

The Gettysburg Address

Background:

In November 1863, President Abraham Lincoln was invited to deliver remarks, which later became known as the Gettysburg Address, at the official dedication ceremony for the National Cemetery of Gettysburg in Pennsylvania, on the site of one of the bloodiest and most decisive battles of the Civil War. Though he was not the featured orator that day, Lincoln's 273-word address would be remembered as one of the most important speeches in American history. In it, he invoked the principles of human equality contained in the Declaration of Independence and connected the sacrifices of the Civil War with the desire for "a new birth of freedom," as well as the all-important preservation of the Union created in 1776 and its ideal of self-government.

Historical context: The American Civil War

The Civil War is the central event in America's historical consciousness. While the Revolution of 1776-1783 created the United States, the Civil War of 1861-1865 determined what kind of nation it would be. The war resolved two fundamental questions left unresolved by the revolution: whether the United States was to be a dissolvable confederation of sovereign states or an indivisible nation with a sovereign national government; and whether this nation, born of a declaration that all men were created with an equal right to liberty, would continue to exist as the largest slaveholding country in the world.

<p>The Gettysburg Address was giving during the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ American War of Independence○ The American Civil War○ The American-Mexican war <p>This great war was a conflict between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The North / South○ The West / East○ The Democrats / Republican <p>The main issue of the conflict is often said to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The issue of voting rights○ The issue of taxation○ The issue of slavery○ The issue of immigrants	<p>The Civil War killed more Americans than all other American wars combined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ True○ False <p>Abraham Lincoln gave the Address because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ In order to attract voters in the upcoming presidential election○ In order to honor dead soldiers○ In order to dedicate a cemetery <p>Today, The Gettysburg Address is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Widely forgotten○ Regarded a one of the most important speeches in US history○ Regarded as an old man's babbling that severely outdated
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Abraham Lincoln: The Gettysburg Address

Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, November 19, 1863

*Spot the **differences** between the two versions of the Gettysburg Address*

- *What has been **changed**? **Why** do you think? And what is the **new effect**, rhetorically?*

First Draft:

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that "all men are created equal."

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle field of that war. We come to dedicate a portion of it, as a final resting place for those who died here, that the nation might live. This we may, in all propriety do.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate – we can not consecrate – we can not hallow, this ground – The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have hallowed it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here; while it can never forget what they did here.

It is rather for us, the living, we here be dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that, from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here, gave the last full measure of devotion – that we here highly resolve these dead shall not have died in vain; that the nation, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Final version:

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.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate 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.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate -- we can not consecrate -- we can not hallow -- this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.

It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us -- that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion -- that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain -- that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom -- and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

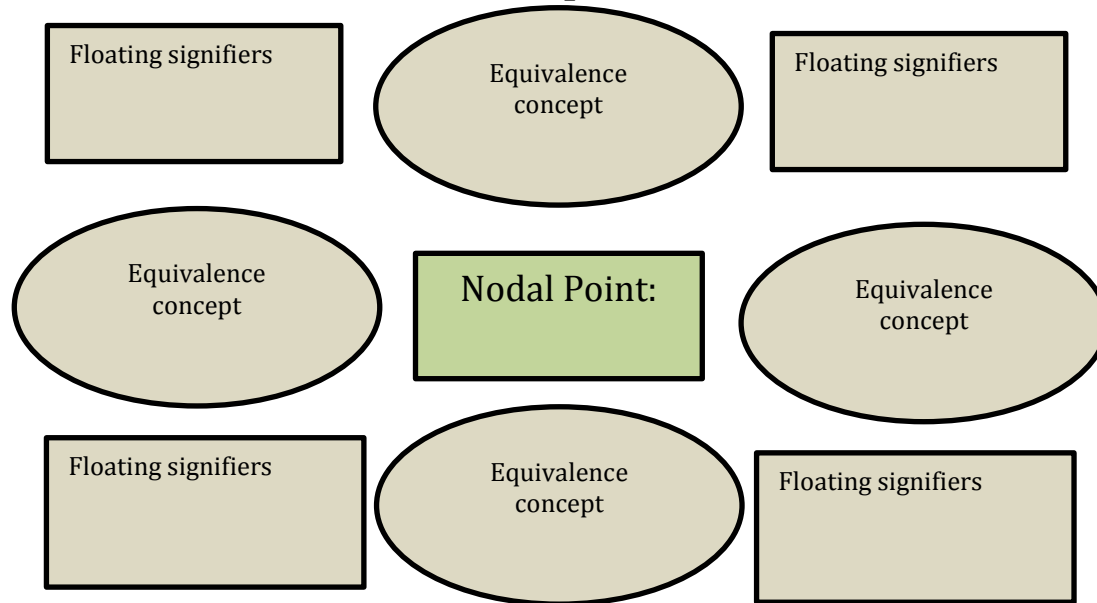
Independent Discourse Analysis

Fill out the boxes – add or reduce if needed.

