



# Abraham Lincoln

Section 1

**Preview**—before you begin to read ask yourself these questions:

1. *What do I already know about Abraham Lincoln's childhood?*
2. *What do the sub-headings tell me?*

Look at the review questions at the end of the section before you begin reading.

## The Early Years

### Kentucky

Abraham Lincoln was born in a one room log cabin in Kentucky. He was born on February 12, 1809. His parents were Thomas and Nancy Lincoln. They had settled on the Sinking **Spring** Farm in December of 1808. Abraham's older sister Sarah was two years old when he was born. She died during childbirth at age 21. Her child died at the same time. In 1810 the Lincolns moved to a farm at Knob Creek.<sup>1</sup> Abraham's little brother Thomas was born at Knob Creek. His little brother also died at Knob Creek. Abraham



<sup>1</sup> Both farms are now part of **Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site** located near Hodgenville, Kentucky. <http://www.nps.gov/abli/index.htm> An early 19th century Kentucky cabin, **symbolic** of the one in which Lincoln was born is preserved in a memorial building at the site of his birth. The **National Park Service** for the people of the United States administers the site.

Lincoln's earliest childhood memories are about life on the farm at Knob Creek.

### Indiana

Abraham was seven years old when his family moved to Indiana. The farm in Indiana was on the **frontier**.<sup>2</sup>

Two years later his mother Nancy died from "Milk Sickness." People caught "Milk Sickness" from drinking milk from cows that had eaten a poisonous plant.

His father remarried. His stepmother was Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln.

In Indiana Abraham helped his father on the farm. He helped his father build a log cabin. Abraham helped his father clear the land and plant and harvest crops. As he grew older he was given more **responsibility**. He was given more difficult jobs.

Abraham had very little chance to go to school. But he developed a life long love for learning. He believed a good education could provide a better life.

#### Review:

1. How did Abraham Lincoln think education could help him?
2. List at least 3 examples of how an education could be helpful in modern life.

<sup>2</sup> The Indiana farm is now preserved at **Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial**. <http://www.nps.gov/libo/index.htm> It includes a museum and a living historical farm. The **National Park Service** **administers** the site for the people of the United States.

# Abraham Lincoln Section 2

**Preview**—before you begin to read ask yourself these questions:

1. *What do I already know about Abraham Lincoln's life in Illinois?*
2. *What do the sub-headings tell me?*

Look at the review questions at the end of the section before you begin reading.

## *Life in Illinois*

### *Move to Illinois*

When he was twenty-one, Abraham and his family moved to Illinois. His family first lived near Decatur, but finally settled on a farm near Charleston, Illinois.<sup>3</sup>

Abraham left the family during this time to start a life of his own. Lincoln and some other men built a **flatboat**. They loaded it with corn and other products. Beginning north of Springfield they took the flatboat down the Sangamon River to the Illinois River. They used the Illinois River to get to the Mississippi River. Eventually they took the flatboat all the way down the Mississippi to New Orleans. In New Orleans Abraham witnessed the **indignities** of slavery.

After returning from New Orleans Abraham took a job as a storekeeper in New Salem.<sup>4</sup> In New Salem Abraham learned to be **surveyor**. He was also a postmaster. During his time in New Salem Abraham struggled to make a better life for himself.

Abraham was elected to the State

Legislature when he was twenty-five years old. He helped convince the State Legislature to move the State Capital from Vandalia<sup>5</sup> to Springfield.<sup>6</sup> While in the State Legislature he found a way to make his life better. He began to study to become an **attorney**. He passed the test to get his law license in 1837. He then moved to



Springfield to begin to practice law. He lived in a room above a store.

In Springfield all his friends called him “Mr. Lincoln.”

<sup>3</sup> This farm is **preserved** as **Lincoln Log Cabin State Historical Site** and is managed by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. <http://www.illinoishistory.gov/>

<sup>4</sup> New Salem has been restored and is managed as a State Historic Site by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency as **Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site**.

<sup>5</sup> The State Capitol building in Vandalia is preserved by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency as **Vandalia Statehouse State Historic Site**.

<sup>6</sup> The State Capitol building in Springfield is preserved by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency as **Old State Capitol State Historic Site**.

## *Marriage and Career*

In 1842 Mr. Lincoln married Mary Todd. They lived in a **boarding house** for a year. Their first son Robert was born in the boarding house. Soon afterward they moved to a rental house. In May of 1844 they bought a house on the corner of Eighth and Jackson streets.<sup>7</sup> They lived in this house for seventeen years. Three more boys, Edward (Eddie), William (Willie), and Thomas (“Tad”), were born in this house.

