

Abraham Lincoln: Young Lawyer at the Bar 1832 – 1856



Library of Congress: American Memory

This project is funded by ILEARN (Illinois Law-related Education And Resource Network, the education program of the Illinois State Bar Association and the University of Illinois at Springfield's Center for State Policy and Leadership's Public Policy High School Initiatives to build a legacy of the young Lincoln as an attorney for students in grades 4 – 8 in Illinois. This is an Interdisciplinary Curriculum on Abraham Lincoln in his early adult years as a lawyer.

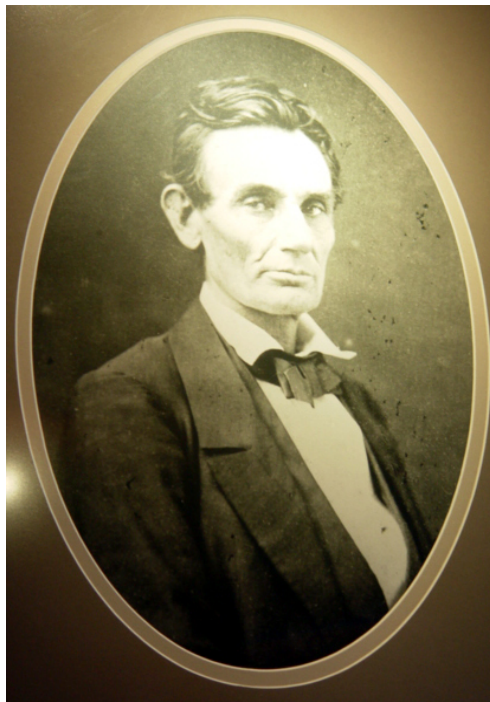
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Dedication

Dedicated to Timothy James Speller and Kathryn Morgan Speller, to honor your creativity, questioning spirits, and assistance on this project...
Your "Plain Grandma"

*"The struggle for today is not altogether for today; it is for the vast future also."
Abraham Lincoln - Annual Message to Congress. December 3, 1861.*



Source: Peggy Dunn, Lincoln Home Historic Site 2004

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Lincoln". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

*This CD is developed and supported by a grant from Illinois State Bar Association and is published
at the University of Illinois at Springfield, Springfield, Illinois. 2005*

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Acknowledgements and Credits

A Grades 4 – 8 integrated curriculum on Abraham Lincoln was researched and written by Peggy Dunn, M.A., M.S. Director of the Public Policy High School Initiatives in the Center for State Policy and Leadership at the University of Illinois at Springfield.

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About the Curriculum Project

This curriculum project on Abraham Lincoln is funded by an ILEARN Grant from the Illinois State Bar Association Education Committee to bring both Abraham Lincoln and his law career into the classrooms in Illinois with a thematic curriculum. It will blend aspects of many subject areas together to help Illinois students gain a well-rounded view of the man in his early years. This man, Abraham Lincoln, who would become one of our greatest leaders as the 16th President of the United States.

A number of people have worked diligently to bring this curriculum to life at the University of Illinois at Springfield's Center for State Policy and Leadership's Public Policy High School Initiatives Program: Alanna Sablotny, graduate assistant in the Public Policy High School Program; Phillip Shaw Paludan, Ph.D. Naomi B. Lynn Distinguished Chair of Lincoln Studies; and Glenna Schroder-Lein, Ph.D. part-time research assistant to the Public Policy High School Initiatives; Timothy and Kathryn Speller, who asked if there wasn't more information about Abe Lincoln as a lawyer for people their age (middle school); and finally Donna E. Schechter, Assistant to Counsel and the Illinois State Bar Association for supporting the development of this curriculum for all Illinois middle school students and their teachers. The

Illinois and Midland Railroad, part of Genesee & Wyoming, Inc., office in Springfield, Illinois with particular thanks to Spencer White, President and General Manager and Raquel Swan, Executive Vice President for permission to use the images of the Fletcher Ransom paintings of Abraham Lincoln that were commissioned by the railroad to depict different phases in the life of Abraham Lincoln. Ransom painted a total of fourteen until his death in 1943. More information will be included in the Art section of the curriculum.

