

Abraham Lincoln

“The best way to predict your future is to create it.”

—Abraham Lincoln



Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Who was Abraham Lincoln?
2. What do you know about the American Civil War?
3. How long did slavery last in the United States?
4. Where did the majority of slaves in the US live?
5. How did Abraham Lincoln die?

B. Vocabulary Preview

Match as many meanings and words as you can before you read.
Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| ___ 1. encourage | a) to do well |
| ___ 2. integrity | b) to withdraw one's membership |
| ___ 3. succeed | c) to put an end to in a formal way |
| ___ 4. secede | d) to support and cheer on |
| ___ 5. preserve | e) to keep or save something in its current state |
| ___ 6. issue | f) honesty, trustworthiness |
| ___ 7. abolish | g) to destroy |
| ___ 8. surrender | h) to joke about a person in an unkind way |
| ___ 9. decimate | i) to give up a fight |
| ___ 10. make fun of | j) to provide or produce formally |

Reading

1. Abraham Lincoln was the 16th president of the United States.
2. Abraham Lincoln was born in a small log cabin in Kentucky on February 12, 1809. When he was nine, his mother died. One year later, Abe's father married Sarah Johnston. Sarah was a kind woman. She loved Abe very much. She also **encouraged** his love of reading. Abe loved Sarah too. Throughout his life, he referred to her as his "angel mother."
3. In 1830, the Lincoln family moved to Illinois. By this time, Abe was a young man. He did hard physical work every day, but still found time to study. In Illinois, Lincoln became known for his sense of humor. People loved his jokes and funny stories. He also became known for his **integrity**. People called him "Honest Abe."
4. Before Lincoln became president, he tried many different jobs. He failed at some of them. He failed as a farmer and as a businessman. But Lincoln **succeeded** in law and politics. He became a respected lawyer. He also became a successful politician. In November of 1860, Lincoln was elected president of the United States.
5. Abraham Lincoln became president during a difficult time in US history. Soon after Lincoln's election, seven southern states **seceded** from the United States. In April of 1861, southern troops attacked Fort Sumter. Lincoln had to make an important decision. He could let the South secede, or he could **preserve** the Union. He decided to save the Union. He responded to the attack on Fort Sumter and the Civil War began.
6. In 1863, Lincoln **issued** the Emancipation Proclamation. This order **abolished** slavery, but only in states that would not come back to the Union. That same year, Lincoln delivered his famous speech, the Gettysburg Address. In this speech, Lincoln spoke about equality for all people. In November of 1864, Lincoln was reelected. On April 9, 1865, the South **surrendered**. The Civil War was over. The North was still strong, but the South had been **decimated**.
7. On April 14, 1865, President Lincoln and his wife, Mary, attended a play at Ford's Theatre. During the play, John Wilkes Booth, an angry southern actor, shot Lincoln in the back of the head. Lincoln died the next morning.
8. During his presidency, many people hated and even **made fun of** Lincoln. Historians and most Americans, however, consider Lincoln the greatest US president.

Comprehension

A. True or False?

Read the statements below.

If the statement is true, write T beside the sentence.

If it is false, write F and correct the information.

- _____ 1. Abraham Lincoln was born in a log cabin in Kansas.
- _____ 2. Lincoln's mother died when he was very young.
- _____ 3. People used to say that Lincoln was an honest, but boring person.
- _____ 4. Lincoln was successful at everything he tried to do.
- _____ 5. Abraham Lincoln let the South secede so that he could preserve the Union.

B. Ask & Answer

Practice asking and answering the following questions with your partner.

Then write your answers in complete sentences in your notebook.

1. Why did Lincoln refer to Sarah Johnston as his "angel mother"?
2. What type of work did Lincoln do as a young man?
3. What were Lincoln's two most successful careers?
4. How did President Lincoln feel about the South's decision to secede?
5. Who attacked Fort Sumter?
6. Did Lincoln liberate all the slaves in the US? Explain.
7. When did the South surrender?
8. What was the condition of the South when the Civil War ended?

Vocabulary Review

Choose the word or phrase with the closest meaning to the underlined word or phrase in the following sentences.

