

THE PERIODIC TABLE OF THE PRESIDENTS™

The Thirteenth Amendment

Introduction:

The Thirteenth Amendment ended slavery in the United States. The Constitution doesn't use the word "slavery;" opting instead for phrases like, "all other persons." Nonetheless, slavery existed in these lands beginning with the first permanent colony. After over 200 years of debate and compromise, the slavery issue boiled over into a Civil War. Abraham Lincoln abolished slavery in the south with the Emancipation Proclamation, but knew a only a Constitutional amendment would legally end slavery.

The text of this amendment reads, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

Questions:

1. What did the Thirteenth Amendment abolish?
2. What year was the Thirteenth Amendment ratified?
3. When were the first enslaved Africans brought to the colonies?
4. When did the Ohio River become the natural dividing line between a free north and enslaved south?
5. How did the Missouri Compromise maintain a balance of power between the North and South?
6. What do you think is meant by "fugitive slaves"?
7. What was the Supreme Court's ruling in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857)?
8. According to his quote during the Lincoln-Douglas debates, what was Lincoln's opinion of slavery?
9. Why do you think the southern states seceded when President Lincoln was elected?
10. Why would President Lincoln insist that an amendment was needed to legally end slavery?