Questions for the article, “Will the Real Abe Lincoln Stand Up?

As you read the article, answer the following questions on your own sheet of paper.
1. Early in the article, there is a discussion about how we should judge Lincoln. In your opinion, is it “fair” to judge historical figures based on today’s standards/values? Why or why not?
2. What is meant by the phrase “Second American Revolution”?
3. What does historian John Hope Franklin conclude about Lincoln? Why do you think he draws this conclusion?
4. Russell Freeman (the author of the article) praises Lincoln’s “capacity for growth and change.” What do you think he means by this? Give two examples from the article that illustrates this.
5. According to the article, what was Lincoln’s first priority in the Civil War?
6. Early in his career, why did Lincoln support the idea of colonization—giving slaves their own homeland in Central America?
7. How did William Lloyd Garrison’s opinion on Lincoln change throughout his life?
8. How did Frederick Douglass’s opinion on Lincoln change over time?
9. Why do you think Lincoln has come to represent the values of “freedom” and “self-governance”?
10. What did Freedman find in China that supports the claim that Lincoln has come to represent freedom and democracy in the world?

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