First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1861

Ordinance of Secession, Mississippi Legislature, January 1861

Nellie Norton, *Southern Slavery and the Bible*

<http://www.civilwar.org/education/history/emancipation-150/i-would-save-the-union.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/>

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