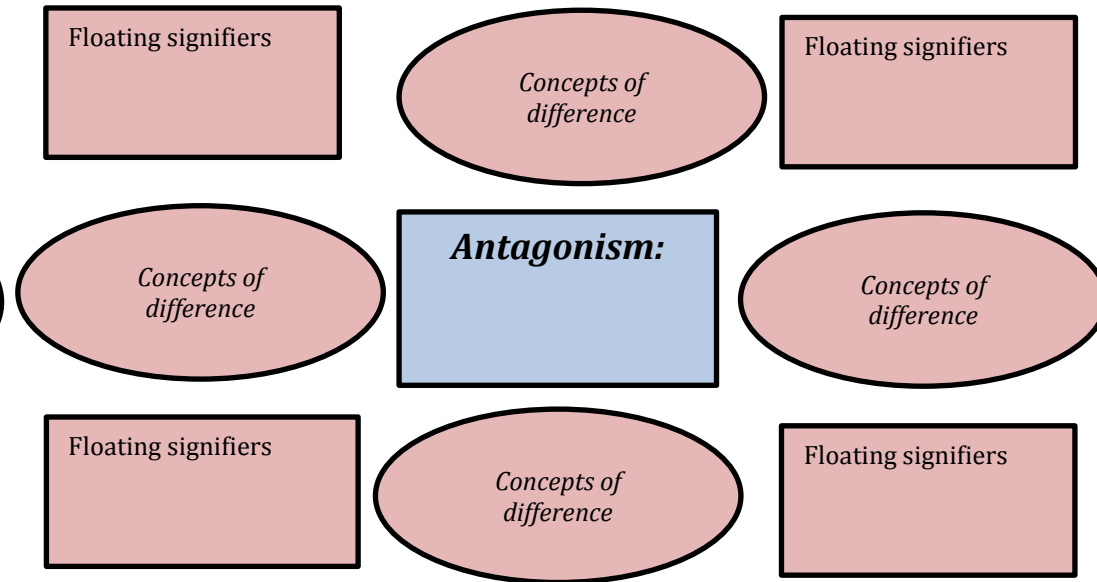
Main purpose is to analyze; **what discourse is being articulated**

Is the discourse an example of the dominant hegemonic discourse – or those it fight it – a counter discourse.

Chain of equivalence



Chain of difference



In order to complete the analysis you need to think about:

- What is the context of the text? (what is the situation of the communication)
- Who are the agents of the situation and what structures do they act in?
 - What is the function of the antagonisms in the text?
 - What is the function of the floating signifiers in the text?
- Discourse is really about the power in language – how do we see that here?
- Is the discourse part of the hegemonic discourse or the counter discourse?
- What is the purpose of the way is articulates / communicates the alleged “reality”?
 - Can you find a passage/quotation that sums up you overall argument?

Writer:

Who is the writer? Background? Views / pov?
How does the author establish ethos?

Topic:

What type of text? What is it about?

Intention:

Why has the writer written this text? To persuade/convince/explain/inform/describe/provoke/manipulate?

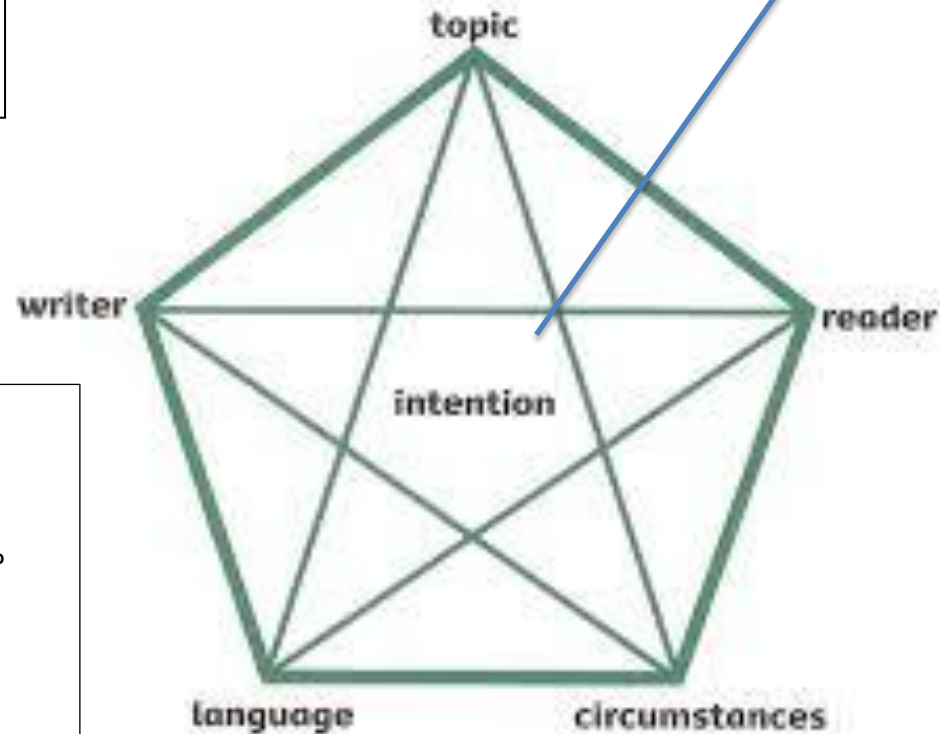
Does the text succeed in fulfilling the intention? How and why?

Language:

Tone/style? Appeal forms? Structure?
Simple/complex? Choice of words?
Connotations/Discourse? Reference? Arguments?

Reader/audience:

Intended/explicit reader?
Implicit audience?



Circumstance: What has inspired the author to write the text?