

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# *His Soul Goes Marching On*

## The Life and Legacy of *John Brown*

A lesson from West Virginia Archives and History [www.wvculture.org/history](http://www.wvculture.org/history)

Subject	Date	Period(s)
<i>The Debate John Brown: Martyr or Madman?</i>		
<b>Materials Needed</b>		
1. John Brown worksheets entitled, “The Raid on the U. S. Armory at Harpers Ferry,” and “The Raid to End Slavery.” 2. Discussion questions following the exercise. 3. For additional information visit <i>His Soul Goes Marching On: The Life and Legacy of John Brown</i> at <a href="http://www.wvculture.org/history/jbexhibit/jbtoc.html">http://www.wvculture.org/history/jbexhibit/jbtoc.html</a> .		
<b>Content Standards</b>		
<u>West Virginia Studies</u> <u>SS.O.8.05.07</u> research and construct the sequence of events and cite reasons for and resulting consequences of conflicts and wars that led to the formation of West Virginia as a state. <u>SS.O.8.05.08</u> interpret facts about West Virginia and other areas from various types of charts, graphs, pictures, models, timelines and primary sources and summarize what you have learned. <u>SS.O.8.05.13</u> access the moral, ethical, legal tensions that led to the creation of the new state of West Virginia and how those tensions were resolved. <u>SS.O.8.05.15</u> point out and locate places of historical importance in West Virginia that can be visited by tourists.		
<u>United States Studies to 1900</u> <u>SS.O.10.05.15</u> research the institution of slavery and its effects on the political, economic and social development of the United States and summarize their findings. <u>SS.O.10.05.16</u> compare and contrast the political, economic and social conditions in the United States before the Civil War. <u>SS.O.10.05.17</u> analyze and sequence the causes and effects of the major events of the Civil War and Reconstruction <u>SS.O.10.05.22</u> research, analyze and interpret primary sources and compare contemporary media to better understand events and life in the United States to 1900.		
<u>21C.S.9-12.1</u> The student will access, analyze, manage, integrate, evaluate, and create information in a variety of formats using appropriate technology skills and communicate that information in an appropriate oral, written, or multimedia format.		
<u>21C.S.9-12.2</u> The student will demonstrate the ability to explore and develop new ideas, to intentionally apply sound reasoning processes and to frame, analyze and solve complex problems using appropriate technology tools.		
<u>21C.S.9-12.3</u> The student will exhibit leadership, ethical behavior, respect for others; accept		

responsibility for personal actions considering the impact on others; take the initiative to plan and execute tasks; and interact productively as a member of a group.

#### Objectives

Students will interpret primary source documents.

Students will explain the two views that developed because of John Brown's Raid.

Students will choose and defend a position concerning John Brown and his raid.

Students will identify the long range impact of John Brown's Raid.

#### Time

45 minutes

#### Essential Questions

1. How should history view John Brown?
2. Do the ends justify the means?

#### Procedures

1. Break the students into several groups of at least two people.
2. Give half of the groups the worksheet entitled, "The Raid on the U. S. Armory at Harpers Ferry" and the other half "The Raid to End Slavery."
3. Instruct the students to read the worksheets and underline or highlight any information that they think is important.
4. Have the students answer the questions.
5. During the exercise student group may realize that they have been given two different worksheets. If they do encourage them to continue and answer the questions.
6. When students complete the questions review their answers. The answers to the first questions should quickly spark some debate between the different groups.
7. Use the opportunity to discuss the idea that debate is an important part of our democracy, and that listening to the viewpoints of others is not only good manners, but necessary to have a productive discussion. Explain ground rules that in debate ideas and not people are criticized. Also explain that every idea has worth and any criticism should promote a different idea and not just another criticism.
8. Following the discussion ask students to explain their viewpoints in paragraph form after the debate.

#### Possible discussion questions:

1. Is John Brown a devil or a saint?
2. Should there be a monument at Harpers Ferry and other places that celebrate the efforts of John Brown?
3. Is John Brown a terrorist?
4. If a raid similar to John Brown's happened today, how do you think the government and society as a whole would view him?

#### Assessments

##### **Performance Tasks**

1. Completion of the worksheet.
2. Student participation in the discussion.
3. Essay following the debate.

##### **Final Assessments**

**Bell Ringer**

1. What were the two views that were taken when considering John Brown?
2. Which side did the Northern abolitionists and Southern slave owners generally take concerning John Brown?
3. What impact did the views of John Brown play in the growing crisis between North and South?

