

Homes of Lincoln

Overview: Students will learn about the homes of Lincoln and how these homes shaped Lincoln to become who he was.

Materials:

- Lincoln Homes Graphic Organizer
- Lincoln Homes Background Sheets

Citation:

- Abraham Lincoln Birthplace: <http://www.nps.gov/abli/index.htm>
- Lincoln's Boyhood National Memorial: <http://www.nps.gov/LIBO/index.htm>
- Lincoln's Springfield Home: <http://www.nps.gov/liho/the-lincoln-home.htm>
- Mr. Lincoln's White House: <http://www.mrlincolnwhitehouse.org/inside.asp?ID=3&subjectID=3>
- President Lincoln's Cottage: <http://www.lincolncottage.org/about/lincoln.htm>

DC Skills (Grades 6-8):

Chronology and Historical Interpretation:

1. Students explain how major events are related to one another in time.
4. Students understand and distinguish cause, effect, sequence, and correlation in historical events, including the short-term causes or sparks from long-term causes.

Essential Questions:

- How does a person's environment and experiences shape who they become?
- What can we learn about Abraham Lincoln from his life experiences growing up and growing older?
- How did Lincoln's life experiences shape him as a president?

Background Information: Lincoln lived in four locations in his life. He was born in Kentucky, moved to Indiana as a young boy and spent his teenage years there, and moved to Springfield as a young professional, living there with his family until he was elected president. As a president he resided in the White House and traveled to his summer cottage in the warmer DC months.

Each of his homes provided him with different experiences and gave him different skill sets which served him well as president.

Objectives:

1. Students will learn about Lincoln's life.
2. Students will learn about the different places that Lincoln lived as well as what happened in his life at each of his homes.
3. Students will analyze what Lincoln learned about himself and the world while living in each of these locations—and evaluate how this contributed to who he was as a president.

Methods of Analysis: Students will read about the various homes and complete the graphic organizer provided.

Procedures

Warm Up: What do you believe you have learned from where you live? Explain.

Activity:

1. Ask students to share their answers to the warm up question.
2. Tell students that today they're going to learn about Lincoln and where he grew up and where he lived throughout his life.
3. Give each student a graphic organizer and ONE of the homes background guides.
4. Have each student read about the particular home they were given and complete the graphic organizer for their particular home.
5. When all students have finished have them jigsaw so that in a group there is one child representing each of the five homes (there will be five students per group).
6. In chronological order have students share what they learned wrote in the graphic organizer for their particular home. Have students share the picture of their home with the other students as well.
7. When all students are finished have a whole group discussion about what they learned.

Assessment: Have students complete a 25 word summary about which home they think was most influential in Lincoln's life and why. A 25 word summary requires that students write exactly 25 words to answer the writing prompt. This means they must write clearly and concisely to get their response in the limited word frame. Have students share their answers with the entire class.

Research link:

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Abraham Lincoln Birthplace:

The Park focuses on Lincoln's life in Kentucky. The Birthplace Unit demonstrates Lincoln's humble beginnings with a symbolic birth cabin enshrined within a neo-classic Memorial Building. The Boyhood Home Unit at Knob Creek Farm was home to Lincoln during his formative years. Events in Kentucky helped mold a young boy into the man who became the nation's sixteenth President.

Retrieved from <http://www.nps.gov/abli/index.htm>

“My earliest recollection is of the Knob Creek place.” So wrote Abraham Lincoln on June 4, 1860 to Samuel Haycraft, of Elizabethtown, Kentucky. Haycraft had invited the future President to visit his childhood home in Kentucky. The Lincoln family lived on 30 acres of the 228 acre Knob Creek Farm from the time Abraham was two and a half until he was almost eight years old. Here he learned to talk and soon grew big enough to run errands such as carrying water, and gathering wood for the fires. Abraham recalled in later years numerous memories of his childhood here; a stone house he had passed while taking corn to Hodgen's Mill; a certain big tree that had attracted his boyish fancy; the old homestead; the clear stream where he fished, and the surrounding hills where he picked berries were all impressed on his mind.

