

In Lincoln's Words
Distance Learning Lesson Plan
6th-8th Grade
Social Studies

BACKGROUND

In the 17 years Abraham Lincoln lived in his Springfield home, he experienced many changes, challenges, and victories that defined him as a family man, neighbor, lawyer, and politician. Between 1844 and 1861 he saw his family grow as Eddie, Willie, and Tad were born there. He also experienced the expansion of his house when in 1856 the second floor was completed. Unfortunately, he and his family went through a very difficult time when Eddie died in 1850. From the steps of this house they saw their first born, Robert, leave for college. It was the people of the neighborhood who saw first-hand the rise of Abraham Lincoln as the politician we all know and remember today.

LESSON OVERVIEW

In 1858 Abraham Lincoln took a public stance against the expansion of slavery when running against Stephen Douglas for a seat in the United States senate. Lincoln strongly believed in the words of the founding fathers, that all men are created equal. Lincoln saw in politics the best avenue to defend that statement which was being threatened by the institution of slavery.

During this distance learning lesson plan, students will analyze primary documents and artifacts to learn about Abraham Lincoln's views regarding slavery and citizenship while he lived in Springfield, Illinois. In addition, this lesson plan will prepare students for their virtual visit with a Park Ranger to Lincoln Home National Historic Site.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Analyze a fragment of Abraham Lincoln's House Divided speech to determine his views on slavery and citizenship.
- Determine how national events and issues influenced Lincoln's House Divided speech.

- Reflect on Abraham Lincoln's political ideology and how it shaped the United States before the Civil War.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

- *How can artifacts help us understand a person or time period?*

STATE AND NATIONAL STANDARDS:

Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science:

- SS. H.2.2.6-8.LC. Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.
- SS.IS.4.6-8.LC.: Determine the value of sources by evaluating their relevance and intended use.
- SS.CV.1.6-8.MdC: Describe the roles of political, civil and economic organizations in shaping people's lives.

National Standards:

- D2.His.5.6-8. Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.

MATERIALS:

- Written Document Analysis Worksheet by National Archives (PDF)
- Artifact Analysis Worksheet by National Archives (PDF)
- Fragment of House Divided Speech (PDF)
- Transcript of House Divided Speech (PDF)
- Image of Lincoln's Desk (PDF)

LESSON PROCEDURE

1. Introduce students to the essential question: *How can artifacts help us understand a person or time period?* Allow students to reflect on essential question to provide their own answer.
2. Teachers may visit [“The Lincolns in Springfield 1837-1847”](#) and [“The Lincolns in Springfield 1849-1861”](#) to provide a brief background on Abraham Lincoln's history in Springfield.

3. Students will read a fragment of Lincoln's House Divided Speech. If students are having difficulty reading primary document, they can read the transcript.
4. Students will analyze speech using the Written Document Analysis worksheet by the National Archives. Ask students to record findings on a separate sheet of paper.
5. Students will look at image of Abraham Lincoln's writing desk.
6. Students will analyze image using the Artifact Analysis worksheet by the National Archives. Ask students to record findings on a separate sheet of paper.
7. After going over both documents individually, students will then share their findings to the rest of the group based on the questions found in analysis worksheets.
8. Ask students:
 - a. What can these artifacts tell us about Abraham Lincoln?
 - b. What can these artifacts tell us about society in the United States in the 1850s?

ASSESSMENT

1. Lead a discussion based on the lesson and students answers to the previous questions. Have students generate questions based on what they learned to ask Park Ranger during their virtual visit.