The life of Abraham Lincoln coincided with dramatic societal transformations that shaped the future of the United States. In the center of these developments stood the question whether that nation could continue to grow with the system of slavery or not. Inherently linked to an issue that almost dissolved the nation was the problem of racism and the future of race relations after emancipation. To examine Lincoln's attitudes on slavery and race opens a window for us to look at his own struggles concerning these issues, but at the same time at the political and cultural contentions at large of a A New Birth of Freedom: The Civil War, 1861-1865 narrates the history of the American Civil War. While it examines individual engagements and the overall nature of the military conflict, the focus is less on the battlefield than on political, social, and economic change in the Union and the Confederacy. One theme throughout the series is what might be called the politics of history – how the world in which a historian lives affects his or her view of the past, and how historical interpretations reinforce or challenge the social order of the present. Read more. Taught by.