He could remember how he stayed by his mother's side and watched her face while listening to her read the Bible. Lincoln could also remember the baby brother who was born and died on the Knob Creek Farm.

He remembered one occasion when he and his sister Sarah, had planted the garden; Abraham said that he planted pumpkin seeds in every other hill and every other row while Sarah and others planted the corn. The following night a big rain in the hills sent water rushing into the creek, the creek flooded the fields and washed away their garden.

It was also at Knob Creek that Abraham first saw African Americans being taken south along the Louisville - Nashville Turnpike, part of the old Cumberland Road, to be sold as slaves.

Lincoln once wrote that while living on Knob Creek he and his sister, Sarah, were sent for short periods, to an A, B, C school – the first kept by Zachariah Riney, and the second by Caleb Hazel. These were subscription schools and lasted only a few months. Free schools did not come to Kentucky until the 1830's.

Likewise, he never forgot the time he fell in the swollen Knob Creek while playing on a foot log near his home. Had it not been for Austin Gollaher, a friend and school mate, Abraham would probably have drowned. Austin, with a keen sense of pioneer knowledge, grabbed a long tree limb from the bank and held it out like a strong arm to the struggling Lincoln. Abraham spoke of the incident after he became President.

The family left Knob Creek and Kentucky in 1816 moving to Spencer County, Indiana.

Retrieved from <http://www.nps.gov/abli/planyourvisit/boyhood-home.htm>

QuickTime™ and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Retrieved from <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/38/Abe-Lincoln-Birthplace-2.jpg>

Lincoln's Boyhood Home:

Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial preserves the site where Abraham Lincoln spent 14 formative years of his life, from the ages of 7 to 21. He and his family moved to Indiana in 1816 and stayed until 1830 when they moved to Illinois. During this period, Lincoln grew physically and intellectually into a man. The people he knew here and the things he experienced had a profound influence on his life. His sense of honesty, his belief in the importance of education and learning, his respect for hard work, his compassion for his fellow man, and his moral convictions about right and wrong were all born of this place and this time. The time he spent here helped shape the man that went on to lead the country. This site is our most direct tie with that time of his life. Lincoln Boyhood preserves the place where he learned to laugh with his father, cried over the death of his mother and sister, read the books that opened his mind, and triumphed over the adversities of life on the frontier. (Retrieved from <http://www.nps.gov/LIBO/index.htm>)

In his own words:

"In the fall of 1844 I went into the neighborhood in that state in which I was raised, where my mother and only sister were buried, and from which I had been absent about fifteen years. That part of the country is, within itself, as unpoetical as any spot of the earth; but still, seeing it and its objects and inhabitants aroused feelings in me which were certainly poetry; though whether my expression of those feelings is poetry is quite another question."

A. Lincoln

My childhood's home I see again.
And sadden with the view;
And still, as memory crowds my brain.
There's pleasure in it too.

O Memory! thou midway world
'Twixt earth and paradise,
Where things decayed and loved ones lost
In dreamy shadows rise.

And, freed from all that's earthly vile.
Seem hallowed, pure, and bright.
Like scenes in some enchanted isle
All bathed in liquid light.

As dusky mountains please the eye
When twilight chases day;
As bugle-notes that, passing by,
In distance die away;

As leaving some grand waterfall.
We, lingering, list its roar--
So memory will hallow all
We've known, but know no more.

Near twenty years have passed away
Since here I bid farewell
To woods and fields. and scenes of play,
And playmates loved so well.

Where many were, but few remain

Of old familiar things;
But seeing them, to mind again
The lost and absent brings.

The friends I left that parting day,
tho changed, as time has sped'
Young childhood grown, strong manhood gray.
And half of all are dead.

I hear the loved survivors tell
How nought from death could save.
Till every sound appears a knell,
And every spot a grave.

I range the fields with pensive tread.
And pace the hollow rooms.
And feel (companion of the dead)
I'm living in the tombs.

And now away to seek some scene
Less painful than the last--
With less of horror mingled in
The present and the past.

