

## Imagining Abraham Lincoln

### Parent Guide

*Read the “Directions” sheets for specific instructions.*

#### SUMMARY

During this activity, you and your child will read *Mr. Lincoln’s Whiskers*, and then take another look at one dramatic moment in the story. After revisiting the moment, he or she will create a new scene that is not in the book, based on the character of Abraham Lincoln.

#### WHY

Your child will be better able to think critically about a story and make predictions. This activity requires imagination and creativity, which are important parts of learning and problem solving.

#### TIME

- 50 minutes

#### RECOMMENDED AGE GROUP

This activity will work best for children in 2nd through 4th grade.

#### GET READY

- Read *Mr. Lincoln’s Whiskers* together. This book will help your child see an example of a girl using her local post office to send mail. For tips on reading this book together, check out the Guided Reading Activity ([http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/lincoln/lincoln\\_reading.pdf](http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/lincoln/lincoln_reading.pdf)).

#### YOU NEED

- Directions sheet (*attached*)
- Idea Collector sheet (*attached*)
- *Mr. Lincoln’s Whiskers* book
- (*preferred*) Computer with Internet and printer
- Step Back in Time sheet (*attached*)
- Blank paper
- (*optional*) Colored pencils or crayons

More information at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/lincoln/>.



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*Directions, page 1 of 2*

*For kids and adults to follow together.*

1. Be sure to read *Mr. Lincoln's Whiskers*.

2. After reading the book, turn back to the part where Grace gets a letter from Abraham Lincoln. What happens? What does Grace say? What does she do? How do the other people in the story act?

**Tip** For a closer look at the letter from Grace and the response from Lincoln, visit <http://americanhistory.si.edu/presidency/5a2d.html>.

3. During the story, Grace writes a letter to Abraham Lincoln and gets an answer seven days later. The readers don't know for sure what happened during those seven days, like how Abraham Lincoln reacted to getting the letter from Grace.

4. Use the Idea Collector Sheet to brainstorm what might have happened when Abraham Lincoln got the letter from Grace in the mail. Make sure it fits in with what you know about Abraham Lincoln from the story and what happens in the story. (Abraham Lincoln writes a letter back to Grace and eventually follows Grace's suggestion.)

**Tip** If you want to make the words and actions in your comic very realistic, you might want to do some more research. To get more information on Mr. Lincoln's personality, visit the online exhibition of Abraham Lincoln: An Extraordinary Life at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/lincoln/>.

5. Take your best ideas and use them to make a comic strip showing what happened. You can either draw the comic by hand or, if you have a computer with Internet,

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*Directions, page 2 of 2*

use Read Write Think's Comic Creator ([www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/comic/](http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/comic/)). Be sure to color in the most important characters and objects in the comic.

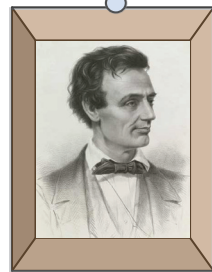
**Tip** The Comic Creator has general pictures, settings, and characters. You may want to add more details or personalization by hand after you have printed your comic.

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6. Share your comic with someone else who read the book and talk about the extra scene you added.
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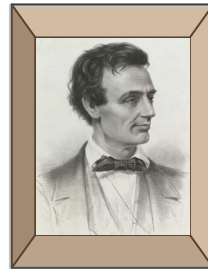
For more activities about Abraham Lincoln and *Mr. Lincoln's Whiskers*, visit <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/lincoln/>.

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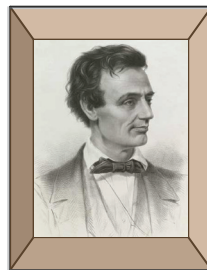
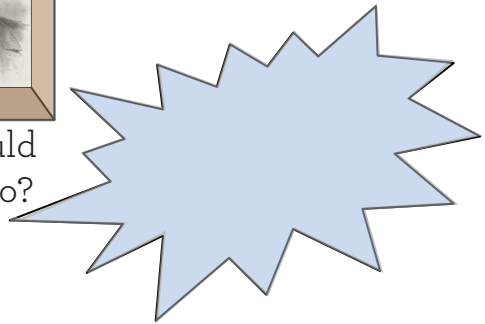
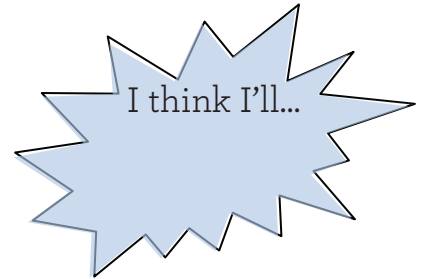
### Idea Collector



