

Dear Students, Teachers, & Parents,

We are thrilled to announce a student Gettysburg speech contest as part of the annual summer 'HISTORY COMES ALIVE' program in Springfield, Illinois. The Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau will select the top ten student submissions who will then present Abraham Lincoln's iconic speech on the steps of the historic Old State Capitol. This is a unique chance for you to honor the legacy of President Lincoln and his timeless words, as well as demonstrate your talent and passion for history.

The Gettysburg Address is one of the most famous and influential speeches in American history. It was delivered by President Lincoln in 1863 at the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery after the Battle of Gettysburg in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. While just 272 words, the revered speech eloquently expresses the ideals of democracy, freedom, and equality that define the American nation.

This contest is open to all students in grades 3-8 (public, private, parochial, and home school). Winners will be chosen based off of accuracy, clarity, expression, and overall impression. Extra consideration will be extended to those who memorize the speech. Each of the 10 best submissions will travel to Springfield on a designated weekend of the summer program (between May 31st & August 3rd) for a complimentary overnight hotel stay courtesy of the Illinois Educators Credit Union. Each student and their family will enjoy a behind the scenes visit at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum, the Lincoln Home Historic Site, as well as a personal meet & greet with Springfield's very own Abraham Lincoln Portraitist. Students will present the speech Saturday morning on the steps of the Old State Capitol.

To enter the contest:

Submit a simple video performing the speech. All entries must be uploaded to YouTube and the link then emailed to darrin.thurman@springfield.il.us by **May 1, 2024**. Attached to your email each student must submit a one to two paragraph response on a word document answering the question, "What does the Gettysburg Address mean to you?" Winners will be notified via email on May 8, 2024. In your email please include your student's name, parent/guardians name, email and phone number, and acknowledgement of responsibility for travel and any meal expenses if selected as one of the 10 winners.

Help us spread the word by sharing with a student in grades 3-8. Best of luck and we hope to meet you in Springfield this summer!