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Goals and objectives:

1. Develop background information for each of the subject areas and how they relate to Lincoln's young legal career
2. Research subject area content for all subject areas and develop initial lesson plans that meet the Illinois Learning Standards for those subjects
3. Develop integrated lessons that encompass the subject areas and the factual information associated with the early legal career of Lincoln
4. Provide a thematic based integrated curriculum of lesson plans that use both video and text materials on a CD ROM for use by middle school teachers in the classroom

Table of Contents

DEDICATION	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CREDITS	4
ABOUT THE CURRICULUM PROJECT	5
TABLE OF CONTENTS	7
CURRICULUM INTRODUCTION	12
TIMELINES - LINKS TO TIMELINES OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S LIFE	16
CHAPTER 1 - HISTORY ~ "I don't know much of history and all I know of it I have learned from law books."	19
INTRODUCTION.....	21
EARLY POLITICAL CAREER	22
THE LAWYERS	25
EARLY LAW PRACTICE.....	30
STAND - IN JUDGE	31
ILLINOIS LEGISLATOR	32
FRONTIER LAWYER	33
HUSBAND AND FATHER	35
FRIEND.....	38
LINCOLN, THE LAW & THE COURTS	39
<i>Three Partners</i>	43
<i>The Contours of his Practice</i>	44
<i>Lawyer Lincoln in Context</i>	44
LINCOLN AND HIS LAW CAREER	47
AFRICAN AMERICANS AS LITIGANTS: ANTEBELLUM ILLINOIS AND ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S LEGAL CAREER	51
ACTIVITY 1.1 ~ THE CHICKEN BONE CASE.....	62
ABRAHAM LINCOLN ~ THE CIRCUIT RIDING LAWYER.....	64
ACTIVITY 1.2 ~ INTRODUCTORY ~ VOCABULARY.....	70
ACTIVITY 1.3 ~ INTRODUCTION ~ CREATE A TIMELINE	71
ACTIVITY 1.4 & 1.5 ~INTRODUCTORY ~ CREATING A MAP OF LINCOLN'S JOURNEY TO ILLINOIS.....	72
ACTIVITY 1.6 ~ ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S JOURNEY	74
FOR TEACHER'S EYE ONLY.....	76
ACTIVITY 1.7 ~ ABRAHAM LINCOLN ~ CROSSWORD	77
ACTIVITY 1.8 ~ HISTORIC LINCOLN SITES INTERNET SCAVENGER HUNT	78
ACTIVITY 1.9 ~ ABRAHAM LINCOLN "BOOKLET" PROJECT.....	80
ACTIVITY 1.10 ~ ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S CAREERS CROSSWORD.....	82
CHAPTER 2 ~ ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS ~ "Books serve to show a man that those original thoughts of his aren't very new at all."	86
ACTIVITY 2.1 ~ POETRY LESSON INSTRUCTIONS.....	88
ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S POETRY	91
ACTIVITY 2.2 ~ WALT WHITMAN CYBERSPACE SCAVENGER HUNT	93
ACTIVITY 2.3 ~ ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S LIFE CROSSWORD	96
ACTIVITY 2.4 ~ LINCOLN'S LIFE BEFORE SPRINGFIELD~ WORD SEARCH	98
CHAPTER 3 ~ READING ~ "A capacity and taste, for reading gives access to whatever has already been discovered by others. It is the key, or one of the keys, to the already solved problems. And not only so. It gives a relish, and facility, for successfully pursuing the {yet} unsolved ones." September 30, 1859.....	100
LINCOLN ~ THE STORYTELLER.....	101
STUDENT STORYTELLING ~ MORE THAN "ONCE UPON A TIME	107
ACTIVITY 3.1 ~ STEP BY STEP APPROACH TO WRITING	108

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S ANECDOTES.....	110
<i>The Circuit Lawyer</i>	110
<i>The Five-Dollar Joke</i>	111
<i>Abe and the Pigs</i>	111
<i>The Shabby Lawyer</i>	112
ACTIVITY 3.2 ~ HISTORIC FICTION WRITING EXTENSION ACTIVITY	113
ACTIVITY 3.3 ~ FICTION STORY DIAGRAM	116
ACTIVITY 3.4 ~ STORY MAPS	117
ACTIVITY 3.5 ~ STORYTELLING AND SOCIAL STUDIES	118
LINCOLN BOOKLIST.....	120
VIRTUAL FIELD TRIPS.....	122