**Essay Questions**

1. Explain the impact of John Brown in the increasing sectional crisis prior to the Civil War.
2. Since his involvement in Kansas and his raid at Harpers Ferry John Brown has been viewed as either a martyr or a madman. What role did these conflicting views play in sectional politics prior to the Civil War?



# *His Soul Goes Marching On* The Life and Legacy of *John Brown*

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Read the excerpts below and answer the following questions.

## ***The Raid on the U. S. Armory at Harpers Ferry***

At 8:00 p.m. on October 16, 1859, a ragtag group of 22 men assembled outside of the Kennedy Farm in the Maryland countryside. John Brown, the leader of the band, and a couple of the men in the group had been on a similar mission in Kansas a few years earlier where several people were either hacked to death by a sword or shot. In the years since, Brown had been planning a bolder and even grander attack. On this night the men were making their way to attack the U.S. armory located at Harpers Ferry. The goal was to collect weapons from the armory and to distribute them to people bent on overthrowing the existing power structure. To ensure that the uprising would be widespread and deadly, a large number of pikes, long wooden spears with an iron tip, were manufactured to provide weapons for those who did not have any experience with guns. Following the raid, the group would move to the Allegheny Mountains and await further recruits to complete the violent and bloody revolution. Under the cover of darkness and with only the sound of horse hooves and the wagon rattling and creaking under the weight of John Brown and a load of the deadly pikes, the men made their way to Harpers Ferry.

At 10:30 p.m., the raiders arrived at a covered bridge that crossed the Potomac River from Maryland to Harpers Ferry. Two of the men left the main group and headed to cut the telegraph wires that would be used sound to the alarm. When the word was given two more of the men stormed across the bridge and captured the guard assigned to the bridge. Once the bridge was secured, the raiders rushed in to Harpers Ferry, overpowered the sentry at the gate of the armory and ushered their prisoners in to small building called the engine house because it housed the armory's fire engines. After securing the armory, two detachments of the raiders left the armory yard. The first detachment under the direction of John Brown went to capture the armory's rifle works less than a mile away. The second group set forth to capture prominent men in the area including Colonel Lewis W. Washington, the great-grand nephew of George Washington.

At 1:30 a.m. a Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Express Train to Wheeling was stopped by the railroad's night watchman to warn the engineer that Harpers Ferry was under attack. When the engineer went to investigate, he and another railroad employee were forced to flee the scene when they came under gun fire. When a baggage handler, Heywood Shepherd, went looking for the night watchmen, he too was forced to flee down the tracks, but the raiders shot him as he ran away. The night watchman pulled Shepherd back to the safety of the station, but he later died. Shepherd was the first to die during the raid, but he was not the last.

By daybreak the armory and rifle works had been captured and the second detachment returned with Colonel Washington, a local farmer named John Allstadt and his son, and ten recruits for the revolution. Along with the hostages, the detachment brought back a sword that was allegedly given to George Washington by Frederic the Great of Prussia and two pistols given to Washington by Lafayette.

As workers made their way to start the morning shift at the armory thirty to forty of them were quickly taken captive. At around 7:00 a.m. town resident Thomas Boerly was shot in the street. In the next few hours shouts of "insurrection" brought militia units from the local country side to Harpers Ferry. By noon the Jefferson Guards, a local militia unit from nearby Charlestown arrived and took control of the Potomac River Bridge. In the hours that followed the rifle works was also stormed and retaken from the raiders.

Realizing that all routes to escape were lost and that outside reinforcements were not coming, John Brown sent one of his raiders and a prisoner to negotiate their escape. The proposal was for the raiders to release the prisoners in exchange for their escape. The plan failed miserably when the townspeople captured the raider and took him into custody. In response to the capture, Brown selected eleven of his hostages and with his men barricaded themselves inside the engine house hoping that reinforcements would arrive from the surrounding area.

As night fell, Fontaine Beckman, the mayor of Harpers Ferry, and townsmen George W. Turner, Thomas Boerly and Heywood Sheppard lay dead. During the fierce fighting the raiders had five men killed, three dying and one held prisoner.