After Mr. Lincoln bought his home he started his own law firm. It was called the Lincoln-Herndon<sup>8</sup> law firm. Mr. Lincoln was a very good attorney. But being a **politician** was what Mr. Lincoln most liked to do. He felt politics was an honorable and important **profession**.

After Eddie’s birth, Mr. Lincoln was elected to the **United States House of Representatives**.<sup>9</sup> He, Mary, Robert, and Eddie lived in Washington D. C. for about one year.

While living in Washington, DC. Mr. Lincoln was **tormented** by seeing slaves being sold in the nation’s capital.<sup>10</sup> He felt the Declaration of Independence<sup>11</sup> applied to them too. He felt that black people too should have the chance to better themselves.

Mr. Lincoln served only one term in the U. S. House of Representatives. Mr. Lincoln spent the early part of the 1850’s concentrating on his law practice. He became very successful.

### **Review:**

1. What was the first job Abraham Lincoln had in Illinois?
2. What was there along the Mississippi River and in New Orleans that he didn’t like?
3. What was one of the things he did while he was a member of the State Legislature?
4. Who did he marry?
5. What were the names of his four boys?
6. What was the first national office he was elected to?
7. While Mr. Lincoln was a very good attorney, what profession was his favorite?
8. Explain why a politician is a very important position in a democracy.

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<sup>7</sup> The house has been restored and is administered by the **National Park Service** for the people of the United States as the Lincoln Home National Historic Site. <http://www.nps.gov/liho/>

<sup>8</sup> The Lincoln-Herndon law office was located in several different buildings over the years. One building is preserved by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency as **The Lincoln-Herndon Law Office State Historic Site**.

<sup>9</sup> You can learn more about the **United States House of Representatives** at this website <http://www.house.gov/>

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<sup>10</sup> To learn about the **U. S. Capitol** building visit this website <http://www.aoc.gov/>

<sup>11</sup> To learn more about the **Declaration of Independence** visit this website [http://www.archives.gov/exhibit\\_hall/charters\\_of\\_freedom/declaration/declaration.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/charters_of_freedom/declaration/declaration.html)

# Abraham Lincoln

## Section 3

**Preview**—before you begin to read ask yourself these questions:

1. *What do I already know about Abraham Lincoln's important role in America?*
2. *What do the sub-headings tell me?*

Look at the review questions at the end of the section before you begin reading.

## *Importance to the Nation*

### *Rise to Prominence*

During the 1850's Mr. Lincoln gave many speeches about America. He said the Declaration of Independence promised everyone a chance to better his or her life. He encouraged everyone to get a good education, to work hard, and to strive to make a better life.

In 1854 Congress **overturned** the Missouri Compromise. This made Mr. Lincoln very angry. The Missouri Compromise had promised that there would never be slavery on the **Great Plains**. Now that it was overturned it looked like slavery would spread across the western part of the United States. The overturning of the Missouri Compromise **inspired** Mr. Lincoln to give even more speeches across America. In these speeches he said slavery was evil. He said that the Declaration of Independence was a promise that everyone would have a fair chance in the race of life. He said slavery denied some people this fair chance. Mr. Lincoln felt that the Declaration of Independence with its assertion that all men are created equal applied to black people too.

In the late 1850's everyone in America was arguing over slavery. The most famous arguments took place between

Illinois United States Senator Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln. These are called the Lincoln-Douglas Debates.<sup>12</sup> They took place as part of the elections of 1858. Mr. Lincoln was trying to take away the senate seat from Mr. Douglas. Mr. Douglas was able to defeat Mr. Lincoln and keep his Senate Seat. But the debates made Mr. Lincoln famous. They led to Mr. Lincoln being elected President in 1860.

### *The Presidency*

Some people in the southern part of the United States were angry when Mr. Lincoln was elected President.<sup>13</sup>

They felt they were being treated unfairly. They were not allowed to take their property [slaves] everywhere in the United States. They felt this was unfair. They convinced others in their states to try to quit the country. Mr. Lincoln and many others were determined to stop the break-up of the country. A terrible Civil War took place. On one side in this Civil War were those fighting to preserve the United States as one country. This side is often called "the Union." On the other side were those rebelling against the United States and trying to break it apart. This other side is often called "the Rebels" or "the Confederates."

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<sup>12</sup> To learn more about the **Lincoln-Douglas Debates** go to this website

<http://www.nps.gov/liho/historyculture/debates.htm>

<sup>13</sup> To learn more about Mr. Lincoln's Presidency go to this website

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/all16.html>

During the Civil War President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. The **Emancipation Proclamation**<sup>14</sup> began the process of ending slavery in America.