CHAPTER 4 ~ SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS ~ “...*The most valuable of all arts will be the art of deriving a comfortable living from the land and agriculture...*”..... **124**

INVENTIONS.....	126
18 th Century Inventions.....	126
19 th Century Inventions.....	127
ACTIVITY 4.1 ~ INVENTION RESEARCH	129
<i>Can Opener, 1858</i>	129
<i>Blue Jeans, 1850s</i>	130
<i>Practice Research for Everyone ~ The Elevator</i>	130
ACTIVITY 4.2 ~ INVENTIONS SCAVENGER HUNT	131
ACTIVITY 4.3 ~ INVENTIONS ~ ABRAHAM LINCOLN ~ THE INVENTOR	135
ACTIVITY 4.4 ~ INVENTIONS ~ GUESS WHAT I AM	139
ACTIVITY 4.5 ~ INVENTIONS ~ THE NEW INVENTORS WORKSHEET	140
FOR TEACHER'S EYES ONLY.....	141
ACTIVITY 4.6 ~ INVENTIONS ~ WRITTEN DOCUMENT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET	142
ACTIVITY 4.7 ~ FREE LAND BRAINSTORMING ACTIVITY	145
BACKGROUND FOR THE MATHEMATICS USING THE CENSUS DATA.....	147
ACTIVITY 4.8 ~ ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S BUDGET	150
ACTIVITY 4.9 ~ WHAT'S THE COST? WORKSHEET	155

CHAPTER 5 ~ CHARACTER ~ “*Character is like a tree and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of it - the real thing is the tree.*”..... **156**

GENEALOGY.....	157
THE LINCOLN FAMILY TREE.....	159
<i>Mary Todd Lincoln</i>	159
<i>The Boys</i>	160
Robert Todd Lincoln (Bob).....	160
Edward Baker Lincoln (Eddie).....	160
William Wallace Lincoln (Willie).....	160
Thomas Lincoln (Tad).....	160
ACTIVITY 5.1 ~ CREATING YOUR OWN FAMILY TREE	161
ACTIVITY 5.2 ~ MY FAMILY TREE	162
ACTIVITY 5.3 ~ WRITING ABOUT YOUR FAMILY TREE	163
ACTIVITY 5.4 ~ DRAW A PICTURE OF YOUR FAVORITE PERSON	165
<i>Additional Genealogy Extension activities</i>	166
GENEALOGY DEFINITIONS.....	167
BOOKS TO READ GENEALOGY.....	169
WRITING RUBRIC.....	170
WRITING RESOURCES.....	171

CHAPTER 6 – GEOGRAPHY ~"Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed." -- August 21, 1858 - Lincoln-Douglas debate at Ottawa 173

ACTIVITY 6.1 ~ POPULATION MAP ACTIVITY SHEET	175
ACTIVITY 6.2 ~ TRANSPORTATION IN ILLINOIS	176
THE NATIONAL ROAD	177
ACTIVITY 6.3 ~ NATIONAL ROAD ACTIVITY	178
FOR TEACHER’S EYES ONLY.....	179
Resources to add to the Extension Activities.....	180
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS	181
Interactive Maps/Extension Activities.....	182
GEOGRAPHY JOURNALS ~ FULL TEXT	183

CHAPTER 7 ~ CIVICS/GOVERNMENT ~ “The ballot is stronger than the bullet.”185

KNOW NOTHING PARTY	186
KNOW-NOTHING PARTY ~ SELECTED RESOURCES	187
ACTIVITY 7.1 ~ READING FOR COMPREHENSION	190
ACTIVITY 7.2 ~ CREATING A NEW SYMBOL	191
ACTIVITY 7.3 ~ CREATE THE CLOTHING TO WEAR TO THE KNOW NOTHING PARTY PUBLIC MEETING	192
ACTIVITY 7.4 ~ STUDENT’S RESPONSE TO MR. LINCOLN	193
THE WIDE AWAKES	194
THE AMERICAN WHIG PARTY.....	196
LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATES	197

CHAPTER 8 ~ ART ~ “Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed.” Lincoln-Douglas Debate at Ottawa August 21,1858..... 198

