



Abraham Lincoln | Lesson Plan

How did Abraham Lincoln unite the country and abolish the institution of slavery in the United States?

Students will understand how Abraham Lincoln kept the Union together during the Civil War and ended slavery. They will also understand how Lincoln provided the leadership America needed during tense and uncertain times in the United States.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the key life events of Abraham Lincoln.
- Explain how Abraham Lincoln united the country and abolished the institution of slavery during his presidency.
- Compare the key hardships and key achievements of Abraham Lincoln that made him a strong leader and successful president.
- Evaluate Abraham Lincoln's leadership skills and decisions, which have named him one of the United States' greatest presidents.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Kansas-Nebraska Act:** An 1854 law that allowed the territories of Kansas and Nebraska to decide whether or not to allow slavery.
- **Popular Sovereignty:** An idea from the United States in the 1850s that people should have the choice to allow slavery in the territory in which they live.
- **Abolitionist:** A person who wants to stop slavery.
- **Secede:** To leave an organization or government.
- **Emancipation Proclamation:** Issued by President Lincoln on January 1, 1863, declaring that all enslaved persons in the rebellious states and territories were to be forever free.
- **Gettysburg Address:** A short speech delivered by President Lincoln on November 19, 1863, to dedicate a cemetery near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, resolving "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Educational Standards: CCRA.R.7, CCRA.W.2, CCRA.W.4, CCRA.W.9, CCRA.L.1, CCRA.L.2, CCRA.L.4, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2

Academic Subject Areas: Biography, U.S. Presidents, Civil War

What You'll Need

- Video: *Guess or Mess: Abraham Lincoln* (Watch [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Guess or Mess: Abraham Lincoln* (Click [Here](#))
- PragerU Kids biographical book: *Abraham Lincoln* (Download [Here](#))
- Large paper or poster board for each group, along with markers



Lesson Plan: Watch and Complete (45 minutes)

Introduction to Lincoln: (5 minutes)

1. Begin with a brief discussion about U.S. presidents and the qualities that make a great leader. Ask students if they know any presidents who were known for their leadership during challenging times.
2. Display the *Abraham Lincoln* digital book using an electronic device. Briefly highlight Lincoln's significance as the 16th president, his role in preserving the Union, and his efforts to end slavery. Show images from the digital book to give a visual overview of his life and achievements.

Lincoln History Huddle: (25 minutes)

1. Read the *Meet Abraham Lincoln* section together as a class, with the teacher leading this page to model fluent reading and set the tone for the lesson.
2. After completing the teacher-led reading, explain that students will now explore other key aspects of Lincoln's life in small groups.
3. Split the class into small groups and assign each group a different section of the digital book to explore:
 - Group 1: Young Abraham, Early Career (pages 3-4)
 - Group 2: Return to Politics, Lincoln-Douglas Debates (pages 5-6)
 - Group 3: Antislavery, but Not an Abolitionist, 1860 Presidential Election (page 7)
 - Group 4: President, Gettysburg Address (pages 8-9)
 - Group 5: Assassination, A Life of Tragedy (pages 10-11)
 - Group 6: Legacy (page 12)
4. Allow time for each group to read their assigned section, taking turns reading aloud. As students read, they should discuss the main ideas.
5. Provide each group with a large piece of paper or a poster board and markers to write down key points and any interesting facts or quotes they find.
6. Allow each group one to two minutes to present their findings to the class. After each presentation, provide time for classmates to ask questions and discuss the content.

Worksheet Workshop: (15 minutes)

1. Hand out individual copies of the worksheet to each student. Explain how to fill out each section of the worksheet with these instructions:
2. Timeline: Students should select key dates and events mentioned throughout the PDF. The following are recommendations, but the teacher and students can use many other dates mentioned in the book:
 - 1809 - Birth of Abraham Lincoln
 - 1861-1865 - Presidency and the Civil War
 - 1863 - Emancipation Proclamation
 - 1865 - Assassination of Lincoln
3. Interesting Quote: Have students choose a meaningful quote from the book to fill in the quote bubble on their worksheet.

4. **Interesting Fact:** Ask students to select an interesting fact about Abraham Lincoln that stood out to them and write it in the space provided.
5. **Vocabulary Builder:** Instruct students to choose a word from the Glossary on page 14 that they find interesting and use it in a sentence that conveys its meaning.
6. **Multiple Choice:** Explain that students should complete the multiple-choice section of the worksheet individually. (Note: The multiple-choice section corresponds to the Guess or Mess episode and can also be used to play along while watching. See “Extension Activity” below.)

Reflection Round-Up: (10 minutes)

1. Briefly summarize the key points covered about Abraham Lincoln, focusing on his life, presidency, and legacy.
2. **Think-Pair-Share:** Ask students to recall one fact about Abraham Lincoln and share it with a partner. Encourage them to discuss why that fact was significant.
3. Give each student a sticky note or index card and ask them to answer one of these three sample reflection questions:
 - What did you find most interesting about Abraham Lincoln?
 - How do you think his presidency impacted the United States?
 - Can you think of a modern issue that relates to something Lincoln dealt with?
4. **Bonus Activities:** If time allows, allow students to complete the puzzle on page 2 by finding hidden letters throughout the book. They can also explore and engage with the other interactive activities included in the book.

Extension Activity: (20 minutes)

Guess or Mess Trivia Show: After the lesson, students can participate in the "Guess or Mess" trivia show for Abraham Lincoln—direct students to the multiple-choice section of the worksheet. Students can play along with the contestants to see if they can answer the trivia questions correctly.

Don't have time for a full lesson? Quick Activity (30 minutes)

Read the *Abraham Lincoln* book together as a class, with students taking turns reading aloud. Then, watch the *Guess or Mess* video and play along with the trivia questions.