

Name _____ **Abraham Lincoln**

The Surrender of Robert E. Lee

Abraham Lincoln was president of the United States during the Civil War. There were a number of factors leading up to this greatest conflict in American history, but the last straw was the election of Abraham Lincoln. The southern states did not like Lincoln, who was known for being against slavery. Before Lincoln was sworn in, seven states declared their independence from the U.S. and formed a new country they called the Confederacy.

Lincoln saw it as his responsibility to keep the country together. So he formed an army in the northern states and went to war with the newly formed southern army. The war lasted four years and killed 600,000 Americans. It ended when the southern general, Robert E. Lee surrendered to the Union general Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox, Virginia on April 9th, 1865.



At the time of the surrender, the Union Army had the Confederate soldiers surrounded at Appomattox. The Confederate Army was falling apart as they ran low on supplies and soldiers began deserting. General Grant discussed the situation with President Lincoln. Lincoln wanted peace for the Union. He did not want to punish and alienate those who had fought for the south, because he did not want them to rebel again. Lincoln wanted the Confederate soldiers to turn in their rifles, but otherwise, he told Grant to let Lee know that upon the South's surrender, the Confederate soldiers would be able to keep their horses and mules and return to their homes. General Grant genuinely respected General Lee, and the meeting between the two men was civil. Though Lee regretted having to surrender, he accepted what he considered to be the very fair terms offered by Lincoln.