The very spot where grew the bread
That formed my bones. I see.
How strange, old field. on thee to tread.
And feel I'm part of thee!

Retrieved from: <http://www.nps.gov/libo/historyculture/my-childhoods-home.htm>

QuickTime™ and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Retrieved from <http://www.kentuckytourism.com/NR/rdonlyres/6A4ED262-5EF8-4C47-885D-FEB9F7F5708A/0/LincolnBoyhoodHome.jpg>

Springfield Home

Abraham Lincoln came of age while living and working as a private citizen in Springfield, Illinois. It was here that he chose to settle down, build a life for himself and his family, and worked hard to achieve success. At the same time, many of Lincoln's social and political beliefs were formed while he lived in the house at Eighth and Jackson Streets.

The house that would become the future Lincoln Home was built in 1839 for the Reverend Charles Dresser. Dresser actually married Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd in 1842. When the house was completed, the house stood one-and-a-half stories tall with five rooms including a sleeping loft.

In May 1844, the Lincolns purchased the Dresser home and lot for \$1500. Abraham, Mary, and Robert, born August 1, 1843, moved into the comfortable home. In 1846 the first remodeling of the home occurred. The Lincolns added a bedroom and a pantry to the back of the home, and the kitchen was removed from the back of the house and shifted over several feet to its present location.

Edward ("Eddie") Baker Lincoln, second son of Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln, was born in the house on March 10, 1846. A few years later, a second remodeling of the home occurred between 1849 and 1850. At this time, stoves were installed in the parlor rooms, the brick retaining wall in front of the home was constructed, and the front walk was bricked over, replacing the wooden sidewalk.

In December of 1849 Eddie became quite ill with what was thought to be diphtheria. Most likely the disease was pulmonary tuberculosis. After 52 days of acute illness, Eddie passed away on February 1, 1850. His funeral was held in the Lincoln Home.

Not long after Eddie's passing, William Wallace Lincoln ("Willie") was born on December 21, 1850. He was the third son of Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln. Willie was named after Dr. William Wallace who had married Frances, one of Mary's sisters. Thomas Lincoln ("Tad") was the fourth and last child of Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln. He was born in the house on April 4, 1853. Tad was named after Thomas Lincoln, Abraham's father who had died in 1851. Tad's head was unusually large at birth. Abraham, viewing the contrast between the large head and tiny baby figure, thought he resembled a tadpole which was the origin of a nickname that stuck for the rest of Tad's life.

The Lincolns continued to upgrade the house as the family expanded. Between 1855 and 1856 the front of the home was raised from one-and-a-half stories to two full stories. The bedroom was moved to the upstairs portion of the home, allowing for the creation of the rear parlor. Wood folding doors were added to the parlor at this time and the front parlor windows were permanently closed. The rest of the home was raised to two full stories allowing for the present 12 room nearly 3,000 sq. ft. home.

The final alterations of the home took place in the latter part of 1859 and the beginning of 1860. The backyard washing house was torn down and the woodshed was added to the existing Lincoln barn. The Lincolns continued to live in the house until departing for the White House in February 1861. The Lincolns never returned to their house on the corner of Eighth and Jackson Streets. Today, the restored house reflects the Lincoln Home of 1860.

Retrieved from <http://www.nps.gov/liho/the-lincoln-home.htm>

QuickTime™ and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Retrieved from <http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln/sites/home.jpg>

The White House Years

The White House

In Springfield, where the Lincolns had lived for the previous two decades, the Lincoln family had trouble keeping a single servant girl to help Mary Todd Lincoln. In the White House, there was an extensive staff to tend to the gardens and the family's well-being. The Lincoln boys not only gained their own bedrooms, they acquired a set of nooks, crannies, stables and attics to fit their childhood fantasies. In reality, however, only seven of the house's 31 rooms were actually "theirs" — the parents' bedrooms, those of their sons, a sitting room on the second floor and a private dining room.

