ABRAHAM LINCOLN

TEACHER-STUDENT INFORMATION

1. OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION
   Dates, names, quotations, some suggested books, Lincoln anecdotes

2. STUDY GUIDE
   a. LEARNING BY “LITTLES”
      Abraham learned by “littles” that is, attending school for 6
days one year then 30 days the next year until his schooling
totaled one year of learning.
      Here are ideas for students to expand their learning and
for teachers to assess that learning.

   b. LINCOLN FAMILY TREE

   c. ACROSTIC: FROM A LOG CABIN TO THE WHITE HOUSE
      After listening to the presentation, students will discover they
know the answers to the ACROSTIC questions.
      KEY to questions: pawpaw, Hanks, Sarah, Cabin, Creek,
      Honest, Drowned
      Circled letters are:  P  N  S  R  I  E  T  D
      Word to complete the sentence: PRESIDENT

   d. WORD FIND: WHAT'S ON ABE'S MIND?
      25 words to find and circle within Abe’s silhouette

   e. TEACHER’S KEY TO WORD FIND: WHAT'S ON ABE'S MIND
Abraham Lincoln Outline and Study Activities

(if time does not permit…. some of the following might not be included)
I pretend to be Abigail Gollaher, sister of Austin, Abe’s best friend in Knob Creek, KY.
Abigail tells stories of Abe’s honesty, responsibility, compassion, and judgment to
demonstrate “behind every man is the boy he used to be.”

VOCABULARY:
Tadwackers…children       Shank’s mare….to walk      Coon it…to walk barefoot
Say nothin’ … talks only if something worthwhile to share

Born 1809 February 12, Sunday near Hodgenville, KY
    Nancy Hanks…dark, pretty, smart
    Sarah---sis about 2 1/2 years old…nickname Sally
    Tom Lincoln…carpenter, tall, dark, a say nothin’, sense of humor,
    “The day you can flip a flapjack up the chimney, run outside and catch it is the day I
    will call you a good cook.”
    “Nancy, by the time our son gets “growed” up there will be a long walk from the
    bottom of his feet to the top of his head.”
    Dennis Hanks, 9 year old cousin, “Aunt Nancy, you take him. He ain’t goin’ amount to
    much”

SIZE AND STRENGTH
6’4” 180 lbs by age of 18
    5 years old: carried heavy water bucket
    Age 6:  hoed corn in hot sun
    Age 9:   chopped tree faster than an adult
    Age 17: moved chicken coop by self
In Illinois…top wrestler and some thought strongest man in 2 states

HOMELY
Skinny face, mole on right side of face
    Black, coarse, horse-like hair
    Hands, feet, ears too big; legs, arms too long
    Clothes too small
    Edwin Stanton (future Sec of War) called him “long armed baboon”
    1840 in Cincinnati courtroom
Knob Creek, Kentucky 1811
    Best friend Austin Gollaher…. shirt tail boys
    Abe’s near drowning when he tried to “coon it”
    “Time to stop your trickin’ and start your thinkin’”
    Paw Paw trees and coonskin hat prank.

Cabin—storytelling at night by fire
Death of Grandfather Abraham Lincoln 1786; owned 5,000 acres in KY
Tom was 7, older brothers Josiah and Mordecai

Daytime chores Loofa squash sponge

School 6 or 7 years old. Blab school...4 mile shanks mare...1 book...1 switch
1 teacher Zachariah Riney. Abe in trouble. Next teacher Caleb Hazel.
Caleb Hazel speaking about Mr. Riney. “Zachariah Riney means well but his eyes
only see what is in books. Let your eyes see the world.”
Went to school by “littles”.... a few weeks or a few months at a time.
Schooling amounted to total of one year

To Indiana... Dec. 1816
Land title and slave disputes encouraged Lincolns to move to
Pigeon Creek near Gentryville, IN in southern Spencer County.
Wintered in half faced cabin. Used wooden mallet to build cabin in Spring 1817

Tender hearted from youth to death
Turkey...never fly free again
Age 19 in New Orleans slave market.“If ever I can hit this slavery situation, I will hit it hard.”
Also saw play with Junius Brutus Booth, relative of John Wilkes Booth
Birds in hat when circuit riding lawyer
1864... General Grant and kittens
While president he said, “I laugh because I must not cry.”
An Indiana man visiting the White House heard him say, “Voorhees, don’t it seem strange
to you that I, who could never so much as cut off the head of a chicken, should be elected, or
selected, into the midst of all this blood?”

Robert Frost said Abe was a man of steel and velvet.