At 11:00 p.m. 100 U. S. Marines arrived under the command of Colonel Robert E. Lee and Lieutenant J. E. B. Stuart and took command of the situation. As morning broke around 7:00 a.m., Colonel Lee made contact with the raiders and demanded that they surrender. When they refused a detachment of Marines under Lieutenant Israel Green stormed the engine house and took the raiders in to custody. During the assault Private Luke Quinn was killed along with two of the raiders.

Following the storming of the engine house the raiders including John Brown were placed under arrest. In the month that followed they were put on trial and found guilty of treason and trying to incite a rebellion and murder. They were found guilty and were executed in the following month.

## ***Affidavits of Events in Kansas, 1856***

Mahala Doyle's affidavit

The undersigned, Mahala Doyle, states upon oath: I am the widow of the late James P. Doyle; that we moved into the Territory, that is, my husband, myself, and children moved into the Territory of Kansas some time in November, A. D. 1855, and settled on Mosquito creek, about one mile from its mouth, and where it empties into Pottawatomie creek, in Franklin county; that on Saturday, the 24th day of May, A. D. 1856, about 11 o'clock at night, after we had all retired, my husband, James P. Doyle, myself, and five children, four boys and one girl—the eldest boy is about twenty-two years of age, his name is William; the next was about twenty years of age, his Drury; the next is about sixteen years of age, his name is John; the next is about thirteen years of age, her name is Polly Ann; the next is about ten years of age, his name is James;

the next is about eight years of age, his name is Charles; the next is about five years of age, his name is Henry—we were all in bed, when we heard some persons come into the yard and rap at the door and call for Mr. Doyle, my husband. This was about 11 o'clock on Saturday night of the 24th of May last. My husband got up and went to the door. Those outside inquired for Mr. Wilkson [sic], and where he lived. My husband told them that he would tell them. Mr. Doyle, my husband, opened the door, and several came into the house, and said that they were from the army. My husband was a pro-slavery man. They told my husband that he and the boys must surrender, they were their prisoners. These men were armed with pistols and large knives. They first took my husband out of the house, then they took two of my sons—the two oldest ones, William and Drury—out, and then took my husband and these two boys, William and Drury, away. My son John was spared, because I asked them in tears to spare him. In a short time afterwards I heard the report of pistols. I heard two reports, after which I heard moaning, as if a person was dying; then I heard a wild whoop. They had asked before they went away for our horses. We told them that the horses were out on the prairie. My husband and two boys; my sons, did not come back any more. I went out next morning in search of them, and found my husband and William, my son, lying dead in the road near together, about two hundred yards from the house. My other son I did not see any more until the day he was buried. I was so much overcome that I went to the house. They were buried the next day. On the day of the burying I saw the dead body of Drury. Fear of myself and the remaining children induced me to leave the home where we had been living. We had improved our claim a little. I left all and went to the State of Missouri,

MAHALA DOYLE.  
her mark X

### ***Letter from L. T. Moore to Thomas Hughes***

CITY OF WINCHESTER, STATE OF VIRGINIA,  
United States of America, November 2d, 1880.

To Honorable THOMAS HUGHES, Queen's Counsellor, Author of "Tom Brown's School Days," &c.,  
London, England:

DEAR SIR -

With pleasure I read your work - the "MANLINESS OF CHRIST;" but believe that there can be no doubt that you have been misled as to the character of John Brown. If you had known his character you would never have introduced it to illustrate the superlative character of our Lord and Saviour - Jesus Christ.

You make in your Book a statement of what you believe to be facts, and deduce therefrom that John Brown was a brave manly character.

A man who fled a fugitive from justice in the State of Kansas, and secreted himself in the mountains of Maryland, to be mentioned in comparison with our Lord and Saviour is, in my opinion, monstrous. Never would such comparison have been made, however slight, had the writer of the Manliness of Christ known the true character of John Brown. Your superior talent and acquirements, and your elevated character as a man gives to your words authority, but such talents, acquirements and character would not publish as true

that that is doubtful or uncertain, for the purpose of wronging a large class of people. You are writing a part of the history of the world, and to state what you do not know to be true, is to some extent reprehensible; for well has it been said "where shall falsehood cease if it be allowed to usurp the place of truth among those who carry on the history of the world."

