

Unit 5 Reading

Democracy: From Athens to America

<Speech>

As your student body president, it is my pleasure to address you during this celebration of the anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. Lincoln spoke with **unfeigned** love for democracy when he delivered his magnificent speech. Today, we not only honor that momentous event, but also acknowledge the history behind it that reaches back over 3,000 years.

Lincoln's United States was a fledgling democracy—an experiment, really, or perhaps a stage in a long, **plodding** journey—that our forebears had boldly **embarked** upon. But in 1863, the country was divided by the Civil War. So when Lincoln stated that ours was a “government by the people, for the people,” he expressed his **indomitable** belief in democracy.

What is democracy? It is a form of government in which political authority rests with the people and is conducted by and with their **assent**, or agreement. In a democracy, all citizens are entitled to equal opportunity and equality before the law. Furthermore, democracies are committed to the idea of majority rule. Although in practice democracy is not **infallible**, it is the most natural form of government we know. For as the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle asserted, man is by nature a political animal.

The roots of our democracy go back to ancient Greek city-states. These entities were small, fortified, independent communities made up of a city and the surrounding countryside. Athens was the most populous—and the one where democracy first took hold. It was ruled by its citizens rather than by monarchs or aristocrats. But at a time when **diffident** and obedient populations ruled by tyrants or kings were the norm, democratic ideas did not take hold overnight; rather, they emerged over time to the point we are at today in this country.

But democratic ideas did take hold eventually—after their early start some 2,600 years ago, when the aristocrat Draco gave Athens a written code of laws. These laws were harsh but clear, and though they favored the nobility, they became a foundation. Democratic ideas built on these laws a generation later, thanks to the **altruistic** and generous reformer Solon. He repealed

many of Draco's harsh laws and replaced them with ones allowing for **clemency**. He also gave citizens a greater voice by establishing a lawmaking assembly.

But it was under the leadership of Pericles that ancient democracy peaked and Athens entered its Golden Age. Pericles believed in citizen participation in government, and he had the **temerity** to give all citizens the right to criticize their leaders and generals. At a time when there was a **dearth** of individual rights, the forerunner of the modern democratic state had arrived. And with it came the first politicians, for Athenians prized the skills of oratory and persuasion.

While we must praise the Athenians for introducing democratic ideals to the world, we would be **remiss** not to recognize the **discrepancies** between their form of democracy and ours. Ours is a representative government, while theirs was a limited, direct form in which only Athenian men participated. Indeed, only men who owned land were entitled to citizenship then. And only they could get an education or participate in cultural festivities. Women shared none of those rights. Neither did slaves, though they made up one-fourth of the population. That said, I believe it would be **facile** and insincere of me to condemn outright the shortcomings of the world's first democracy. Out of it developed the country that Abraham Lincoln was trying to unite and preserve on the day he dedicated a cemetery for the **repose** of the Civil War soldiers at Gettysburg. The gifts handed down to this country from ancient Greece and defended by our citizens and our leaders through the ages are something we should all cherish.

Unit 5 Examples

1. Most people support **altruistic** programs to help the less fortunate of this world.
2. Workers hope that the threat of a long strike will force management to **assent** to their demands.
3. Romeo and Juliet knew they would never gain their feuding families' **assent** to marry.
4. Without the help of many **benefactors**, most charities would be unable to carry out their work.
5. In today's busy world, where people are often heedless of others, a **chivalrous** act is admired by all.
6. Many judges are willing to show **clemency** to first offenders who express regret for their wrongdoing.
7. An employer may complain of a **dearth** of qualified applicants for available jobs.
8. Many a **diffident** suitor has lost his beloved to a bold rival.
9. **Discrepancies** in the testimony of witnesses to a crime can have a decisive impact on the outcome of a trial.
10. Columbus spent years raising money before he was able to **embark** on his perilous ocean voyage in search of a passage to the Far East.
11. Writing is a **facile** process for some authors but a laborious task for others.
12. All who hear of the remarkable deeds of Harriet Tubman admire her **indomitable** courage in the face of grave danger.
13. Some critics seem convinced that their expert knowledge makes them **infallible** judges of the quality of an artist's work.
14. After the blizzard, we had to **plod** through deep snowdrifts to reach the nearest stores.
15. The kitchen of the French restaurant was filled with the **pungent** aroma of onion soup.
16. When I am **remiss** in doing daily chores, I have to spend a big part of the weekend cleaning up.
17. The mortal remains of thousands who fell in America's wars **repose** in Arlington National Cemetery.
18. After spending all day with others, you may wish for a period of **repose** before dinner.