ILLINOIS MAP WITH THE FAMOUS LINCOLN STATUE AND THEIR LOCATIONS.....	200
LINCOLN’S TOMB	202
Exterior of the Lincoln Tomb	203
Interior statues of the Lincoln Tomb	206
ACTIVITY 8.1 ~ LINCOLN’S TOMB EXTERIOR CROSSWORD	211
ACTIVITY 8.2 ~ LINCOLN’S TOMB INTERIOR STATUES CROSSWORD	215
ABRAHAM LINCOLN SCULPTOR’S INFORMATION	219
Rebecca Childers Caleel	219
Leonard Taft	219
Daniel Chester French.....	220
Augustus Saint-Gaudens.....	220
Leonard Wells Volk.....	221
Anna Vaughn Hyatt Huntington	221
Gutzon Borglum.....	221
Henry Kirke Brown	222
Thomas Eakins.....	223
Vinnie Ream (Hoxie).....	223
Francis B. Carpenter	224
ACTIVITY 8.3 ~ SCULPTURE RESEARCH ACTIVITY	225
ACTIVITY 8.4 ~ LINCOLN SCULPTURE ACTIVITY CROSSWORD	230
PHOTOGRAPHERS OF THE LINCOLN ERA	234
Matthew Brady.....	234
Alexander Gardner	236
Samuel M. Fassett.....	237
Lewis E. Walker	237
Preston Butler	238
Alban Jasper Conant	238

<i>Alexander Hesler</i>	239
ACTIVITY 8.5 ~ READING A PHOTOGRAPH	241
ACTIVITY 8.6 ~ 1860'S PHOTOGRAPHER'S CROSSWORD	242
ACTIVITY 8.7 ~ LINCOLN'S PHOTOGRAPHERS WORD SEARCH	244
ARTISTS ~ PAINTERS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN	246
<i>Fletcher Ransom</i>	246
<i>Thomas Hicks</i>	247
<i>Lewis P. Clover</i>	247
<i>George (G.P.A.) Healy</i>	248
<i>John Henry Brown</i>	249
ACTIVITY 8.8 ~ CALENDAR ART MATCHING ACTIVITY	253
ACTIVITY 8.9 ~ ARTISTS AND PORTRAIT PAINTERS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN CROSSWORD	254
HORACE GREELEY NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER	256
ACTIVITY 8.10 ~ HORACE GREELEY NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER ACTIVITY	259
THOMAS NAST ~ POLITICAL CARTOONIST	260
ACTIVITY 8.11 ~ THOMAS NAST ~ POLITICAL CARTOONIST CROSSWORD	264
ACTIVITY 8.12 ~ POLITICAL CARTOON ACTIVITY WORKSHEET	266
ILLINOIS LEARNING STANDARDS FOR FINE ARTS	267
NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR ARTS EDUCATION	267
ACTIVITY 8.13 ~ FIRST READING OF THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION ACTIVITY	269
ANSWER TO THE EMPTY CHAIR QUESTION	270
ACTIVITY 8.14 ~ THE MUSIC OF THE 1800S	274
<i>Stephen Foster</i>	274
19TH CENTURY MUSIC WEB RESOURCES	276
ACTIVITY 8.15 ~ MUSICAL HISTORY INSTRUMENTS CROSSWORD	277
ACTIVITY 8.16 ~ PATRIOTIC SONGS OF THE 19TH CENTURY CROSSWORD	279
CHAPTER 9 ~ THOUGHTS ON SLAVERY ~ "You know I dislike slavery; and you fully admit the abstract wrong of it." --From the August 24, 1855 Letter to Joshua Speed	283
ACTIVITY 9.1 ~ THOUGHTS ON SLAVERY ACTIVITY	289
APPENDIX	290
BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES, WEBIOGRAPHY	291
RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS	292
RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS	293
VIDEOS	294
WEB CONNECTIONS	295
MORE WEB RESOURCES FOR THE CLASSROOM	298
FOR TEACHER'S EYES ONLY	299
WEB LINKS	300
STORYBOARDS	301
HISTORY'S HABITS OF MIND	308
VITAL THEMES AND NARRATIVES	310
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES THEMATIC STANDARDS	312
GUIDELINES FOR THE TRIVIA GAME	314
ELECTION OF 1856	315
CHILDREN'S GAMES ~ 1840-1870	316
<i>Blindman's Wand</i>	316
<i>Deerstalker</i>	371
<i>Cupid's Coming</i>	317
<i>Twenty Questions</i>	317
<i>Dumb Crambo</i>	317
<i>Taboo</i>	318



