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A Lesson on The Election

by Andrew Walworth

Grade Level: Grade 4

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 30 minutes or less

Lesson Keywords: Honesty, Election, Lincoln, Ethics

Lesson Description: This lesson is about ethics and elections.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.2: Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.4: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.8: Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.3: Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.4a: Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.4c: Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.

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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.

The Election

by

Content: I was in Chicago when the country took a giant step. I saw history in the making.

I was at the Wigwam, thats what they called it. It is the Sauganash Hotel. There at the corner of Lake Street and Wacker Drive the Republicans met and fought. Most of them wanted William Seward. His manager Thurwood Weed said, Who is this man Lincoln? A nobody from nowhere.

It looked like Seward had it locked up.

I met Thurwood Weed, who was there to get the votes for Seward. I have rarely met a man who was so devious, He would promise one thing to one person. Then another promise to a different person. And none of them would he keep. He lied all day long.

Im going to offer Lincoln the Vice Presidency, Weed told me. Of course he has the Illinois votes. But who else would vote for him. He is not really ready to be president. Look at my man. Seward is a leader. He is smart. He knows how to make decisions. He will not let other people tell him what to do.

I thought that Weed was a good name for him. He was not a decent man. He was buying votes. He was going to make sure his man got the nomination. He did not care about being honest.

I saw Lincolns team leader, David Davis, at the convention. I asked him what he would do to make sure Lincoln got the nomination. He just smiled. Later I learned he had gotten more of their supporters into the hall by giving them extra tickets. They printed those tickets themselves. Abe would not have liked this at all, said Davis, but we were not bribing people like Weed. And the Lincoln team gave them whistles. When Lincoln was nominated, there was so much noise that everyone thought this is our man.

Later after he was elected, Lincoln did something surprising. He made Seward his Secretary of State. I always thought this man is different. He knows how to get elected. He knows how to work with others. He knows how to lead our country.

Im not sure what is next for our country. It is 1862 and we are at war. I dont think that Seward would have been able to lead us through this war. I believe Abraham Lincoln can.

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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: Republicans **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: In our Text, the author states, "There at the corner of Lake Street and Wacker Drive the Republicans met and fought." What does the word "Republican" mean in this sentence?

- A: a member or supporter of the Republican Party.
- B: group of bad people
- C: people who live at Wacker Drive
- D: Kings and Queens

Question: Which one of the sentence below uses the word "Republican" correctly?

- A: The Republican was elected to congress.
 - B: The Republican is my favorite flavor of soup.
 - C: Republican is my least favorite color.
 - D: I am republican tall now.
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Q: 2 WordPhrase: manager **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: What is meant by the word "manager" in this section?

- A: a person responsible for controlling or administering all or part of a company or similar organization
- B: a piece of furniture found in a stable
- C: a type of orange
- D: the capitol of Ohio

Question: How would the word "manager" be used in a sentence?

- A: She left it to her manager to deal with the canceled concert.
 - B: The manager was a comfortable place to sleep.
 - C: The manager was a delicious piece of fruit.
 - D: I hate it when my manager gets wrinkled in the wash.
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Q: 3 WordPhrase: Weed **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: In the text we see, "I thought that Weed was a good name for him." What is a weed?

- A: a wild plant growing where it is not wanted and in competition with cultivated plants.
- B: a lovely plant that everyone wants always.
- C: the highest point in an election process.
- D: a type of soup.

Question: Which example uses "weed" correctly?

- A: The weed was growing in my garden, so I had to immediately get rid of it.
 - B: The weed was exactly where I had planted it and exactly where I wanted it to be.
 - C: The weed was very smart, as far as animals go.
 - D: I have never met a weed that I did not like.
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Q: 4 WordPhrase: Vice Presidency **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: What does "Vice President" mean in this sentence, "'I'm going to offer Lincoln the Vice Presidency,' Weed told me."

- A: an official or executive ranking below and deputizing for a president.
- B: the first in command of the executive branch of the United States of America
- C: the lowest ranking official in the White House
- D: a type of soup.

Question: Which sentence uses "Vice President" correctly?

- A: The Vice President is the second most important person in America.
 - B: The Vice President is the least important person in America
 - C: The Vice President is an ugly tree.
 - D: The Vice President is the ruler of America.
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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 does the author say, "I thought that Weed was a good name for him. He was not a decent man."

Why is Weed a good name for this person, and what does this have to do with the candidate he represents. Please explain why opinions matter so heavily in this section and what they mean in the larger scale of the election.

2 - Why does the author say, "When Lincoln was nominated, there was so much noise that everyone thought this is our man."

Why would a group of people having whistles make a difference in our story? Please explain why being the loudest would be important in this instance.

3 - Why does the author say, "Later after he was elected, Lincoln did something surprising. He made Seward his Secretary of State."

Why is the statement I always thought this man is different. He knows how to get elected. He knows how to work with others. He knows how to lead our country. important and surprising? Please explain how and why a person would appoint their enemy to such an important office, and one so close to their own office.

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: You are to write and post here 500 words essay on why Honest Abe and honesty is important for an election. Make sure to provide specific examples.

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