Still, the White House was not Springfield. Congressman Isaac Arnold was a strong Lincoln loyalist and abolitionist. After the Civil War, he served as the longtime president of the Chicago Historical Society and compiled a biography of Lincoln in which he wrote about his friend: "It will interest those who did not see him at the White House, and who have come on the stage since his death, to know something of his life and habits while he lived in the Executive Mansion. At Springfield, his home was a small, modest, comfortable, wooden cottage, such as is found everywhere in the villages of our country. Here he lived in a quiet unostentatious manner, without any pretension, and dispensed to his personal friends and members of the bar and judges, a cordial but very simply hospitality. At the White House, he was compelled by custom and usage to have large receptions, to give dinners, and to adopt a life of conventional form and ceremony, to which it was not easy for him to conform, and which was far less agreeable than the simple and easy life he had led before."¹

Ward Hill Lamon, wrote of his friend and sometime legal associate: "Mr. Lincoln was always simple in his habits and tastes. He was economical in everything, and his wants were few. He was a good liver; and his family, though not extravagant, were much given to entertainments, and saw and enjoyed many ways of spending money not observable by him. After all his inexpensive habits, and a long life of successful law practice, he was reduced to the necessity of borrowing money to defray expenses for the first months of his residence at the White House. This money was repaid after receiving his salary as President for the first quarter. Lamon recalled an earlier incident with Mrs. Lincoln: "A few months after meeting Mr. Lincoln, I attended an entertainment given at his residence in Springfield. After introducing me to Mrs. Lincoln, he left us in conversation. I remarked to her that her husband was a great favorite in the eastern part of the State, where I had been stopping. 'Yes,' she replied, 'he is a great favorite everywhere. He is to be President of the United States some day; if I had not thought so I never would have married him, for you can see he is not pretty. But look at him! Doesn't he look as if he would make a magnificent President?'"²

For Mary Lincoln, the White House was a political goal, a social challenge -- and a private hell. Here, funerals for both her beloved son Willie and her revered husband were held. Indeed, the first major Union casualty of the war, Elmer Ellsworth, was a close family friend. His funeral too was held here in May 1861. Another important family friend, Colonel and Senator Edward D. Baker, visited the White House before he died in an early Union defeat in October 1861. Willie here penned a precocious poetic remembrance of the family friend. And his father here penned hundreds of pardons and directives of military compassion.

Retrieved from <http://www.mrlincolnwhitehouse.org/inside.asp?ID=3&subjectID=3>

QuickTime™ and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

The White House in the mid-1800s. Retrieved from http://www.elcivics.com/white_house_1846.jpg

Lincoln Cottage

At the Soldiers' Home just as at the White House, Abraham Lincoln shouldered the burdens of wartime leadership and personal and national tragedy. During this time of grief and stress, Lincoln often was described as sad, restless, and always anxious about the future of his country. One officer from the Union Light Guard stationed at the Soldiers' Home encountered the President outside around midnight one evening. The officer commented:

I saw a man walking alone and leisurely across the path I was taking . . . and as I came near him I saw it was Mr. Lincoln. At an earlier hour I would have kept from speaking, but, prompted by anxiety, I said, "Mr. President, isn't it rather risky to be out here at this hour?" He answered, "Oh, I guess not "I couldn't rest and thought I'd take a walk." He was quite a distance outside the line of infantry guards about the house where the family was staying. He turned back after I spoke to him, and I passed on to where the escort was camped.

— **Lieutenant George C. Ashmun**, officer of the Union Light Guard

Lincoln was preoccupied with his wartime responsibilities even at his country refuge. He took time to play with his son and read his favorite books, but he also used the cottage as a quiet setting for important meetings, visits from well-wishers, and solitary reflection as he pondered decisions of profound national importance.

Retrieved from <http://www.lincolncottage.org/about/lincoln.htm>

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Retrieved from <http://blogs.nationaltrust.org/preservationnation/wp-content/uploads/2007/12/lincoln-cottage.jpg>

Lincoln Home	Key Points about Lincoln's life from the reading	Your Thoughts about how the time spent here shaped Lincoln
Birthplace		
Boyhood Home		
Springfield Home		
White House		
Lincoln Cottage		