SEPT. 1818 Dennis Hanks’ parents died of milk fever from the white snake root, a weed
eaten by cows. Oct 5th 1818 Abe’s mother died of milk fever. Abe was 9 ½.

December 1819  new mama Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln
3 new siblings: Elizabeth, Matilda, John
new mother tosses Abe’s straw mattress and gives him feather mattress
Whitewash and footprint story
Recites “preacher man’s “sermon “front WORDS and back WORDS
and inside out WORDS”
Mama proud of his ability to make people laugh
Visitors listen to Abe retell Aesop fables
Quote “read the story then tell it to catch the idea twice; once with my eyes and once
with my ears”
Abe said, “The things I want to know are in books; my best friend is the man who’ll git me a book I ain’t read.”

Borrowed Weem’s Life of George Washington from Josiah Crawford
Recited and lived by “Whenever by accident you do anything wrong you must never tell a falsehood or conceal it; but come bravely up, my son, and tell me of it. Instead of berating you, George Washington, I will honor and love you for telling me the truth.”

HONESTY Blab school: breaks teacher Ezel Dorsey’s prized rack of antlers
Dorsey: “Let Abe’s honesty be an example to each and everyone one of you. I would rather have an honest student then one who makes good grades and lies or cheats”

1830 moved to Illinois
Mr. Gentry: “The Lord broke the mold when he made you, Abraham Lincoln.”
Abe: “Guess the good Lord couldn’t stand anymore ugliness in one human frame.”

Abigail ends by saying: I can close my eyes and see his fingers itching to touch a book. I can close my eyes and hear his laugh which sounded like a whinnying horse. I can close my eyes and see his eyes sparkling with a riddle, joke, laughter but then there is sadness deeper than the deepest well.

This presentation was based on information from the following books:

ABE: A NOVEL OF THE YOUNG LINCOLN by Richard Slotkin
ABE LINCOLN GETS HIS CHANCE by Frances Cavanah
ABE LINCOLN GROWS UP by Carl Sandburg
ABRAHAM LINCOLN: THE BOY THE MAN by Lloyd Ostendorf
BAREFOOT ABE by Sadyebeth and Anson Lowitz
IF YOU GREW UP WITH ABRAHAM LINCOLN by Ann McGovern
LINCOLN: A PHOTO BIOGRAPHY by Russell Freedman
LINCOLN’S YOUTH: INDIANA YEARS 1816-1830 by Louis A. Warren
THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN JOKE BOOK by Beatrice Schenk de Regniers
YOUNG ABE LINCOLN: HIS TEENAGE YEARS IN INDIANA by W. Fred Conway
Remember, history does not always correctly record the facts. Examples: In some books Nancy Hanks Lincoln can only write an X for her name while others state she read every night to the children. Abe’s “near drowning” story has several versions. We know this event happened but the exact details have been lost in the pages of history.

There are hundreds of books about Abe but these are some of my new favorites.

ABE LINCOLN: LOG CABIN TO WHITE HOUSE by Sterling North
THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN YOU NEVER KNEW by James Lincoln Collier
JUST A FEW WORDS, MR. LINCOLN: The story of the Gettysburg Address by Jean Fritz
WHERE LINCOLN WALKED by Raymond Bial

You can find hundreds of stories, jokes and speeches that Lincoln told during his lawyer and presidential years. The following Abe tales can be found in many books but these are from THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN JOKE BOOK by Beatrice Schenk de Regniers.

Lincoln told anecdotes and jokes when he needed to prove a point, help him answer a question or cheer up people.

1. How to win a pocketknife
Lincoln said this happened to him when he was a traveling lawyer. A stranger came up to Lincoln and said, “Excuse me sir. I have something that belongs to you.” Lincoln asked the stranger, “What do you mean?” The stranger took a jackknife out of his pocket. “Many years ago, someone gave me this jackknife. He told me that when I found a man uglier than myself I must hand the knife over to him. Allow me to say that I think the knife now belongs to you.”

2. When Lincoln was a lawyer, he tried to make peace between men. Peace and solving problems were more important to him than making money.
   Once he had to play a joke on someone in order to make peace. This is what happened:
   A rich man wanted to sue a poor man who owed him two dollars and fifty cents. The rich man wanted Lincoln to be his lawyer. Lincoln tried to talk the rich man out of suing the poor man.
   “If you won’t do the job for me, I will go to another lawyer.”
   Lincoln took the case. “But you must pay my fee now. Ten dollars.” The rich man paid. Lincoln went to the poor man who owed the money. Abe gave him five dollars and told him to come to court the next day and pay off his debt.
   In court the poor man paid his $2.50 debt to the rich man. Everyone was happy. The rich man thought he had his revenge. The poor man got some extra money and Lincoln had five dollars for his time and trouble.