You express delight for the Manliness and Bravery of Brown, but you will find the elements of character necessary to produce a brave man never were possessed by John Brown. To produce a brave and manly character - not only physical, but the largest share of moral courage - must blend with it, which can only manifest itself to the individual from a confident rectitude of motives and action tempered with a love for his species, and a full assurance that he is in the discharge of his duty to God. Let us see whether John Brown had all of these requisites of character in October 1859 at Harper's Ferry. I can best convince you by a statement of facts. It was my duty to be present at the capture of John Brown on the morning of the 17th October, 1859, [the capture of John Brown actually occurred on October 18th]at Harper's Ferry, and witnessed all of that dreadful tragedy. I arrived at Harper's Ferry on Monday night the 16th of October, 1859, in company with troops, and entered the Armory yard after dark. It was the darkest night I ever experienced. After getting into the Armory yard the command found itself within two hundred yards of Brown and his gang of men. Brown and his men then occupied the Engine-House in the yard. From 9 o'clock to about 1 o'clock of the night a picket was advanced to within one hundred yards of Brown. That night about 1 o'clock the pickets were challenged by a body of United States Marines who had just arrived on the ground under command of Col. Lee, of the United States Army, who is since known as the great patriotic chieftain, Gen. R. E. Lee. The position occupied by the troops was yielded to Col. Lee's Marines.

After daylight, the troops with whom I was connected, were assigned a position in rear of the Engine House not distant twenty feet from the building, and I stood within thirty feet of the Engine House door when Gen. Lee ordered a squad of Marines to advance and take position on both sides of the Engine House door. At this moment several shots were fired by Brown and his men but with no effect save a few splinters which struck one of the Marines. Gen. Lee then demanded of Brown a surrender. Brown was willing to surrender but on such terms as Gen. Lee could not accept. Lee informed Brown that his terms could not be accorded, and that the United States required an unconditional surrender, which offer Brown declined; whereupon the Marines were ordered to enter the building. The Marines, dressed in the uniform of the United States, entered the Engine House door, and Brown deliberately fired and killed private Quinn of the Marine corps. This shot, fired by Brown himself, was the only shot fired by either party at the time. As Quinn was borne out of the door the Lieutenant commanding the Marines entered, and having seen Brown shoot Quinn, (as was natural), he struck Brown over the head with his dress sword. Private Quinn was laid at my feet, and also Brown and one of his men named Anderson. Anderson had received a bayonet wound in the abdomen

I held a conversation with Anderson, and while in conversation he died in less than five minutes. I then turned to Brown, who was imitating the contortions and struggles of Anderson while dying. My question to Brown was: "Are you seriously hurt?" He replied "That he was and that he had received a bayonet wound. A physician of distinction and character was standing near, and he was requested to make an examination, and ascertain to what extent Brown was wounded. The Doctor soon made the examination, and replied that he could find no wound except the little scar on his (Brown's) brow caused by the sword of the Lieutenant of Marines. Fin[di]ng that Brown was not hurt, I entered into conversatio[n] with him. In this conversation, I inquired [why] he did not make his escape with all his men on Mond[ay] night? His reply was, that he had not supp[ose]d his capture would cause any detention of himself or his men. I requested him to give his reasons for so believing - reminding him that he was violating the laws of Virginia - that he was further guilty of murder in shooting down Mr. Beckham the railroad agent who had given him no cause of offence; and

that he was also guilty of murder in shooting down the coloured man Haywood Shepard whom he knew to be amiable and inoffensive, and whose only offence to Brown was that Shepard would not join Brown's party. All this I told him should have satisfied him that nothing short of a trial for life could befall him, and this of itself should have been sufficient inducement to make an effort to escape. Brown gave no reply but the senseless one that he did not expect to be detained if captured. The distance from the Engine House to the river is less than fifty yards, and not a soldier or guard on the night of the 16th was posted between the Engine House and the river. Once at the river and the escape was accomplished as very few places in the river at that period of the year contained over two feet of water from the Virginia to the Maryland shore, and when on the Maryland shore he was at the foot of a mountain traversing Maryland and Pennsylvania. The escape could without difficulty have been accomplished. A man of courage or of good sense would have said: "If I remain until morning my capture is a fixed fact, but if I attempt to do my duty to my men by an effort to save them, then I have discharged my duty. If I am captured in my effort to reach the river I will be no worse off in the morning than I will be if I make no effort, but if I reach the river I elude the grasp of 500 soldiers. John Brown did not so reason, but on the contrary, like the frightened crazy, cowardly ostrich, he hid his head under the sand.

