

PROJECT TITLE:

Who was Abraham Lincoln other than president of the United States?

AUTHOR:

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SCHOOL:

Broadus Wood Elementary
Second Grade

SCHOLARSHIP & RESEARCH

1. Primary Investigative Question(s)

Who was Abraham Lincoln other than president of the United States?

2. Contextual Essay

Abraham Lincoln has been revered as one of the great presidents of the United States. But, who was Abraham Lincoln besides a great president and why was he such a great president? Lincoln himself once said, “Perhaps a man’s character was like a tree, and his reputation like its shadow; the shadow is what we think of it, the tree is the real thing.” Abraham Lincoln lived those words. He was caring, honest, trust worthy, respectful and practiced self-discipline in all aspects of his life. It is these character traits that made him a kind and loving family man, an admired and successful lawyer and a great emancipator who redefined freedom for our country.

Abraham Lincoln’s tender, caring nature can be seen in his interactions with his family. The first years as a family man were not easy ones for Abraham Lincoln. He was in debt when he married Mary Todd. Not being accustomed to living in poverty, Mary was disagreeable and “fretted that their wealthier friends were snickering about them”. To make matters worse, Mary had their first child early in their marriage. As difficult as these first few years were, Abraham Lincoln adjusted better than his wife. Lincoln found great “satisfaction from being a husband and father”. Because of Mary’s inexperience as being a mother, it was Lincoln who was “considerate about the children and often took care of them”. Often times Mary would succumb to horrific headaches that would incapacitate her for days. At these times, Lincoln would attend to her every need and shower her with affection. Mary loved the way Lincoln pampered her and called her “little woman” or “my Molly”. Even after Lincoln became president, he cherished his family time. He enjoyed Willie and Tad, his younger boys. The times he spent with his sons relaxed him and transported him into a more innocent time. He especially enjoyed reading them stories. He lovingly referred to them as his “two little codgers” and would brag about them to whomever would listen. Abraham Lincoln’s family was important to him and he was a patient, loving and caring husband and parent.

As a lawyer, Lincoln was admired for his honesty, kindness and fairness. An Illinois lawyer and politician, Shelby M. Cullom wrote, “During my life I have been acquainted with very many able lawyers, and I have no hesitation in saying that Lincoln was the greatest trial lawyer I ever saw.” Cullom also said of Lincoln that, “He was frank with the court, the juries, and the lawyers, to such an extent that he would state the case of the opposite side as fairly as the opposing counsel could do it; he would then disclose his client’s case so

strongly, with such honesty and candor, that the judge and jury would be almost convinced at once in advance of the testimony.” During Lincoln’s career as a lawyer, he never made an enemy out of other lawyers. Frederick Trevor Hill, author of Lincoln The Lawyer, observed that Abraham Lincoln “knew how to try a case without making a personal issue between counsel. He could utter effective replies without insulting his opponent, and during all his practice he never made an enemy in the ranks of the profession. No one but a lawyer can appreciate what this means; but it requires generosity, patience, tact, courtesy, firmness, courage, self-control, and a big-mindedness which few men possess.” Abraham Lincoln’s kindness did not go unnoticed by the other attorney’s with whom Lincoln associated. Fellow attorney, Elihu B. Washburne stated, “Beneath his ungainly exterior he wore a gold heart. He was ever ready to do an act of kindness whenever in his power, particularly to the poor and lowly.” Not just Lincoln’s fellow lawyers recognized the kindness of Lincoln but also the clients and clerks with whom Lincoln worked. William H. Somers, clerk of the Champaign County Court in the late 1850s wrote, “I became warmly attached to him because of his genial disposition and the kindness shown me as clerk.” These are but a few of the countless examples of kindness, honesty, and fairness that Lincoln displayed throughout his career as lawyer.

During Abraham Lincoln’s presidency, he became known as the “Great Emancipator”. Lincoln had always been morally against slavery. In fact Lincoln stated, “ I am naturally anti-slavery. I cannot remember when I did not so think and feel.” However, when Lincoln became president, the constitution forbade him to abolish slavery on the basis of moral judgment. Since Lincoln was unable to directly abolish slavery, he had an idea to indirectly deal with the problem. His first plan was to offer federal buy-outs to slaveholders. Since Delaware was the northernmost of the slave states, he offered the state legislature United States bonds in return for a bill from the Delaware legislature that would set up a timetable for abolishing slavery in that state. Lincoln was confident that if Delaware agreed to this arrangement, then other marginal slave states would follow Delaware and there would be gradual emancipation and government compensation. However, before this plan could be fully realized, the slave states of the south seceded from the Union and formed an independent slave republic called the Confederacy. Shortly after, the Confederates fired upon Fort Sumter and the Civil War begun. Lincoln went from being the president to being the constitutional commander in chief of the army and navy. Since international law, during wartime, gave military commanders authority to suspend the normal operations of civil law and rule by decree, this was the opportunity Lincoln needed to abolish slavery. Lincoln used his “war powers” to begin organizing the Union against the south. But by the summer of 1862, the military aspect of the war was going badly. Because the Confederacy was able to rely on slave labor, their armies had no trouble standing up to Lincoln’s armies. Not wanting to wait any longer, Lincoln decided to change his tactics. So on July 22, 1862, Lincoln read a draft of the emancipation proclamation to his cabinet. This document stated that the freeing of the slaves was a “fit and necessary war measure for suppressing the rebellion”. When the Confederates were defeated at Antietam, Lincoln published the proclamation and gave the Confederates 100 days to end the rebellion. When the 100 days came and went with no reply from the Confederacy, Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation into military law on January 1, 1863. Since this was military law and not civil law, the emancipation pertained only to the slaves of the rebellious states. Therefore, the slave states that did not join the Confederacy were not in rebellion so Lincoln’s “war powers” had no jurisdiction over them.

