

To the Teacher: Grades 5 through 8

The activities in this study guide are designed to make your students' visit to the Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum a learning experience. Pre-visit, On-site, and Post-visit activities can be used during one (or more) class period(s) as a means of introducing the students to the Museum and furthering their interest in mid-19th century culture and history. Additional activities can be used to supplement this material.

Background Information: The Museum is divided into several galleries: Gallery One covers Lincoln's early life; Gallery Two, the War years; and Gallery Three Lincoln's presidential years and assassination. Through observation and use of the descriptive labels, your students can determine many of the characteristics that made Lincoln a memorable person and President. The students can also learn about the dramatic events during Lincoln's presidency and better understand the issues of slavery.

**Pre-visit:**

To better understand a visit to the Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum, students should be familiar with various terms. Ask your students to use a dictionary to discover the meanings of the following words:

Antebellum; Artifacts, Assassination; Cabinet; Character; Civil War; Diorama; Emancipation; Fortifications; Ideology; Nation; Military Occupation; Proclamation; Racism; Reconstruction; Secession; Prisoners of War, and Slavery.

**On-site:**

First Gallery (have your students prepared to make notes for Post-Visit activities.)

1. Ask your student to view artifacts and images and to compare and contrast 19<sup>th</sup> century items with present day items. Example: transportation; living conditions; health care.
2. Ask your students: What caused Lincoln's mother's death? Could Nancy Hanks Lincoln's death have been prevented in the 19<sup>th</sup> century? (This could become a research assignment for a Post-Visit project.)
3. Compare the displayed photographs of Lincoln. What might have caused the premature aging of President Lincoln shown in the large photograph on the right?
4. List some information shown in the Museum's galleries that could explain Lincoln's feelings about slavery.
5. As a child and young man, Lincoln lived in a log cabin. Compare his years living in a log cabin with his years living in the White House.

Second Gallery: (Students should continue making notes for Post-Visit activities.)

1. Compare the large image of Washington City with photographs (or personal observations) of the nation's capitol today.
2. Shortly after the Battle of Antietam, President Lincoln issued the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, with the Emancipation Proclamation to become law on January 1, 1863, unless the Southern states in rebellion came back into the Union. Ask your students to observe the diorama of Lincoln visiting General McClellan.
3. Observe the carriage used by Lincoln's Secretary of State, William H. Seward.

Third Gallery: (Students should continue making notes for Post-Visit activities.)

1. Gallery Three contains paintings of several Civil War generals. Ask your students to observe their clothing, equipment, and means of travel.
2. There are two dioramas in Gallery Three – both relate to Lincoln's presidency. Ask your student to observe the dioramas. Mention that you may have questions later.
3. Gallery Three mentions the assassination of President Lincoln and includes photographs of funeral ceremonies for the martyred President. Ask you student to observe the image of John Wilkes Booth and the funeral ceremonies.

Post-Visit:

1. Ask your students to brainstorm about artifacts/items displayed in the Museum's First Gallery. Items to compare and contrast – Lincoln's early life in a log cabin compared to his family home in Springfield, IL and the beautiful tea set. Do you student think the tea set would have been used during his early frontier years?
2. Ask your student s to compare the images of Lincoln shown in Gallery One. Ask them to brainstorm about what might have caused the premature aging of President Lincoln (shown in the large photograph on the right).
3. Ask your students to list some information seen in the Museum galleries that could help explain Lincoln's views about slavery.
4. A log cabin is an example of Lincoln's early life. Lincoln owned one home – a house on Eighth Street in Springfield. Compare and contrast Lincoln's early life with his life just prior to becoming President. How was he able to achieve such a remarkable change?
5. Shortly after the Battle of Antietam, Lincoln issued the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation giving notice to states in rebellion that slaves would be freed on January 1, 1863, unless the states returned to the Union. Ask your students what effect do they think the Emancipation Proclamation had on the remainder of the Civil War? Ask if they think African Americans would have been allowed to serve in the Union Army if the Emancipation Proclamation had not been issued.
6. Ask your students to write a short description of what impact they believe the Emancipation Proclamation had on slavery.
7. Civil War soldiers used various types of weaponry. Several were shown in the Museum's second gallery. Ask your students to compare and contrast today's weapons with those from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.
8. Ask your students to compare the communication methods of commanding generals in the Civil War years with communication methods of today's commanding generals.
9. John Wilkes Booth originally planned to kidnap President Lincoln to force the North to exchange Prisoners of War. (a) Ask your students to brainstorm about what might have happened IF the kidnap plot had been successful? (b) Would the war have continued for more years? (c) Would the North have agreed to exchange Prisoners of War? (d) What effect do your students think the prisoner exchange and resulting reinforcement of Confederate troops would have had on the War? (e) If Lincoln had been able to serve his full second term in office, do you think he would have been able to reconstruct the country without military occupation of the southern states? (f) Do your students think Lincoln's assassination had an effect on people in the Southern states? Do they think people in the South were happy (or sad) that he was killed?
10. What effect do you think Lincoln's assassination had on Mrs. Lincoln and their remaining children, Robert and Tad?
11. Divide your students into teams. Allow each team to choose one of the following major themes to develop. Following each team's completion of their project, they should present their completed work to the class.
  - a. The Personal Life of Abraham Lincoln
  - b. The Gettysburg Address
  - c. The Emancipation Proclamation
  - d. Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address
  - e. Lincoln's image

Each team should use their notes from pre-visit activities and on-site observation to complete at least one of the following:

- A. Create a poster representing their chosen theme.

- B. Write a 200 word essay on their chosen theme.
  - C. Using magazine photos or students' own artwork, make a collage telling the story of their chosen theme.
12. Flags were important during the Civil War. Both the Confederacy and the Union had flags, as did individual states. Flags were very important symbols – so much so that soldiers vied to become part of the color guard. These soldiers carried the flags at great risk to themselves because they were unable to defend themselves while carrying the flag. Union soldiers carried the American flag. In 1865, the year the war ended, the American flag had 36 stars. Most Civil War regiments and army corps also had their own flags. Southern soldiers began the war under the First Flag of the Confederacy. The Confederacy soon adopted a second flag – the canton contained 13 stars. Allow your students to conduct research on the internet (or in the library) to answer the following questions.
- a. When was the first flag of the Confederacy adopted?
  - b. The flag's canton contains seven stars. What do they represent?
  - c. What is the name of this first official flag of the Confederacy?
  - d. When was the Second flag of the Confederacy adopted?
  - e. Why did the Confederacy need to change flags?
  - f. Why did the Second flag of the Confederacy contain 13 stars? What did they represent?
  - g. The Second flag of the Confederacy was easily mistaken for what kind of signal during a battle? Why?
  - h. Was the problem of the Second flag of the Confederacy being mistaken for a type of battle signal the reason the Confederacy adopted a Third flag of the Confederacy?
  - i. When was the Third flag of the Confederacy adopted?
13. Discuss the importance of flags to Civil War soldiers and the American flag's importance to citizens and soldiers. Divide your class into two groups. One group can be assigned to design a flag for your class; the other group can design a flag for your school. An additional option would be to assign your groups the job of designing a flag for a Civil War Army Corps (Union and/or Confederate). Provide poster board, large pieces of construction paper, scissors, rulers, glue, chalk, chalkboard eraser, and crayons or markers.
- a. If students are designing a class or school flag, they should first list the characteristics the flag should represent. Ask one person from each group to write the ideas on the blackboard.
  - b. The students should decide how to make a flag that shows the ideas written on the blackboard. Flags can be made in any shape – square, rectangular, triangular.
  - c. Students should make the flag using the materials listed. Remind them to be creative – that they can draw, write slogans, and glue shapes onto their flags.
  - d. Each group should compare their flag with the other group's flag and explain the symbolism. How are the flags similar? How are they different?