John Brown at the time of his capture, and for an hour after his capture, was more stricken and paralyzed with fear than any human being I ever saw before or since the occasion I refer to. During our late civil war I saw men in all situations, but in the entire of that trying period I saw no man afflicted with fear so seriously as was Brown on the morning of his capture at Harper's Ferry. Brown knew before as well as on the morning of the 17th that he was overpowered, and he knew too that a soldier of the United States could have no animosity toward him, and was informed that they were entering for his capture and not for his life; and he knew, too, that no violence was offered him to cause him to shoot Quinn, or Beckham, or the coloured [sic] man, Haywood Shepard; and for this cause to call John Brown manly, noble and brave, for committing the three murders, is too void of reason to be entertained for one moment, by any man of manly characteristics. I am aware that many versions of this affair of John Brown have been given to the world, nevertheless the facts are as I state them. About two years ago the Washington papers published the death of Anderson, one of Brown's men. I stood by and saw Anderson die on the morning of the 17th of October, 1859, at Harper's Ferry. If you knew John Brown as I knew him, you would be convinced that he was a crazy man or a coward. After the capture of Brown and his men in the course of an hour or more he re[c]overed from his fright. On finding himself a captive under the laws of Virginia, and as such protected by law, and in his interview with Gov. Wise he appeared to better advantage, than when in the midst of danger.

He was conveyed to prison and tried in the Circuit Court of Jefferson County, held by the Hon. Richard Parker, whose father had long served his State as one of the Judges [sic] of the Supreme Court of Appeals, and afterwards served to the time of his death as United States Senator. Judge Richard Parker was and is a most competent Judge, has had great experience, a distinguished graduate of the University of Virginia, eminent in his profession as a lawyer, a descendant of an old and honored family, the members of which held office in England from about the year A. D. 1500 to about the commencement of the 17th Century - a man of the purest christian character, surely a Briton cannot object to the character and capacity of the Judge; and such is the Judge who presided in the Court that tried John Brown. The men who composed the jury were impanelled [sic] to try Brown (some yet live) would compare favourably with a jury of British Peers in moral and manly worth, and sound judgment, or with any other body of twelve men, similarly selected and summoned. The three murders were committed in public, some in open daylight and before a concourse of people, and can it be possible that any person would entertain a doubt as to the proof.



The people of Great Britain live only by the protection of law extended to each and every individual or subject of the realm, and it really comes with a bad grace from an English subject to land and deify a culprit and felon, one tried by English laws and found guilty but under a different flag. A man who has written so much for the good of the human family would never have used the name of John Brown with approval, if he had known the moral character of the felon.

Consider, sir, and say, was John Brown a Moses who accidentally slew the Egyptian? or was he a Cain, with a heart filled with hatred, malice, jealousy and revenge, and in cold blood slew his Brother Abel? Ossawottomie's [sic] deeds on the plains of Kansas will answer. It was in Kansas he assumed the bloody Indian chief's name. It was there he was known as Ossawottomie [sic] and after having baptized himself with this name, he ruthlessly, murderously in the darkness of the night slew in their beds men, women and children. Call him brave, manly and noble? You state in your Book, "that John Brown was carried "to the place of execution with the bloody clothes on, in which he had been captured, and you state that "as he left prison he seized a negro child from its mother's arms and kissed it." The day after his commitment to prison John Brown was furnished with proper clean clothes and was cleanly dressed and well fed to the day of his execution. He was allowed to see all and every friend who called to see him but he exhibited an aversion and took little or no notice of the negroes who called on him. He was cleanly dressed for his execution and rode from the jail door to the scaffold in company with the Surgeon whose duty it was to attend his execution.

Captain John Avis, of Charlestown, had charge of Brown in prison. Captain Avis is a most truthful and faithful man, and this character of Avis can be vouched for by all who know him. He will tell you that Brown did not, nor could not have kissed a negro child on his way to the gallows. You guard your culprits when taken out for execution, and, allow me to assure your Honor, that the United States, and especially the State of Virginia, are not less cautious in this particular than are the laws of Great Britain; and to gain access to any person other than his guard on his road to the gallows was impossible, consequently you see that the assertion of his kissing a negro baby from its mother's arms on his way to the scaffold is simply assured, ridiculous and untrue. Your words are in your Book as follows: "The [hole in paper] very men who allowed him to lie in his bloody clothes 'till the day of his execution," &c. My dear, [word missing], it is untrue, it is a great calumny on the people of Virginia, but to the contrary of your statement is the real truth. If Virginians are distinguished for any trait of character it is that they are the most humane and decent of people. Nothing so seriously sting the pri[de] of a Virginian as to charge him with barbarity and indecency and no people are less liable to this [cha]rge than are Virginians.