1. Sarah encouraged Lincoln's love of reading.
 - a) prevented
 - b) supported
 - c) loved
2. Lincoln showed his integrity by always returning things that he had borrowed.
 - a) dishonesty
 - b) honesty
 - c) forgetfulness
3. Lincoln succeeded in his career as a lawyer.
 - a) did well
 - b) worked
 - c) failed
4. The South decided to secede from the Union.
 - a) unite with
 - b) compete with
 - c) separate from
5. President Lincoln wanted to preserve the Union.
 - a) save
 - b) divide
 - c) attack
6. Lincoln issued a proclamation that freed slaves in some states.
 - a) read
 - b) released
 - c) used
7. The war officially ended when the South surrendered on April 9, 1865.
 - a) celebrated victory
 - b) fought harder
 - c) admitted defeat
8. Slavery was completely abolished in 1865.
 - a) eliminated
 - b) changed
 - c) established
9. The Union Army decimated the South.
 - a) bombed
 - b) defended
 - c) destroyed
10. Some people made fun of Lincoln because he was very tall and thin.
 - a) shouted at
 - b) laughed at
 - c) looked at

Discussion

1. What was the Emancipation Proclamation?
2. What did the Gettysburg Address and the Emancipation Proclamation have in common?
3. Lincoln said, "You must remember that some things legally right are not morally right." What do you think he was talking about? Why do you think he said that?
4. Near the end of the Civil War, Lincoln spoke these words, "With malice (hatred) toward none, with charity (kindness) for all..." What do you think he was saying to the defeated South?

The Gettysburg Address

A. Research

Do some research about the Gettysburg Address. Make sure you read the actual speech. Come to the next class prepared to tell your partner(s) what it means and what you liked about it.

B. Vocabulary

Choose five words from the Gettysburg Address that you don't know. Look up the meanings in your dictionary and write them down in your own words. Share the new words you learned with your partner(s).

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson, students read a short biography about the 16th president of the United States. Students learn about and discuss the Emancipation Proclamation and the Gettysburg Address.

LEVEL: Int – Adv

TIME: 1–2 hours

TAGS: Abraham Lincoln, Lincoln, president, presidents, American presidents, slavery, Gettysburg Address

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Answers will vary.

B. VOCABULARY REVIEW

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. d | 3. a | 5. e | 7. c | 9. g |
| 2. f | 4. b | 6. j | 8. i | 10. h |

Comprehension

A. TRUE OR FALSE?

- F – Lincoln was born in a small log cabin in Kentucky.
- T
- F – People used to say that Lincoln was honest and funny.
- F – Lincoln was not successful at everything he tried. He tried out many different jobs and failed at some of them.
- F – Lincoln chose to preserve the Union by not letting the South secede.

A. ASK & ANSWER

- Lincoln's stepmother was kind to him and loved him very much. She also encouraged his love of reading.
- Lincoln did a lot of hard physical work as a young man.
- Lincoln was successful as a lawyer and a politician.
- Lincoln believed that the North and South should remain one country, the United States. He did not want the South to secede.
- Southern troops attacked Fort Sumter.
- Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation only freed the slaves in states that refused to come back to the Union.

- The South surrendered on April 9, 1865.
- The Civil War destroyed the South's economy, some of its cities, and much of its farmland.

Vocabulary Review

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. b | 3. a | 5. a | 7. c | 9. c |
| 2. b | 4. c | 6. b | 8. a | 10. b |

Discussion

Use these questions for writing or speaking practice. For writing practice, you can assign one to each student or allow students to choose one. For speaking practice, discuss in groups or as a class.

The Gettysburg Address

Optional. Individual answers.

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the words *Humor* and *Practice*. Most other English-speaking countries spell these words this way: *Humour* and *Practise* (when used as a verb; *Practice* when used as a noun). Make it a challenge for your students to find these words in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spellings.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Ford Theatre is the name of the building where Lincoln was assassinated. You might want to point out to your students that this is the British-English spelling (*theatre*). Tell your students that for general use, the American spelling is *theater*.