



A Lesson on Honest Abe by Cassidy Bulino

Grade Level: Grade 8

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 2 hours

Lesson Keywords: Abraham Lincoln, Honest Abe, Reading, Writing, Comprehension, Reflection

Lesson Description: This lesson gives students an opportunity to improve reading and writing skills through a famous historical figure. Students will thoroughly read the passage, "Honest Abe". They will answer questions about vocabulary. Students will then answer 4 short answer questions from the text to focus on comprehension. Then the students will have a longer writing activity to reflect on the passage.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2c: Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

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Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

Instructions: Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

Honest Abe

by

Content: This history tells about what happened while Abe Lincoln had a job working in a store in a small town. Every day people came and bought things they needed there. It was a frontier community. People did not have any extra money to spare. This story tells you about his character. As you read, think about the traits he shows by what he does.

Abe Lincoln could not endure the thought of cheating any one, even though it had been done unintentionally. He took great care of the money at the store. But some days there were mistakes. He always made sure to correct them.

One day a woman bought goods in Offutt's store amounting to something over two dollars. She paid Abe the money and went away satisfied. That night, on going over the sales of the day, Abe found that he had charged the woman six and one - fourth cents too much. After closing the store, though it was late, he could not go home to supper or to bed till he had restored that sixpence to its proper owner. She lived more than two miles away, but that did not matter to Abe Lincoln. He walked all the way there - and back.

Another evening, as he was closing the store, a woman came in for a half-pound of tea. He weighed it out for her and took the pay. But early next morning, when he came to open up, he found the four - ounce weight instead of the eight - ounce on the scales, and inferred that he had given that woman only half as much tea as he had taken the money for. Of course, the woman would never know the difference, and it meant walking several miles and back, but the honest clerk weighed out another quarter pound of tea, locked the store and took that long walk before breakfast.

J. G. Holland wrote, in his Life of Abraham Lincoln, of the young man's progress during his first year in New Salem:

The year that Lincoln was in Denton Offutt's store was one of great advance. He had made new and valuable acquaintances, read many books, won multitudes of friends, and become ready for a step further in advance. Those who could appreciate brains respected him, and those whose ideas of a man related to his muscles were devoted to him. It was while he was performing the work of the store that he acquired the nickname, 'Honest Abe' - a characterization that he never dishonored, that he never outgrew.

He was everybody's friend, the best - natured, the most sensible, the best - informed, the most modest and unassuming, the kindest, gentlest, roughest, strongest, best fellow in all New Salem and the region round about.

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Task 1: Vocabulary

Instructions: Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

Q: 1 WordPhrase: frontier **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: "It was a frontier community." What does the word frontier mean in this sentence?

- A: a large portion of land
- B: a region that forms the margin of settled or developed territory
- C: a region that extends to the water
- D: the farthestmost limits of knowledge or achievement in a particular subject

Question: Which one of these sentences uses the word "frontier" correctly?

- A: Jamie went through a frontier county when driving across states.
- B: Einstein was on the frontier of creating the light bulb.
- C: The middle of Kansas City is a frontier.
- D: There is a frontier in New York City.

Q: 2 WordPhrase: sensible **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: "He was everybody's friend, the best - natured, the most sensible, the best - informed, the most modest and unassuming, the kindest, gentlest, roughest, strongest, best fellow in all New Salem and the region round about." What does the word "sensible" mean in this sentence?

- A: designed for being practical
- B: lacking good sense or judgemet
- C: containing good sense or reason
- D: showing an ability to understand and share the feelings of another

Question: Which one uses "sensible" the same and correct way aas the passage.

- A: She cried when her friend fell down making her very sensible.
- B: I like her because her character is sensible.
- C: Her shoes are sensible.
- D: Jared was sensible when he drove his car the wrong way down the road.

Q: 3 WordPhrase: inferred **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: "But early next morning, when he came to "open up," he found the four - ounce weight instead of the eight - ounce on the scales, and inferred that he had given that woman only half as much tea as he had taken the money for." What does "inferred" mean in this sentence?

- A: a guess
- B: to be sure of
- C: to make formally known
- D: to conclude from evidence or fact

Question: Which sentence uses the word "inferred" correctly?

- A: She inferred that she would be getting proposed to soon because she found the ring.
- B: She inferred pineapple over watermelon.
- C: She was sick and they inferred her to the doctor.
- D: Jared inferred that grass is green even though he knew it as fact.

Q: 4 WordPhrase: modest **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: "He was everybody's friend, the best - natured, the most sensible, the best - informed, the most modest and unassuming, the kindest, gentlest, roughest, strongest, best fellow in all New Salem and the region round about."

- A: limited in size
- B: more than enough when concerning quality
- C: showing excess pride
- D: placing a moderate estimate on one's abilities or worth

Question: Which of the following sentences uses the word "modest" correctly?

- A: The TV was not set on the right modest.
- B: People tend to like actor's who are modest about their talents and abilities.
- C: The modests on the front of the magazine had great smiles.
- D: Avery was being modest when she told everyone how great she was and how well she perfomed on stage.

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Task 2: Forum Discussion

Instructions: This discussion forum will have questions for students to respond. Read the posted questions, and respond to each. Students are responsible for posting one initial and two peer responses for each topic.

1 - Why did Abraham Lincoln earn the nickname Honest Abe?

Abraham Lincoln is often referred to as Honest Abe. From the reading, explain why Abraham Lincoln got the nickname Honest Abe and why being honest is an important quality to have??

2 - What did Abraham Lincoln do to show his character?

There is a short story explained in the story that shows Abraham Lincoln's good character. Explain the story, what character trait were shown, and why it was important for him to do what he did?

3 - Abraham's character traits

How was Abraham Lincoln described? Explain what these characteristics mean.

4 - Lincoln's character in the future

Lincoln displayed good character early on working in a store job. How would these qualities he had then help him in the future as a president?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: You are to write and post a 4 paragraph?essay on how the characteristics of Honest Abe were important to him and are important to you. Why are the qualities that he possessed so valuable to have? How could we improve our own character to reflect Honest Abe's??

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