

Assessing with Primary Sources

Grade Level: High School (Grades 11-12)

Standards or Objectives: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.6
Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

Library of Congress Resources:

**SPEECH
OF
Mr. EMERSON ETHERIDGE,
AT PHILADELPHIA.**

Fellow-citizens, indulge me as best you can with your silence. I am a stranger to you, unknown to distinction and unheralded by fame. I come to-night to mingle in your rejoicing upon this sacred soil; to join with you in ratifying those nominations upon which depends the preservation of the holy Constitution of these United States. [Applause.] If the spirits of good men from earliest history who years ago, on this spot, proclaimed to the world the Constitution which has been the only bond of union among a free and glorious people—could they once more revisit earth they would be here in their glorious presence to look approvingly upon you, their children, who meet this night to ratify again that noble Constitution, upon the preservation of which de-

**“SPEECH OF Mr. EMERSON ETHERIDGE, AT PHILADELPHIA”
Democrat and Sentinel. (Ebensburg, Pa.), September 28, 1864, Page 1**

<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86071378/1864-09-28/ed-1/seq-1/>

Topic Background:

Henry Emerson Etheridge served one term in the Tennessee House of Representatives and three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. When the Civil War began, Etheridge remained loyal to the Union. As his third term was ending in March 1861, he was elected clerk of the House of Representatives, where he served until December 1863. Although he staunchly supported the war to preserve the Union, Etheridge broke with President Abraham Lincoln over the issue of emancipation. His position placed him among the Conservative Unionists of Tennessee. The presidential race of 1864 was between Republican candidate, incumbent President Abraham Lincoln, and the Democratic candidate, George B. McClellan, Lincoln's former commander of the Army of the Potomac.

Excerpted from: <http://tennesseencyclopedia.net/entry.php?rec=441>

Source(s) Used:

The source used for this assessment is a newspaper article from the *Democrat and Sentinel* newspaper in Edensburg, Pennsylvania, dated September 28, 1864. The article appears on the front page and gives a complete account of a speech given by Mr. Etheridge. At the time of the speech, he was no longer a Representative nor the clerk of the House of Representatives. The Civil War was happening and in six weeks, the presidential election of 1864 would occur.

Multiple Choice Answer Key:

Question 1 – A

Question 2 – B

Democrat and Sentinel

September 28, 1864

Vol. 11 - No. 39

SPEECH OF Mr. EMERSON ETHERIDGE, AT PHILADELPHIA

Fellow-citizens indulge me as best you can with your silence. I am a stranger to you, unknown to distinction and unheralded by fame. I come tonight to mingle in your rejoicing upon this sacred soil; to join with you in ratifying those nominations upon which depends the preservation of the holy Constitution of these United States. [Applause.] ...

You have heard tonight a distinguished statesman of New York, who has told you that Abraham Lincoln is a conditional Union candidate. That is the only expression he uttered to which I shall make any dissent. Abraham Lincoln is not even that, he is a usurper and a despot. [Applause and Laughter.] There was no Union of States except the union which was the child of the Federal Constitution alone, and you have heard so many eloquent discourses from these loyal leaguers in regard to loyalty, [you] should remember that there is not a supporter of Abraham Lincoln today who is not in degree if not in kind, a traitor equally with Jefferson Davis. [Great applause.] No intelligent man can be an honest man and a supporter of Abraham Lincoln. [Renewed applause.] No man can be influenced by the unholy pretences of these men and no man understands the theory of this Government, its early history and the principles upon which it was founded, can support Abraham Lincoln and be loyal to the Constitution of the United States [Cries of "good! good!" and cheers.] ...

There is a world of loyalty in the Republican party. [Laughter.] But it is loyalty to a cringing slave, to a mean and imbecile master. [Applause.] It is not loyalty to law. Ask these men who preach loyalty, these loyal leaguers, [laughter,] as they call themselves, or as we call them out West, Lincoln Liars, [great laughter] ask these men what loyalty is, and they are as dumb as an oyster. [More laughter.] ...

You may suppose that if these October elections go against George B. McClellan and George H. Pendleton, this Government may be preserved. But I tell you sincerely and honestly, that if Abraham Lincoln be forced upon the country, if by force or fraud – for by no other means can it be done – if by force or fraud he be declared the President of the United States, then there is no hope of saving the county. [Applause.] ...

... If the banner of George B. McClellan is carried to victory the Union will be restored and every star will be restored to its former brightness. [Cheers.]

Questions:

1. According to this source, a person who would vote for the re-election of Lincoln can be described as: (CCSS.ELA.RI.9-10.6)
 - a. Not placing a strong value on the U.S. Constitution.
 - b. Very intelligent and informed; seeking out the truth.
 - c. Believing that the "founding fathers" could agree with Lincoln's principles.
 - d. Not understanding that Lincoln is responsible for the war.
2. This article appeared on the front page of this newspaper. Which of the following statements best summarizes the editor's purpose for deciding to put Mr. Etheridge's speech on the front page? (CCSS.ELA.RI.9-10.6)
 - a. The editor wants the readers to be well informed on what each candidate stands for.
 - b. The editor wants the readers to conclude that a Democrat would be the best choice.
 - c. The editor wants to call the readers' attention to the candidates' stand on slavery.
 - d. The editor wants to call the readers' attention to the vast knowledge of Mr. Etheridge.