

Letter of Leadership Answer Key

1. **Paramount object:** Lincoln's highest goal was to preserve the Union, above all else.
2. **Approach to slavery:** He was flexible: willing to free all, some, or none of the enslaved people depending on what best served the Union's survival.
3. **Leadership style:** Practical, strategic, and focused on the larger goal rather than ideology; he emphasized results over rigid positions.
4. **Reason for addressing Greeley:** Greeley was a prominent voice with strong antislavery opinions, and Lincoln wanted to clarify his stance to both Greeley and the broader public.
5. **Influence on public opinion:** It showed Lincoln as a leader committed to national unity, possibly reassuring moderates while frustrating abolitionists who wanted immediate emancipation.

Teacher Note:

This primary source demonstrates how leaders balance ideals with political realities. Students should recognize that Lincoln's words reveal both the central tension of the Civil War and the careful way he justified his decisions to the public. Encourage students to consider how tone and audience shape the message of a historical document.