**Introduction to The Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum**

*Grades K-4*

**Objective:** Students will be introduced to the Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum and be able to explain what a museum is to the teacher.

**Time:** 1 – 2 hours depending on the activities engaged.

**NCHS K-4 Historical Thinking Standards:***4D: Marshal needed information of the time and place in order to construct a story, explanation, or historical narrative.*

**Materials for activities:**

* **Paper**
* **Pencil**
* **Crayons**
* **Magazines**
* **Scissors**
* **Poster Board**

**Vocabulary:** museum, artifact, donate

**Anticipatory Set:** Do you like to collect things? Maybe you like to collect coins, or maybe you have collected leaves in the fall. **Museums** are places that hold collections of things. Museums also tell stories about those things. Some museums collect things that tell stories about plants, animals, or planets. Other museums collect art and tell stories about that art. In history museums, the story of the past is told. Items that come from the past and that are shown in museums are called **artifacts**. *What types of items do your students think might be in the Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum?*

*Read to your students the following description about the Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum:*

The Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum tells the story of the life of Abraham Lincoln and the American Civil War. Abraham Lincoln was the 16th President of the United States. You can find him on our penny, and on the five dollar bill. President Lincoln fought to keep the country together during a terrible war. Many years after he died, a university was founded to help a place that Lincoln cared very much about: East Tennessee. People who knew Lincoln and who fought in the terrible war **donated**, or gave, artifacts to the university that belonged to Lincoln. As the university collected more and more items over the years, it was decided that a museum should be built so that the collection could be shared with everyone. In 1977, with the help of many people (including the man who created KFC – Colonel Harland Sanders!), the Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum opened its doors.

Today, the Museum has collected over 30,000 artifacts that are related to the life of Abraham Lincoln and the American Civil War. Inside, you will find things that he owned, items that soldiers used, and letters that were written and read by people who lived when Abraham Lincoln lived. You can even find artwork that people created to honor Abraham Lincoln.

**Discussion:**

1. Have you ever visited a museum? What types of things did it have inside?
2. Why do people collect things? Do you collect anything that is special to you?
3. Why do you think that museums are important?
4. How do you think that museums can help us learn about the past?

**Activities:**

*These activities may be completed in the classroom or taken home to complete.*

1. If Lincoln’s life has been discussed in class, have students draw pictures of artifacts that they think they might find at the Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum.
2. Museums tell stories about the past. If a story about Lincoln’s life has been read to the class, have students draw a picture from that story.
3. Have students create artwork that tells the story of what they would like to see in a museum. They might draw a picture, or cut out images that can be glued to poster board.
4. Visit the Museum’s website at www.lmunet.edu/museum and select “Online Exhibits.” Click on the “Strong Women…Man’s World” exhibit. There, you will find several everyday items that both women and men used during the Civil War. Print the pictures out, or display them on the class’s SmartBoard. Ask your students to identify what those items might have been used for. Then, ask them to create a story about how that object might have been used. You may also have the students draw a picture or write a short story about an item that is important to them, like a special stuffed animal. Have the student explain why the special item tells a story about their life.
5. Have the students participate in a “Show and Tell” where they bring their own collections to class. Have the students identify why their collections are of interest to them.