The rebels were defeated on April 9, 1865. The President gave a speech two days later. President Lincoln declared that he believed that now that black men had been freed they should be allowed to vote. This angered John Wilkes Booth. Booth decided to **assassinate** the President. On April 14, 1865, Booth shot President Lincoln during a play being held in Ford's Theatre<sup>15</sup>. The President died the next morning.

President Lincoln's body was returned to Springfield. He was buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery.

## Abraham Lincoln Today

The National Lincoln Monument Association dedicated itself to erecting a fitting **memorial** in Springfield, Illinois. Today this Memorial is the Lincoln Tomb State Historic Site.<sup>16</sup> Mr. Lincoln is also memorialized at the Lincoln Memorial<sup>17</sup> and Mount Rushmore.<sup>18</sup>



Today, Abraham Lincoln is a **symbol** of **democracy** and **equality**. He is a symbol of democracy and equality for Americans and to people around the world. Each year, millions of visitors from around the world visit the places where he lived and worked. They go to the memorials to his life and accomplishments.

### Review:

1. What had the Missouri Compromise promised?
2. Why did Mr. Lincoln think slavery "broke" the assertion or promise made in the Declaration of Independence?
3. What were the most famous arguments about slavery?
4. How did these arguments help Mr. Lincoln?
5. Why were some people angry when Mr. Lincoln was elected President?
6. What important document did President Lincoln issue?
7. What did it do?
8. What did President Lincoln say that angered John Wilkes Booth?
9. What two things does Mr. Lincoln symbolize around the world?

<sup>14</sup> To learn more about the **Emancipation Proclamation** go to this website [http://www.archives.gov/exhibit\\_hall/featured\\_documents/emancipation\\_proclamation/](http://www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/featured_documents/emancipation_proclamation/)

<sup>15</sup> Ford's Theatre is preserved by the National Park Service as **Ford's Theatre National Historic Site**. <http://www.nps.gov/foth/index.htm>

<sup>16</sup> The Lincoln Tomb is managed by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency as **Lincoln Tomb State Historic Site**. You can learn more about the **Illinois Historic Preservation Agency** by visiting this website. <http://www.illinoishistory.gov/>

<sup>17</sup> The National Park Service administers the **Lincoln Memorial** which is located in Washington, DC. <http://www.nps.gov/linc/index.htm>

<sup>18</sup> The National Park Service administers **Mount Rushmore National Memorial** which is located in Keystone, South Dakota. <http://www.nps.gov/moru/index.htm>



## Vocabulary Words

### *From Lincoln Biography*

**Instructions:** Write a short [four to eight words] definition for each word. Then use another piece of paper to write a short sentence using the vocabulary word. Each vocabulary word is used in the Lincoln Biography and is printed in *italics* [and red if your copy is printed in color].

### *From Section One:*

**Spring** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Frontier** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Responsibility** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Administers** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Symbolic** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### *From Section Two:*

**Flatboat** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Indignities** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Surveyor** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Preserved** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Attorney** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Boarding House** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Politician** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Profession** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**United States House of Representatives** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Tormented** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**From Section Three:**

**Overtured** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Great Plains** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Inspired** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Emancipation Proclamation** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Assassinate** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Symbol** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Democracy** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Equality** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Vocabulary Words

## *From Lincoln Biography*

**Instructions:** Write a short [four to eight words] definition for each word. Then use another piece of paper to write a short sentence using the vocabulary word.

### *From Section One:*

**Spring** \_\_\_\_\_ a natural fountain or flow of water \_\_\_\_\_

**Frontier** \_\_\_\_\_ a region at the edge of a settled area \_\_\_\_\_

**Responsibility** \_\_\_\_\_ something for which one is accountable [duty] \_\_\_\_\_

**Administers** \_\_\_\_\_ manage [to have charge of] \_\_\_\_\_

**Symbolic** \_\_\_\_\_ symbol = something representing something else \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ symbolic = expressed by a symbol \_\_\_\_\_

### *From Section Two:*

**Flatboat** \_\_\_\_\_ a boat with a flat bottom and square ends used in transporting freight on inland waterways \_\_\_\_\_

**Indignities** \_\_\_\_\_ indignity = humiliating, degrading, or abusive [something that offends one's pride or sense of dignity] \_\_\_\_\_

**Surveyor** \_\_\_\_\_ someone who used instruments to measure land [boundaries], elevations, and distances by using geometry and trigonometry \_\_\_\_\_

**Preserved** \_\_\_\_\_ to keep safe, to maintain unchanged \_\_\_\_\_

**Attorney** \_\_\_\_\_ lawyer, one who is legally qualified to represent another in court or give them legal advice \_\_\_\_\_

