

America, The Last Best Hope

Volume One

Bennett Summer Assignment Study Questions: Chapters 3, 9, & 10

Chapter 3: The Greatest Revolution

1. What is the relationship between Parliament and the Colonial legislatures?
2. What was it about the Stamp Act that makes it so objectionable to the Colonial legislatures? What are some of the key points made by the resolutions of Patrick Henry?
3. What was the Quartering Act of 1766 and what was it about the location of many redcoats that gave many colonists great concern?
4. What were the "Intolerable Acts" in response to, and how specifically did the Acts seek to punish the colonists?
5. What was the significance of Lexington and Concord in April 1775?
6. The Battle of Saratoga was critical in helping win the support of the French for the Americans. How so?
7. Briefly summarize the events leading up to and including the Battle of Yorktown, the battle that effectively ended the war.
8. Was George Washington a great general? What does Bennett say? What did he do that historically was very rare among powerful military leaders

Chapter Nine: Freedom's Fiery Trial

1. Why did some Southern "fire-eaters" welcome Lincoln's election? What were some of the reasons they gave for secession?
2. What happens that makes Fort Sumter a crucial moment in the lead-up to war? What is ironic about the military commanders opposing each other in the conflict? What is Robert Toombs' striking prediction?
3. What action does Lincoln take in Maryland that raised constitutional questions, and what is Bennett's opinion about the rightness of such actions?
4. What were the challenges for Lincoln in dealing with the border states where slavery was legal? How did General Fremont complicate the situation?

5. What was the *Trent* affair and how did it jeopardize prospects for Union victory?
6. What are some of the key factors that cause friction between Lincoln and his new commander, George McClellan?
7. What is the dispute between Lincoln and Frederick Douglass? How does Lincoln's reply to Horace Greeley's editorial illustrate tensions among Northerners about the motives for fighting the war?
8. What are some of the factors that make Antietam one of the most significant battles of the war?
9. Who did the *Emancipation Proclamation* free and who did it not free? What was its impact on Europe and how did this help the Union cause?

Chapter 10: A New Birth of Freedom

1. What does it mean to call Gettysburg the high water mark of the Confederacy? What did Joshua Chamberlain do to become a hero of the Union? What was Pickett's Charge and how did it turn out?
2. How did Grant win the Battle of Vicksburg and what was the strategic significance of that victory? What does Bennett say was the "secret of Grant's success"?
3. How does the *Gettysburg's Address* reveal Lincoln's sense of what the war was being fought for?
4. How did Grant seem to differ from earlier Union commanders? What were some of his distinctive characteristics? What was he willing to do that previous commanders had refrained from, and what unflattering title did this earn him?
5. What key role did General Sherman play in 1864 that greatly strengthened the Union's strategic position? How did it have a political impact as well?
6. Bennett calls Lincoln's second inaugural address the greatest ever delivered. Summarize and paraphrase the gist of the two passages quoted on p.385.
7. How does Grant's treatment of Lee at Appomattox embody the spirit of Lincoln's sentiments in the second inaugural address?