

# Common Myths about the Gettysburg Address



254 Lincoln's Address at Gettysburg, Nov. 19, 1863, from a painting by A. I. Keller in *Harper's Weekly*, Feb. 10, 1900

**Myth:** President Lincoln wrote the speech on the back of an envelope.

**Myth:** President Lincoln wrote the speech on the train from D.C. to Gettysburg.

**Myth:** The cemetery was complete when the dedication took place.

**Myth:** President Lincoln thought his speech was a failure.

**Myth:** The audience at Gettysburg was disappointed by the short speech.

## Group Assignment

1. Explain the myth that your group has been assigned, answering these three questions:
  - What is a truth in this myth?
  - What are other truths behind this myth that might contradict it?
  - What does the myth reveal about those who believe it?
2. As a group, you may use any of the materials available to help you understand and explain the myth.
3. Prepare a five-minute presentation to the class that explains your understanding of the myth, using creative drama, visual aids such as posters, music, illustrations, or an oral presentation.