<i>I Have a Basket</i>	318
<i>Jackstraws</i>	318
<i>Tiddly Winks</i>	318
<i>“Bandy”, “Shinny”, and “Curling”</i>	319
<i>“Graces</i>	319
<i>“Kick the Can”</i>	319
<i>Battledore and Shuttlecock</i>	320
<i>“The Needle’s Eye</i>	320
<i>“Football</i>	320
<i>“Baseball</i>	320
<i>“Tug-of-War</i>	320
<i>“Hoops and Sticks</i>	321
<i>“Marbles</i>	321
STUDENT ACTIVITY PACKET	323
LEARNING STANDARDS ALIGNMENT APPENDIX	328

Curriculum Introduction

“Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it, I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people can be engaged in.”

March 9, 1832 - First Political Announcement

This curriculum is focused on the early legal career of Abraham Lincoln, and is aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards and the National standards in English, Social Studies (including history, government, civics, and geography), Art, Music, Language Arts, and Science for Grades 6 – 8. The early legal career of Abraham Lincoln will be used as the foundation to engage students in exploration and learning using curriculum materials that build skills for the students in a thematic unit with interconnected lessons in the subject areas above specifically for middle school students and their classroom teachers. This curriculum and all of the lesson plans and worksheets are presented in CD-ROM format for the classrooms.

Background Photo Source: Courtesy of the Central Illinois & Midland Railroad

“Let reverence for the laws, be breathed by every American mother, to the lisping babe, that prattles on her lap – let it be taught in schools, in seminaries,

and in colleges; let it be written in Primers, spelling books, and in Almanacs; --
let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced
in courts of justice. ...

-- January 27, 1838 – Address Before the Young Men’s Lyceum of Springfield,
Illinois

The curriculum includes the following subject areas that will be developed fully as integrated lesson plans in this project. Quotes from Abraham Lincoln will be used as they are appropriate to the subject matter and Lincoln’s early legal career is entwined in the structure of the lessons developed in this project. A hands-on project based approach is used in the lesson plans and resources for the classroom teacher, which is used easily from the CD-ROM with links to websites that will supplement and assist the classroom teacher in developing and presenting these lessons.

Civics/Government – “The ballot is stronger than the bullet.” The lessons allow students to gain perspective and knowledge on the government and development of Illinois government, policy making, and Abraham Lincoln’s Illinois links in his early legal career to the development of the state and its citizenry.

English/Language Arts – “Books serve to show a man that those original thoughts of his aren’t very new at all.” Lessons will encourage writing and language arts activities that may also include debates, creating classroom newspapers, reading Lincoln documents from the time period, writing letters and developing writing activities that will increase the students ability to communicate both orally and in writing.

History – “I don’t know much of history and all I know of it I have learned from law books.” Lessons focus on the historical perspective of the time period in the life of Abraham Lincoln and the growth of the state of Illinois and the United States in the 1820s – 1850s.

Science/Mathematics – “...The most valuable of all arts will be the art of deriving a comfortable living from the land and agriculture...” Lessons in science are integrated into the time period and focus on inventions and Abraham Lincoln’s patented invention. The mathematics section will focus on the census and economics and budgeting using information from Abraham Lincoln’s family.

Character – “Character is like a tree and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of it – the real thing is the tree.” Using the career of Abraham Lincoln lessons that allow students to increase their personal character and to build leadership skills will be the focus of this aspect through the use of genealogy.

Reading – “A capacity, and taste, for reading, gives access to whatever has already been discovered by others. It is the key, or one of the keys, to the already solved problems. And not only so, it gives a relish, and facility, for successfully pursuing the [yet] unsolved ones.”—September 30, 1859.

A middle school booklist related to the topic areas along with other curricular materials focused on building reading and writing skills. Students will have the opportunity to engage in historic fiction writing, storytelling, and reading.