19. Few of his subordinates had the **temerity** to answer the general back.
20. People with **truculent** dispositions can make life miserable for those who have to work with them.
21. The novelist won high praise for her ability to portray the **unfeigned** emotions of children.
22. The First Amendment protects the right of free speech for everyone, even those with **virulent** views that are repugnant to most people.

Unit 5 Choosing the Right Word

1. By 1781, George Washington's green recruits of a few years earlier had been forged into an **indomitable** army.
2. How do you account for the **dearth** of doctors who are general practitioners rather than specialists?
3. She is a popular young woman because people realize that her interest in them is sympathetic and **unfeigned**.
4. After boasting to me of your family's great wealth, how could you have the **temerity** to ask me for a loan?
5. After the hurricane destroyed the city, the people of New Orleans showed their **indomitable** spirit by rebuilding.
6. The recipe for my great-grandfather's spaghetti sauce, **pungent** with bay leaves and other herbs, has been passed down for several generations.
7. I had no inkling of your deep-seated aversion to pop music until I overheard your **virulent** comments about it.
8. Caring nothing about negative repercussions, Katy had the **temerity** to ask not only for a raise but also for a more flexible schedule.
9. You will surely win more support for your view by quiet discussion than by **truculent** attacks on your opponents.
10. Planet Earth is a sort of spaceship on which billions of human beings have **embarked** on a lifelong voyage.
11. With all the deductions for taxes, there is a substantial **discrepancy** between my official salary and my weekly paycheck.
12. The critic's **pungent** comments during the TV panel show were not only amusing but also very much to the point.
13. I admired the speaker's **facile** flow of words, but they failed to convince me that she had practical ideas to help solve our problems.
14. We breathed a sigh of relief when we saw the supposedly missing set of keys **reposing** in the desk drawer.

15. We soon learned that behind his retiring and **diffident** manner, there is a keen mind and a strong will.
16. In the violent world of today's pro football, good sportsmanship and **chivalrous** behavior still have a place.
17. Given the glaring **discrepancies** between the applicant's résumé and his actual experience, he did not receive the job.
18. American Presidents often point to one of their schoolteachers as the **benefactor** who helped shape their character and ideas.
19. He is not too well informed on most matters; but when it comes to big-league baseball, he is all but **infallible**.
20. As a state legislator, you should not give your **assent** to any measure unless you truly believe in it.
21. Great political leaders know how to appeal to people not only through self-interest but also through their sense of **altruism**.
22. The lawyer **plodded** through hundreds of pages of the trial record, hoping to find some basis for an appeal.
23. In a grim old joke, a man found guilty of murdering his parents appeals for **clemency** because he is an orphan.
24. It would be **remiss** of me, as editor-in-chief of the school newspaper, not to express appreciation for the help of our faculty advisor.
25. I enjoy reading stories about King Arthur and his **chivalrous** knights.

Unit 5 Synonyms

1. **Gallant** actions are not a thing of the past: **chivalrous**
2. **Start** on a new endeavor of his life: **embark**
3. Generous **sponsors** of the foundation: **benefactors**
4. Found **serenity** in the shade of a tree: **repose**
5. Refused to **accede** to the will of the majority: **assent**
6. **Humanitarian** dedication to finding a cure: **altruistic**
7. A **caustic** response to a hostile question: **pungent**
8. A **brutal** band of hardened criminals: **truculent**
9. Made allowances for the **audacity** of youth: **temerity**
10. The spreading of **venomous** rumors: **virulent**

Unit 5 Antonyms

1. Made a **crude** apology for his behavior: **chivalrous**
2. An extremely **bland** spice: **pungent**
3. Making a **meek** observation about taxes: **truculent**
4. Wrote an **innocuous** letter to the person in charge: **virulent**
5. Discovered the identity of the **detractor**: **benefactor**

