

Southern Secession and Abraham Lincoln's Presidential Election

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Winner, 1st Place, 2012-2013 Civil War Trust Best Lesson Plan Contest

Grades: Middle School

Approximate Length of Time: Three 45 minute class periods

Goal: Students will be able to describe how Lincoln's election as president caused southern secession (the Civil War).

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to describe Abraham Lincoln's presidential platform regarding slavery (i.e. that it is morally wrong, should not be extended in the West, and is permissible in the South) and African American rights (i.e. that blacks have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as listed in the Declaration of Independence).
2. Students will be able to describe why Abraham Lincoln's presidential platform alarmed slave owners and caused secession by some southern states (i.e. they lost power in the federal government/Congress and therefore favored individual state rights).

Materials Used:

1. "Abraham Lincoln and Slavery" reading worksheet: This handout contains various primary source quotes said by Abraham Lincoln. A student copy and teacher annotated copy is included.
2. "Dividing up the Free and Slave States" worksheet
3. Map of the Free and Slave states in the US in 1860: sample map found at <http://lincoln.lib.niu.edu/fimage/image.php?id=436>
4. "Assignment Expectations for the Abraham Lincoln Campaign Advertisement" chart
5. "Grading Rubric for the Abraham Lincoln Campaign Advertisement" chart

6. Website used in extension activities: <http://www.thelincolnlog.org/view>

Anticipatory Set/Hook:

The teacher will begin the lesson by asking students to answer the following questions:

1. True or False: Abraham Lincoln thought slavery was morally wrong.
2. True or False: Abraham Lincoln thought black and whites were equal.
3. True or False: Abraham Lincoln thought southerners were evil people for having slaves.
4. True or False: Abraham Lincoln did not want slavery to expand into westward territories or states.
5. True or False: Southerners seceded since they would have eventually lost power in the federal government if slavery was ended in the West.

The teacher should explain that there is no right or wrong answer at this point in the lesson. The teacher just wants to determine what the student believes about Lincoln.

The teacher will explain to students that they will later return to these questions. The teacher should then state today's learning objectives. The teacher will point out that many southerners were alarmed by Lincoln's presidential platform. He or she will also state that many historians today find Lincoln's presidential platform distressing. Lincoln is not, in other words, the social hero that many Americans believe him to be. Instead his presidential campaign may have started the Civil War, and he himself may have been a racist.

PROCEDURE

Activity 1:

Instruction: Working with a partner, students will complete the worksheet "Abraham Lincoln and Slavery." The teacher has tried to make these primary sources more accessible to students by...

- ❖ Having multiple sources that cover the same topic
- ❖ Breaking lengthy, complex texts into smaller quotes.
- ❖ Defining some advanced vocabulary terms in parenthesis
- ❖ Allowing each student to work with a partner

Once students are done working, the class will discuss each discussion question on the "Abraham Lincoln and Slavery" worksheet. The teacher can call on students at random to see how he or she answered each question. The teacher could also have students raise their hand for the yes/no questions. If they said "yes" they would raise their hand; a "no" response would be signaled to the teacher since the student did not raise their hand.

As the students report their answer to each question, the teacher will facilitate a class discussion regarding Lincoln's campaign platform. The teacher will ask students to consider...

1. Who is Lincoln's intended audience for this text?
2. How did pro-slavery southerners view Lincoln at this time? The teacher may need to explain this.
3. What type of voter is Lincoln try to sway to his side through this speech? What will he need to say to win this person's vote?
4. How could someone read this text and think Lincoln was for black equality and black rights?
5. How could someone read this text and think Lincoln was NOT for black equality and black rights?

The purpose of this discussion is for students to discover that Lincoln was portrayed by the pro-slavery press as a dangerous abolition. The teacher may need to give some history about the Lincoln-Douglas debates here. Lincoln was also trying to sway independent voters, which meant he had to appear moderate and not conservative on the issue of slavery. He had to show, in other words, that the press's view of him was incorrect. The debate in history is whether Lincoln was carefully selecting his words as to not disclose that he was in fact for black equality or whether Lincoln was indeed proclaiming his viewpoint that blacks were inferior to whites.

Activity 2:

The class will then complete the "Dividing up the Free and Slave States" worksheet. This worksheet shows the break down of the US along the lines of free and slave states. To complete this worksheet...

1. Students will first examine a free and slave state map of the US in 1860. A sample map can be found at: <http://lincoln.lib.niu.edu/fimage/image.php?id=436> Many textbooks also included this map in their curriculum.
2. Students will then fill out the first chart on the "Dividing up the Free and Slave States" worksheet. The teacher will call on students at random to identify whether each state is a slave holding state or a free state. The teacher can model filling out the worksheet using a smart board or overhead projector
3. The teacher will pause after the first chart is completed and ask the class how many votes each side had in the Senate. The class should notice that at this point each side has an equal number of votes in the Senate.
4. The class will then fill out the second chart, which includes the admission of Missouri, Maine, California, and Kansas. The teacher will then ask the class how many votes each side had in the senate. The class should notice that Free states have 4 more votes in the senate over slave states.
5. The teacher will then ask students whether President Lincoln would have approved a request by a western territory to be annexed to the US as a slave

state. Lincoln's campaign platform showed that he would have vetoed such a request. In other words his election is one (among others) reasons southerners seceded. Many states secede knowing they would lose power and their way of life. They argued for self-government and state's rights over federal power.

As another checking for understanding activity the teacher would return to the true/false questions from the mental set and discuss the correct responses with students. The answers are...

1. True
2. False
3. False
4. True
5. True

Activity 3:

The teacher will ask students to design a campaign poster, song, cartoon, or speech regarding Lincoln. The teacher will go over the assignment expectation chart as well as grading rubric. Students will work individually on their campaign advertisement. This assignment offers students a choice grade, which should increase student engagement.