The attending Surgeon at the execution of Brown to[ld] [t]he writer of this letter, that Brown was so completely paralyzed with fear on the morning of his execution, that if the authorities had delayed the execution for thirty minutes longer there would have been no occasion to hang Brown. At the sight of the gallows he was completely unnerved - his whole frame shook with fear. From the above statement of facts you cannot find in John Brown's character a single element of nobleness, manhood and bravery. But allow me to say that the fact that Gen. Lee had command on the occasion of his capture is sufficient reason to know that no barbarious [sic] treatment occurred to John Brown at Harper's Ferry. The men there were incapable of it and our good and patriotic Gen. R. E. Lee is but a full type of a large part of the Southern people. Any comparison of the most lovely of the human characters in any form with the divine character of our Lord and Saviour, is, in my opinion, unfortunate. I hope you will in your next edition of the "Manliness of Christ, avoid the name of John Brown and let the Southern people alone, and do them no further injustice.

I am respectfully Your Obt. Servt.,  
L. T. MOORE

### **Questions**

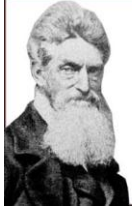
1. From the excerpts above, what five words would you use to describe John Brown and then explain why you would use these words?

2. How should history remember John Brown?

3. In 1511, Niccolo Machiavelli wrote a book for leaders called *The Prince*. In this book he argued that “the ends justify the means.” What did he mean by this?

4. What arguments could you make to support Machiavelli's views?

5. What arguments could you make to counter Machiavelli's views?



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## ***The Raid to End Slavery***

Instructions: Read the following excerpts and answer the questions that follow.

On October 18, 1859, a group of dedicated abolitionists led by John Brown were surrounded by U.S. Marines under Colonel Robert E. Lee at Harpers Ferry. The goal of the raid was to bring an abrupt end to the brutal institution of slavery. Of the 22 men that took part in the raid most would be killed during the raid and the seven that were captured were quickly put on trial and quickly sentenced to death. Abolitionists from the North would celebrate the heroic deeds of the raid's leader and his willingness to sacrifice his life for those of his fellow people held in bondage.

### **Excerpts from *John Brown: An Address* by Frederick Douglass *May 30, 1881.***

1. I rejoice that it is my good fortune to have seen, not only the end of slavery, but to see the day when the whole truth can be told about this matter without prejudice to either the living or the dead. I shall however allow myself little prominence in these disclosures. Your interests, like mine, are in the all-commanding figure of the story, and to him I consecrate the hour. His zeal in the cause of my race was far greater than mine - it was as the burning sun to my taper light - mine was bounded by time, his stretched away to the boundless shores of eternity. I could live for the slave, but he could die for him. The crown of martyrdom is high, far beyond the reach of ordinary mortals, and yet happily no special greatness or superior moral excellence is necessary to discern and in some measure appreciate a truly great soul. Cold, calculating and unspiritual as most of us are, we are not wholly insensible to real greatness; and when we are brought in contact with a man of commanding mold, towering high and alone above the millions, free from all conventional fetters, true to his own moral convictions, a "law unto himself," ready to suffer misconstruction, ignoring torture and death for what he believes to be right, we are compelled to do him homage.

2. Slavery is indeed gone; but its long, black shadow yet falls broad and large over the face of the whole country. It is the old truth oft repeated, and never more fitly than now, "a prophet is without honor in his own country and among his own people." Though more than twenty years have rolled between us and the Harper's Ferry raid, though since then the armies of the nation have found it necessary to do on a large scale what John Brown attempted to do on a small one, and the great captain who fought his way through slavery has filled with honor the Presidential chair, we yet stand too near the days of slavery, and the life and times of John Brown, to see clearly the true martyr and hero that he was and rightly to estimate the

value of the man and his works. Like the great and good of all ages - the men born in advance of their times, the men whose bleeding footprints attest the immense cost of reform, and show us the long and dreary spaces, between the luminous points in the progress of mankind, - this our noblest American hero must wait the polishing wheels of after-coming centuries to make his glory more manifest, and his worth more generally acknowledged.