Years later, Lincoln’s critics fixated on the way Lincoln had used emancipation as a military necessity. His critics maintain that emancipation was a strategy that Lincoln used to increase Northern morale and increase the sympathy of foreign governments. However, appealing to “military necessity” was the only way Lincoln could have gotten emancipation passed. At the time, the chief justice of the Supreme Court was Roger B. Taney. He was southern-born and held the opinion that black men and women had no standing as a citizen of the United States because they were not white and therefore had no right to sue in court for their freedom. If Lincoln had tried to get his emancipation proclamation passed as civil law, Taney would have shot it down in court.

So, in January of 1865, to ensure the safety of the proclamation, he pushed through congress a constitutional amendment that abolished slavery. This amendment is the Thirteenth Amendment. This solidified the work that the proclamation had begun before any court could tamper with it.

In 1865, Massachusetts senator Charles Sumner stated that, “History dwells on results rather than the means employed” and maintains that the results of the Emancipation Proclamation spoke for themselves and supports Lincoln’s greatness.

Sumner added, “Lincoln put his name to Emancipation, and in doing that every other consideration became secondary. Therefore we honor him and Fame takes him by the hand.”

In conclusion, Abraham Lincoln was like the tree. He was the real thing. He stayed true to who he was and what he believed. Because of his strong moral character, his shadow grew to be great. By most, he was admired for his honesty, his trustworthiness, his kindness, his self-discipline and respect for others. It was these same traits that allowed Abraham Lincoln to be such a great family man, lawyer, emancipator and finally president of the United States.

3. **Annotated Bibliography**

Oates, Stephen B. (1994) With Malice Toward None, A life of Abraham Lincoln. New York. Harper Collins Publishers, Inc.

Summary: In this book, Stephen Oates paints a comprehensive picture of Abraham Lincoln and the times in which he lived. He includes information on all aspects of Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln becomes alive as the reader gets to know him as a family man, lawyer and finally as a president.

Donald, David Herbert (1999) Lincoln at Home, Two Glimpses of Abraham Lincoln’s Family Life New York. Simon & Schuster

Summary: Much has been written about Abraham Lincoln’s public life and political career. However, this book focuses on Lincoln’s private life. A life defined by his relationships with his wife and children. This book offers 2 views of Lincoln as a family man. The first view sees Lincoln as a family man in the Whitehouse during the Civil Was and the second sees his relationship with his family through letters.

Mr. Lincoln and Friends: <http://www.mrlincolnanfriends.org>

Summary: Abraham Lincoln had many friends. These friendships played a large role in his personal life as well as his political success. In this site, prepared by The Lincoln Institute under a grant from The Lehrman Institute, you see Lincoln in various roles as he interacts with family, businessmen, lawyers and political figures.

Abraham Lincoln Research Site: <http://rogerjnorton.com>

Summary: This site includes numerous quotes of Abraham Lincoln.

Guelzo, Allen C. (2004) “The Great Event of the Nineteenth Century: Lincoln Issues the Emancipation Proclamation”, Pennsylvania Legacies, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 20-23, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27764945>

Summary: This is an article about the events that led up to the issuance and signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. This article supports that the issuance of the Proclamation by Abraham Lincoln was great even though critics maintain that the way Lincoln used “wartime powers” to push through the Proclamation was sneaky and underhanded.

CLASSROOM PRACTICE

4. Teaching Thesis & Guiding Questions:

There is so much more to Abraham Lincoln than just being the sixteenth president. He was a family man, a successful lawyer and the great emancipator of our United States. By learning about these other aspects of his life students will be able to make personal connections to their lives today. They will see Abraham Lincoln as a kind, loving and patient father and husband. They will also learn that he was an honest and trustworthy lawyer and, finally, they will learn that he was an emancipator that redefined freedom for the United States. Looking at Lincoln through these lenses will help students understand that the same qualities that made him a family man and lawyer also contributed to his ability to lead our country during one of its hardest times.