Unit 5 Completing the Sentence

1. We were all impressed by your **facile** use of unusual words and expressions that you had learned only a few hours before.
2. It was quite **chivalrous** of you to give up your seat so that the man with the cane did not have to stand during the bus trip.
3. Your **unfeigned** joy when it was announced that I had won the scholarship meant more to me than all the polite congratulations I received.
4. Doctors attributed the epidemic to the rampant spread of a particularly **virulent** strain of influenza virus.
5. I rarely join in the discussions because I am **diffident**.
6. History tells us that many men and women regarded as failures in their own lifetimes were actually major **benefactors** of humanity.
7. Humor should be clever and amusing but never so **pungent** that it hurts the feelings of other people.
8. The exhausted refugees **plodded** along the dusty road, hoping to reach the Red Cross camp before nightfall.
9. As soon as the last passenger had **embarked**, the captain ordered the ship to get under way.
10. The rash young lieutenant had the **temerity** to disregard the express orders of the commanding officer.
11. The custom of putting erasers on pencils is one way of recognizing the fact that no one is **infallible**.
12. My parents will not **assent** to my going to the dance unless I promise faithfully to be home no later than 1:00 A.M.
13. Refusing to admit defeat even when things looked completely hopeless, our **indomitable** football team drove eighty-five yards in the last few minutes to score the winning touchdown.
14. In view of the many able people in public life today, I do not agree that we are suffering from a(n) **dearth** of capable leaders.

15. Emphasizing the youth of the convicted man, the defense attorney pleaded for **clemency**.
16. The principal claimed that there were major **discrepancies** between what actually happened in the school and the way the incident was reported on TV.
17. He is not merely unpleasant but actually dangerous whenever he gets into one of his **truculent** moods.
18. As a school cafeteria guard, I would be **remiss** in my duties if I failed to report a serious disturbance.
19. What good are **altruistic** principles if no real attempt is made to help people by putting those principles into practice?
20. I did not realize how beautiful the twins were until they fell asleep and I saw their faces in complete **repose**.

Unit 5 Vocabulary in Context (Literary Text)

1. Grandmother looked anxiously at grandfather. He took off his hat, and the other men did likewise. I thought his prayer remarkable. I still remember it.... He prayed that if any man there had been remiss toward the stranger come to a far country, God would forgive him and soften his heart.

To be **remiss** is to be

- ① ambitious ② courteous ③ inoffensive ④ **thoughtless**

2. I loved the dim superstition, the propitiatory intent, that had put the grave there; and still more I loved the spirit that could not carry out the sentence—the error from the surveyed lines, the clemency of the soft earth roads along which the home-coming wagons rattled after sunset.

If a road seems to have **clemency**, it is

- ① paved ② winding ③ **smooth** ④ bumpy

3. Julia was in the hammock—she was fond of repose—and Frances was at the piano, playing without a light and talking to her mother through the open window.

A person who enjoys **repose** likes to

- ① **relax** ② gossip ③ sway ④ sing

4. Why had Coronado never gone back to Spain, to his riches and his castles and his king? I couldn't tell them. I only knew the schoolbooks said he "died in the wilderness, of a broken heart."

"More than him has done that," said Antonia sadly, and the girls murmured **assent**.

To show **assent** is to show

- ① humility ② confusion ③ opposition ④ **accord**

5. When Mrs. Shimerda opened the bag and stirred the contents with her hand, it gave out a salty, earthy smell, very **pungent**, even among the other odors of that cave.

A **pungent** odor is NOT

- ① musky ② **mild** ③ rich ④ strong

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Unit 5 Synonyms

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5. Discovered the identity of the **detractor**: _____

Unit 5 Completing the Sentence

1. We were all impressed by your _____ use of unusual words and expressions that you had learned only a few hours before.
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18. As a school cafeteria guard, I would be _____ in my duties if I failed to report a serious disturbance.
19. What good are _____ principles if no real attempt is made to help people by putting those principles into practice?
20. I did not realize how beautiful the twins were until they fell asleep and I saw their faces in complete _____.

Unit 5 Vocabulary in Context (Literary Text)

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To be **remiss** is to be

- ① ambitious ② courteous ③ inoffensive ④ thoughtless

2. I loved the dim superstition, the propitiatory intent, that had put the grave there; and still more I loved the spirit that could not carry out the sentence—the error from the surveyed lines, the clemency of the soft earth roads along which the home-coming wagons rattled after sunset.

If a road seems to have **clemency**, it is

- ① paved ② winding ③ smooth ④ bumpy

3. Julia was in the hammock—she was fond of repose—and Frances was at the piano, playing without a light and talking to her mother through the open window.

A person who enjoys **repose** likes to

- ① relax ② gossip ③ sway ④ sing

4. Why had Coronado never gone back to Spain, to his riches and his castles and his king? I couldn't tell them. I only knew the schoolbooks said he "died in the wilderness, of a broken heart."

"More than him has done that," said Antonia sadly, and the girls murmured **assent**.

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5. When Mrs. Shimerda opened the bag and stirred the contents with her hand, it gave out a salty, earthy smell, very **pungent**, even among the other odors of that cave.

A **pungent** odor is NOT

- ① musky ② mild ③ rich ④ strong