**Boarding House** \_\_\_\_\_ a house providing lodging and meals \_\_\_\_\_

**Politician** \_\_\_\_\_ one who holds or seeks political office \_\_\_\_\_

**Profession** \_\_\_\_\_ **occupation** \_\_\_\_\_

**House of Representatives** \_\_\_\_\_ **lower house of the U. S. Congress** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tormented** \_\_\_\_\_ **torment = mental anguish, source of annoyance or pain;** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **tormented = bothered, annoyed, pestered** \_\_\_\_\_

**From Section Three:**

**Overtured** \_\_\_\_\_ **to defeat, to undo, to overthrow** \_\_\_\_\_

**Great Plains** \_\_\_\_\_ **a vast prairie region extending from Alberta and Saskatchewan and Manitoba in Canada south through the west central United States into Texas; formerly inhabited by Native Americans** \_\_\_\_\_

**Inspired** \_\_\_\_\_ **excited Mr. Lincoln into action** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emancipation Proclamation** \_\_\_\_\_ **A proclamation issued by President Lincoln freeing all the slaves in territory still at war with the United States [Union]** \_\_\_\_\_

**Assassinate** \_\_\_\_\_ **to murder a prominent person** \_\_\_\_\_

**Symbol** \_\_\_\_\_ **symbol = something representing something else** \_\_\_\_\_

**Democracy** \_\_\_\_\_ **government exercised [run] either directly by the people or indirectly through elected representatives** \_\_\_\_\_

**Equality** \_\_\_\_\_ **being equal** \_\_\_\_\_

## Teacher Page

The Flesch-Kincaid system rates the biography as written on an 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading level. However, when the vocabulary words and footnotes are removed the Flesch-Kincaid reading level is reduced to 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

Educational Objectives: The student will be able to

1. Read and comprehend
2. List several details about Mr. Lincoln's early life
3. Explain Mr. Lincoln's belief concerning education
4. List several details about Mr. Lincoln's life in Illinois
5. Explain the importance of a politician in a democracy
6. Identify why some states seceded after Mr. Lincoln was elected President
7. Explain the importance of the Emancipation Proclamation
8. Identify the reason John Wilkes Booth assassinated Mr. Lincoln
9. Identify what Mr. Lincoln symbolizes
10. Use a dictionary
11. Define vocabulary words

National Learning Standards<sup>19</sup>

The following National Learning Standards for Social Studies are utilized by the activities:

- Understands the causes of the Civil War
- Understands the course and character of the Civil War and its effects on the American people

The following National Learning Standards for Language Arts are utilized by the activities.

- Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of informational text
- Uses grammatical and mechanical conventions in written compositions

Illinois Learning Standards:

### Social Science:

The state goals from Illinois Learning Standards for Social Studies that relate to the Longitude and Latitude Exercise are listed on the charts that also list educational objectives and the levels of Bloom's taxonomy utilized.

All the other activities concerning Abraham Lincoln and his times relate to these Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science:

State Goal 14: Understand political systems, with an emphasis on the United States.

Late Elementary 14A2: Explain the importance of fundamental concepts expressed and implied in major documents including the Declaration of

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<sup>19</sup> These national learning standards came from the *McRel* webpage <http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp> *McRel* is a nationally recognized, private, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving education for all through research, product development, and service. The United States Department of Education lists *McRel* as an affiliated site.

Independence, the United State Constitution and the Illinois Constitution.

Late Elementary 14F2: Identify consistencies and inconsistencies between expressed United States political traditions and ideas and actual practices [e.g. freedom of speech, right to bear arms, slavery, voting rights].

State Goal 16: Understand events, trends, individuals, and movements shaping history of Illinois, the United States and other nations.

Late Elementary 16B2c: Identify presidential elections that were pivotal in the formation of modern political parties.

Late Elementary 16D2d: Identify major political events and leaders within the U. S. historical eras since the adoption of the Constitution including westward expansion, Louisiana Purchase, Civil War, and 20<sup>th</sup> century wars as well as the roles of Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

### Language Arts:

State Goal 1: Read with understanding and fluency

Late Elementary 1A2a Read and comprehend unfamiliar words using root words, synonyms, antonyms, word origins and derivations

Late Elementary 1.A.2b Clarify word meaning using context clues and a variety of resources including glossaries, dictionaries and thesauruses

Late Elementary 1B2a Establish purposes for reading; survey materials; ask questions; make predictions; connect, clarify and extend ideas.

Late Elementary 1C2a Use information to form and refine questions and predictions.

Late Elementary 1C2b Make and support inferences and form interpretations about main themes and topics.

Late Elementary 1C2c Compare and contrast the content and organization of selections.

State Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes

Late Elementary 3C2a Write for a variety of purposes and for specified audiences in a variety of forms including narrative (e.g., fiction, autobiography), expository (e.g., reports, essays) and persuasive writings (e.g., editorials, advertisements).