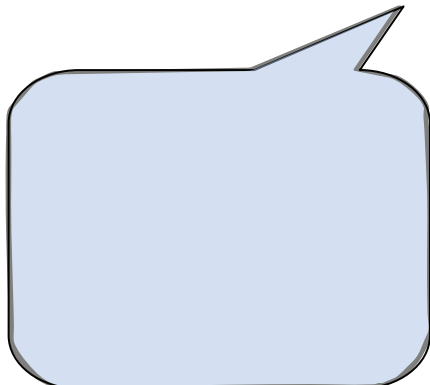
What would  
Lincoln think?



What would  
Lincoln do?



What would  
Lincoln say?



Who else would be there?

What things would you see there?

Abraham Lincoln, 1860, Leopold Grozelier, after Thomas Hicks, [National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution](#)



## Imagining Abraham Lincoln

### Step Back in Time

For more information, visit the National Museum of American History Web site <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/lincoln/>.

**A**braham Lincoln was the president of the United States of America from 1861 to 1865. As a child, he grew up in a poor family and wasn't able to spend much time in school because he had to work to help support his family. Abraham Lincoln is famous for leading America through the Civil War, freeing slaves, and giving thoughtful speeches, like the Gettysburg Address. To find out more about Abraham Lincoln, visit <http://americanhistory.si.edu/lincoln/>.



Lincoln wore high top hats, like this one. The last time he put it on was to go to Ford's Theatre on April 14, 1865, the night he was assassinated.



"Passage Through Baltimore"  
Etching by Adalbert John  
Volck, 1863. [National Portrait  
Gallery, Smithsonian Institution]

Drawings, cartoons, and comics have been used to tell both funny and serious stories for a long time. During the 1850s, just before Abraham Lincoln was running for president, technology made it possible for newspapers to print cartoons. Cartoons, like this one about Abraham Lincoln, added simple and sometimes funny pictures to the news stories that were written out in the pages of the newspapers.

*Do you like to read comics or watch cartoons on TV?*

*Have you ever thought about making a comic yourself?*

*Make a comic about a scene that is not written into the book Mr. Lincoln's Whiskers.*



## Imagining Abraham Lincoln

*For Teachers,* page 1 of 2

*Read the “Parent Guide” and “Directions” sheets for specific instructions.*

### OBJECTIVES

The students will be better able to:

- tell a story using words and pictures.
- read a historical fiction narrative with imagination.
- apply knowledge about Abraham Lincoln to create historical fiction.

### STUDENT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- Creates a logical series of events.
- Asks and responds appropriately to relevant questions.
- Plans a work of art (including written and visual content).
- Demonstrates an understanding of character.

### STANDARDS

#### *NCHS History Standards*

##### *K-4 Historical Thinking Standards*

- 1C: Establish temporal order in constructing their own historical narratives.
- 2H: Draw upon the visual data presented in photographs, paintings, cartoons, and architectural drawings.
- 3B: Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas.
- 3C: Analyze historical fiction.
- 4B: Obtain historical data.
- 4D: Marshal needed information of the time and place.

##### *K-4 Historical Content Standards*

- 4C: The student understands historic figures who have exemplified values and principles of American democracy.
- 4D: The student understands events that celebrate and exemplify fundamental values and principles of American democracy.

More information at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/lincoln/>.



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*For Teachers, page 2 of 2*

### *21st-Century Skills*

#### *Learning and Innovation Skills*

- Creativity and Innovation
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

#### *Information, Media, and Technology Skills*

- ICT (Information, Communications, and Technology) Literacy

### *IRA/NCTE Language Arts Standards*

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