Art – “Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed.” "Lincoln-Douglas debate at Ottawa"
(August 21, 1858)

The sculpture, paintings, and drawings of Abraham Lincoln and the artists will be developed into interconnected lessons on art, reading, writing, and critical thinking. Research projects on the lives of the artists creating the Lincoln art will be developed to enlarge the student knowledge of art mediums and the artists' background.

Geography - "Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed." -- August 21, 1858 - Lincoln-Douglas debate at Ottawa

Using the maps from the Eighth Judicial Circuit, geography lessons will be developed to assist students in identifying the communities that were included in the lawyers circuit ride.

Law & the Courts - "Discourage litigation. Persuade your neighbors to compromise whenever you can. Point out to them how the nominal winner is often a real loser - in fees, expenses, and waste of time. As a peacemaker the lawyer has a superior opportunity of being a good man. There will still be business enough." A. Lincoln. Using the courthouses and state capitols of the 8th Judicial Circuit students will have the opportunity to take both real and virtual field trips to these buildings to view the courts of the past either as part of virtual field trips developed for the classroom or in person. As part of the lessons teachers may wish to create to extend this section, students may have the opportunity to learn about court procedures of the past, the history of the courts in Illinois, and using Readers Theater act out one of Lincoln's legal cases dealing with character and fairness to portray the members of the case and learn about how the law was practiced in the time of young Abraham

Lincoln, the lawyer. Classroom teachers will determine the types of extension activities they need to use in their own classrooms.

Lessons address the subject areas with an integrated thematic unit approach and include extended lessons in the areas of significant low performance: social sciences, reading, and writing.

Timelines - Links to Timelines of Abraham Lincoln's life

Abraham Lincoln Timeline - http://lincolns-birthday.123holiday.net/lincoln_timeline.html

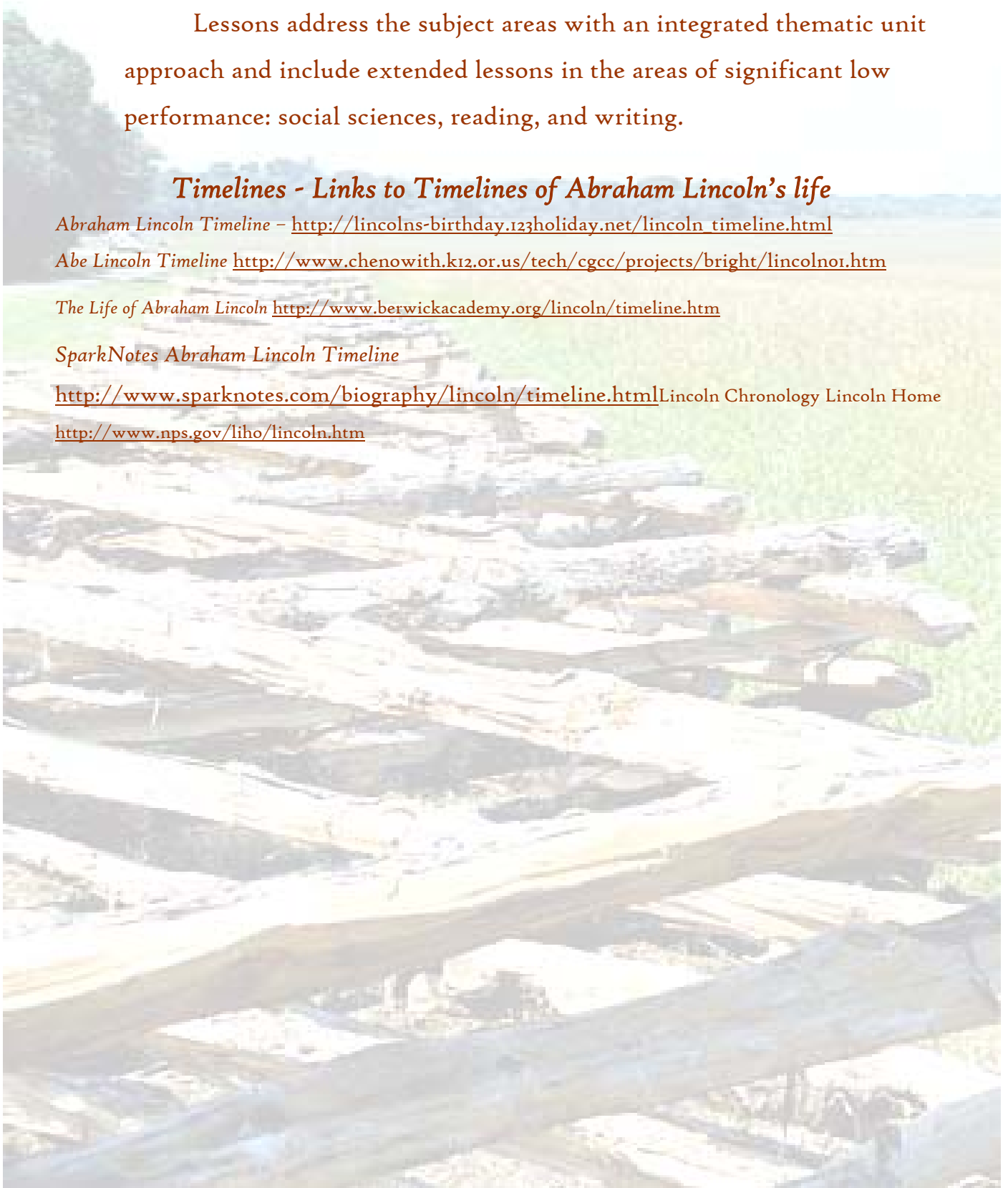
Abe Lincoln Timeline <http://www.chenowith.k12.or.us/tech/cgcc/projects/bright/lincoln01.htm>