Closure:

Was Lincoln a racist? Was Lincoln a clever politician who knew how to select his words carefully so he could win an election? How will you remember Lincoln? The teacher could ask students to present their campaign advertisements to the class. The class could also complete a poll to see how the majority views Lincoln.

Extending the Lesson:

- Advanced students could research Lincoln's views regarding slavery during his presidency. They could specifically examine how his views regarding slavery may have changed or finally been disclosed during the war. Several documents that could be examined include...
 - September 22, 1861: Response to General Fremont's proclamation
http://www.thelincolnlog.org/view/show_date?day=22&month=09&year=1861
 - July 12, 1862: Appeal to favor Compensated Emancipation
http://www.thelincolnlog.org/view/show_date?day=12&month=07&year=1862
 - August 14, 1862: Address on Colonization
http://www.thelincolnlog.org/view/show_date?day=14&month=08&year=1862

- September 22, 1862: Emancipation Proclamation
http://www.thelincolnlog.org/view/show_date?day=22&month=09&year=1862
- Advanced students could research other causes of the civil war (i.e. the Kansas-Nebraska Act, John Brown, the Fugitive Slave Act, and the Dred Scott Decision) and how Lincoln viewed each one. Several documents that could be examined include...
 - June 26, 1857: Speech on the Dred Scott Decision
http://www.thelincolnlog.org/view/show_date?day=26&month=06&year=1857
 - October 16, 1854: Speech on the Kansas-Nebraska Act at Peoria (also includes information on Fugitive Slave Act)
http://www.thelincolnlog.org/view/show_date?day=16&month=10&year=1854
 - February 27, 1860: Republican response to John Brown
http://www.thelincolnlog.org/view/show_date?day=27&month=02&year=1860

Teacher's Note:

Students should study this lesson after first learning basic civil war vocabulary terms (i.e. civil war, secession, union, confederacy, and popular sovereignty) and the causes of the civil war (i.e. the Missouri Compromise, Kansas Nebraska Act, and Dred Scott case).

Assessment:

1. Students will complete and discuss the mental set True/False questions.
2. Students will read and discuss the "Abraham Lincoln and Slavery" worksheet.
3. Students will complete and discuss the "Dividing up the Free and Slave States" worksheet
4. Students will complete their own Lincoln presidential advertisement.

Dividing Up the Free and Slave States

The United State before 1820:

State	Is it a Free or Slave State?	State	Is it a Free or Slave State?
Florida		Indiana	
Georgia		Illinois	
Alabama		Michigan	
Mississippi		Louisiana	
Massachusetts		Tennessee	
Connecticut		North Carolina	
Rhode Island		South Carolina	
New Jersey		Virginia	
Pennsylvania		Maryland	
New York		Delaware	
New Hampshire		Kentucky	
Ohio		Vermont	

Number of Free States: _____

Number of Slave States: _____

Number of Votes in the Senate: _____

Number of Votes in the Senate: _____

States that Added the Union	Is it a Free or Slave state?	Who would control the Senate—slave or free states?
Missouri		
Maine		
California		
Kansas		

Dividing Up the Free and Slave States

The United State before 1820:

State	Is it a Free or Slave State?	State	Is it a Free or Slave State?
Florida	Slave	Indiana	Free
Georgia	Slave	Illinois	Free
Alabama	Slave	Michigan	Free
Mississippi	Slave	Louisiana	Slave
Massachusetts	Free	Tennessee	Slave
Connecticut	Free	North Carolina	Slave
Rhode Island	Free	South Carolina	Slave
New Jersey	Free	Virginia	Slave
Pennsylvania	Free	Maryland	Slave
New York	Free	Delaware	Slave
New Hampshire	Free	Kentucky	Slave
Ohio	Free	Vermont	Free

Number of Free States: 12

Number of Slave States: 12

Number of Votes in the Senate: 26

Number of Votes in the Senate: 26

States that Added the Union	Is it a Free or Slave state?	Who would control the Senate—slave or free states?
Missouri	Slave	Slave
Maine	free	None—equal now (Optional: The teacher could discuss the Missouri compromise here.)
California	Free	Free
Kansas	free	Free (Optional: The teacher could discuss Bleeding Kansas but is certainly required to point out that Lincoln is running for Presidency afterwards. He says he wants to end Slavery in the west. This means

		there will be no more slave states added to the Senate. Power will remain unbalanced.)
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Assignment Expectations for the Abraham Lincoln Campaign Advertisement

Requirement	Length	Historically Accurate Message	Audience Appeal
Political Speech	At least $\frac{3}{4}$ a page written	Describes at least five of the six slavery beliefs held by Lincoln in paragraph form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eloquently memorable as well as persuasive
Campaign Poster	A full page in color	Describes at least five of the six slavery beliefs held by Lincoln with pictures, words, or symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visually memorable as well as persuasive
Political Slogan or Song	At least 16 lines	Describes at least five of the six slavery beliefs held by Lincoln in poetry form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poetically memorable as well as persuasive

Grading Rubric for the Abraham Lincoln Campaign Advertisement

- Point value is left up to each individual teacher.

Requirement	Proficient	Slightly Non-Proficient	Seriously Non-Proficient
Length	Met length requirement	Slightly under length requirement	Sufficiently under length requirement
Historically Accurate	Accurately discussed 5 of the 6 slavery beliefs of Lincoln	Accurately discussed 4 of the 6 slavery beliefs of Lincoln	Accurately discussed 3, 2, 1, or none of the 6 slavery beliefs of Lincoln
Audience Appeal	Both appeal elements visible	Only one appeal element visible	No appeal element visible