3. Lincoln said of another lawyer who talked a lot and never said anything worth saying:
   “That man can pack the most words into the least ideas of any man I know.”
4. How long should a man’s legs be? When Lincoln was a lawyer, two friends came to him and said: “Lincoln, we want you to settle an argument for us. Tell us exactly how long should a man’s legs be?”

One friend had very short legs and the other had very long legs.

Lincoln looked at their legs and said, “I never gave this matter much thought. But now that I think of it, I would say a man’s legs should be exactly long enough to reach from his body to the ground.”

5. Longest Leg One day a man came to Abraham Lincoln’s law office. He saw Lincoln sitting with one leg stretched across the desk. The man commented, “Why Mr. Lincoln, that’s the longest leg I’ve ever seen!” “Here’s another just like, “said Lincoln. And he put his other leg across the desk.

6. No Trouble Lawyer Lincoln, so they say, was walking along a dusty road. Along came a farmer driving his wagon to town.

   Lincoln: Would you be good enough to take my overcoat to town for me?
   Farmer: Glad to. But how will you get it back again?
   Lincoln: No trouble at all, I’m going to stay right inside it!

7. Eleven year old Abe in school It was Kate Roby’s turn to spell the word defied—as in “The brave lad defied the giant.”

   Kate began to spell “d-e-f, “but then she stopped, unsure if the next letter was an i or y. She looked at Abe who grinned at her and pointed to his eye. Kate took the hint and spelled the word with an I. Abe was a good speller and a good friend.

8. At about age 11, Abe wrote this:

   Abe Lincoln
   his hand and pen.
   He will be good but
   God knows When.
A Hoosier tree with banana-like fruit is the ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Nancy Lincoln's last name before she married Tom Lincoln was ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Abe's sister was named ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Abe's nickname is ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ When Abe fell into Knob Creek he almost ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Abe was born in a log ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Abraham Lincoln was our 16th ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
WHAT'S ON ABE'S MIND?

OHIO RIVER
HONESTY
INDIANA
ILLINOIS
LOG CABIN
KENTUCKY
LITTLES
FEBRUARY 12

BOOK
1865
KNOB CREEK
SHANKS MARE
COONSKIN
BLAB SCHOOL
GRANDFATHER

PAW PAW
1809
HOOSIER
EDWIN STANTON
NANCY HANKS
TOM
SARAH
TADWACKERS
Learning By “Littles”

1. Abe was born in Hodgenville, Kentucky, then moved to Knob Creek at the age of 2 ½. He moved to Pigeon Creek (Spencer County), Indiana, at the age of 7 ½, then moved to Illinois when he was 21. Have you ever moved across town or to another city? Describe how you felt about your move. Was it easy, hard, scary, fun, sad, or confusing?

2. Abe made bad choices such as walking across the slippery log and grabbing the buck’s antlers. Describe an event where you made a good or bad decision.

3. Abe and Sarah had many chores to do every day. Do you have chores and how do you make them fun?

4. Make a family tree. If you know some interesting facts about relatives, add the information below their names.

5. Abe experienced events and people who helped shape him into a fine adult. Do you have a relative or friend who has shaped your life and helped form your character?

6. Abraham Lincoln enjoyed reading a story then telling the tale to others. Tell us about a favorite book you have read in the last month.

7. Pretend you are 5 year old Abe and tell us what it is like to carry a heavy wooden bucket down to the creek then return with a full bucket of water. Remember this needed to be done 6-8 times a day in differing weather conditions.

8. How would you feel after spending a day in “blab school”? How would the “ever ready” switch, the walk to school, and the noisy room affect your learning?
Try A Tableau

Tableau, in the classroom, involves students who play roles and position themselves to create a silent, frozen picture that represents a significant moment in a story. After a minute of being “frozen”, the students wake to explain how they would feel in that situation.

Tableau Ideas

• Three students have just watched Abe jump up to grab the rack of antlers. Then Ezel Dorsey, the teacher, arrives on the scene.

• Austin watches Abe fall into Knob Creek. Add some other children to the picture and share how they would feel during this event.

• Neighbors sitting around the Lincoln cabin listen to Abe retell stories from books. How do they feel about Abe’s ability to read, his humor, his appearance, and his future?