3. With John Brown, as with every other man fit to die for a cause, the hour of his physical weakness was the hour of his moral strength - the hour of his defeat was the hour of his triumph - the moment of his capture was the crowning victory of his life. With the Alleghany mountains for his pulpit, the country for his church and the whole civilized world for his audience, he was a thousand times more effective as a preacher than as a warrior, and the consciousness of this fact was the secret of his amazing complacency. Mighty with the sword of steel, he was mightier with the sword of the truth, and with this sword he literally swept the horizon. He was more than a match for all the Wises, Masons, Vallandingham and Washingtons, who could rise against him. They could kill him, but they could not answer him.

4. But the question is, Did John Brown fail? He certainly did fail to get out of Harper's Ferry before being beaten down by United States soldiers; he did fail to save his own life, and to lead a liberating army into the mountains of Virginia. But he did not go to Harper's Ferry to save his life. The true question is, Did John Brown draw his sword against slavery and thereby lose his life in vain? and to this I answer ten thousand times. No! No man fails, or can fail who so grandly gives himself and all he has to a righteous cause. No man, who in his hour of extremest need, when on his way to meet an ignominious death, could so forget himself as to stop and kiss a little child, one of the hated race for whom he was about to die, could by any possibility fail. . . .If John Brown did not end the war that ended slavery, he did at least begin the war that ended slavery. If we look over the dates, places and men, for which this honor is claimed, we shall find that not Carolina, but Virginia - not Fort Sumter, but Harper's Ferry and the arsenal - not Col. Anderson, but John Brown, began the war that ended American slavery and made this a free Republic. Until this blow was struck, the prospect for freedom was dim, shadowy and uncertain. The irrepressible conflict was one of words, votes and compromises. When John Brown stretched forth his arm the sky was cleared. The time for compromises was gone - the armed hosts of freedom stood face to face over the chasm of a broken Union - and the clash of arms was at hand. The South staked all upon getting possession of the Federal Government, and failing to do that, drew the sword of rebellion and thus made her own, and not Brown's, the lost cause of the century.

The John Brown Song  
W. W. Patton Lyrics, 1861

Old John Brown's body is a mould'ring in the grave,  
While weep the sons of bondage whom he ventured all to save;  
And now the grass grows green above his grave,  
His soul goes marching on;

Oh glory hallelujah  
Glory, glory hallelujah  
Oh glory hallelujah  
His soul is marching on.

John Brown was a hero undaunted, true and brave;  
Kansas knew his valor when he fought her rights to save;  
And now tho' the grass grows green above his grave,  
His soul is marching on.

Oh glory hallelujah  
Glory, glory hallelujah  
Oh glory hallelujah  
His soul is marching on.

He captures Harpers Ferry, with nineteen men so few,  
And he frighten'd "Old Virginny" 'till she trembled thro'and thro';  
They hung him for a traitor, themselves a traitor crew,  
But his soul goes marching on.

Oh glory hallelujah  
Glory, glory hallelujah  
Oh glory hallelujah  
But his soul is marching on.

John Brown was John the Baptist for the Christ we are to see—  
Christ who of the bondman shall the Liberator be;  
And soon throughout the sunny south, the slaves shall all be free,  
For his soul is marching on.

Oh glory hallelujah  
Glory, glory hallelujah  
Oh glory hallelujah  
For his soul is marching on.

The conflict that he heralded, he looks from heav'n to view;  
On the army of the Union with its flag of red, white and blue,  
And heaven shall ring with anthems o'er the deeds they mean to do,  
For his soul is marching on.

Oh glory hallelujah  
Glory, glory hallelujah  
Oh glory hallelujah  
For his soul is marching on.

Oh soldiers of freedom, then strike while strike you may  
The death blow of oppression in a better time and way;  
For the dawn of John Brown has brighten'd in to day,  
And his soul is marching on.

Oh glory hallelujah  
Glory, glory hallelujah  
Oh glory hallelujah

And his soul is marching on

Questions:

1. From the excerpts above, what five words would you use to describe John Brown and then explain why you would use these words?

2. How should history remember John Brown?

3. In 1511, Niccolo Machiavelli wrote a book for leaders called *The Prince*. In this book he argued that “the ends justify the means.” What did he mean by this?

4. What arguments could you make to support Machiavelli’s views?

5. What arguments could you make to counter Machiavelli’s views?