5. Significance & Relevance:

Selected State & National Standards-Virginia State SOLs

- 2.10 The student will explain the responsibilities of a good citizen with emphasis on
 - b. taking part in the voting process when making classroom decisions
 - d. demonstrating self-discipline and self-reliance
 - e. practicing honesty and trustworthiness

- 2.11 The student will identify George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony Helen Keller, Jackie Robinson and Martin Luther King Jr. as Americans whose Contributions improved the lives of other Americans.

OAH Historical Inquiry Skills –

Historical Comprehension: The students will describe Lincoln as a family man, lawyer and emancipator through the eyes and experiences of those who were there as revealed through their letters, photographs and artifacts.

Historical Analysis and Interpretation: Students will use primary sources for identifying character traits of Abraham Lincoln that made him a good citizen and president.

6. Suggested Grade Level and Length of Activities:

Second Grade

Two 45 minute lessons

7. Lesson Objectives

- The students will be able to analyze photographs and letters to determine character traits that describe Abraham Lincoln as a family man, lawyer and emancipator.
- The students will formulate an opinion as to what type of citizen Abraham Lincoln was based on their examination of primary documents.

8. Lesson Plans or Instructional Activities – This kit contains two lessons.

- Lesson one involves identifying the character traits of Abraham Lincoln.
The students will examine primary documents to identify traits that Abraham Lincoln exhibited in other areas of his life. They will realize that these character traits made him a kind and loving father, a successful lawyer and an emancipator that redefined freedom.
- Lesson two requires that children use the character traits to answer the question as to whether Abraham Lincoln was a good citizen. The students will have to justify their answer using information they gained from the primary documents.

9. Related Materials & Resources

Lesson 1:

Leslie, Tonya (2008). Abraham Lincoln, A Life of Honesty
Minnesota. Bellwether Media

Summary: This is a book from the People of Character series. It is a brief biography that explains who Abraham Lincoln is and highlights his important achievements.

Lincoln at Home. Prints and Photographs, Washington, D.C. *Library of Congress*

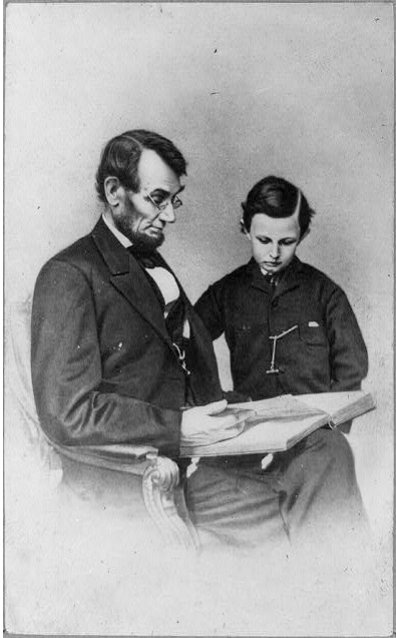


LINCOLN AT HOME.

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/pgs.03434/>

Summary: This is a photograph of Lincoln with his family.

Abraham Lincoln and his son Tad looking at an album of photographs. Prints and Photographs, Washington, D.C. Library of Congress



<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a10735/>

Summary: This is a photograph of Lincoln with his son Tad.

Reading the Emancipation Proclamation. Prints and Photographs, Washington, D.C. Library of Congress



<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a08642/>

Summary: This is a picture of slaves reading about the Emancipation Proclamation in the Newspaper.

Emancipation. Prints and Photographs, Washington, D.C. Library of Congress



<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/pga.03898/>

Summary: This is a poster showing life before emancipation and life after emancipation for black Americans.

Lincoln Defending Duff Armstrong



<http://www.mrlincolnanfriends.org/inside.asp?pageID=105&subjectID=11>

Summary: This is an illustration of Lincoln in a courthouse defending Duff Armstrong. In this illustration, Lincoln is speaking to the jury.

Lincoln for the Defense. Courtesy of the Norman Rockwell Museum,



<http://www.nrm.org/?s=abraham+lincoln>

Summary: This is a painting done by Norman Rockwell showing Abraham Lincoln as a defense lawyer.

10. Technology (if applicable)

- I will be using the elmo to project the quote from Abraham Lincoln.

11. Modifications, Differentiation, and Extensions

- Children with varying abilities will be grouped together so those with higher abilities will be able to help those with lower abilities.
- Using think, pair, share during discussions will help those students who are less secure feel more confident when sharing to the whole group.
- Students with writing difficulties will be able to dictate their information for their graphic organizer and paragraph to a scribe.
- Those students with higher abilities will be able to go above and beyond on both their graphic organizer and paragraph.