The Life of Abraham Lincoln <http://www.berwickacademy.org/lincoln/timeline.htm>

SparkNotes Abraham Lincoln Timeline

<http://www.sparknotes.com/biography/lincoln/timeline.html> Lincoln Chronology Lincoln Home

<http://www.nps.gov/liho/lincoln.htm>



Introducing Abraham Lincoln –

The Path to His Career in the Law

The path trod by Abraham Lincoln to the law was an intriguing one. Because of this it makes sense to spend some time learning about the different careers that Lincoln attempted before making the decision to read for the law and accepted as a member of the Bar in Illinois in 1836.

“The philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next.” Abraham Lincoln

A trip to New Orleans would begin this adventure for Abraham Lincoln at the age of 22, as he rode a flatboat to New Orleans upon leaving Macon County and his father’s family. This would be the first of several trips to the end of the Mississippi River before a high spot in the Sangamon River would cause the flatboat to hang up near the village of New Salem. This event would lead to Abraham becoming a member of this community and change the course of his life. It is reported that Abraham was uncertain about his career choices from the trials he would pursue with each, until he reached the decision to read for the law.



Part of the journey of his career would lead him to run for the State Legislature after only a short stay in New Salem and while he awaited the elections; he answered the Governor’s call for a militia of one thousand men to fight Black Hawk and his braves, where he served for three months as the Captain of his militia unit.



Upon return to New Salem, Lincoln continued his electioneering supporting the internal improvements; but failed to successfully be seated. The postmaster’s position was soon filled by the man who would find enjoyment in the job, as he was able to read the newspapers that came into the community. Another storekeeping effort failed and left Lincoln with a large debt to settle with only the \$50 to \$75.00 per year from the post office; he

took up splitting rails, helping at the mill and in the harvest and when John Calhoun, the country surveyor promised to make Lincoln his assistant a great effort was put forth learning the surveying trade and purchasing the tools to survey and a horse on credit. Income from surveying was set at \$2.50 per quarter section of land and \$2.00 per day for traveling expenses.

In 1834, Lincoln determined to try once more for the legislature with success. During his campaign was encouraged by John Stuart to begin to study for the law using books borrowed from Stuart.



The frontier village of New Salem would be home for Lincoln for six years that were fruitful, important years. The works of Shakespeare, the poetry of Robert Burns, and the study of mathematics and grammar were mastered. He made his 'fledgling' efforts in speechmaking and politics and there he learned to know the people, made friendships.... tried his hand at many trades – storekeeper, storeowner, postmaster, surveyor ... according to Stefan Lorant. More of the journey to the law will be developed as the reader enters.

Source of Paintings: Illinois Midland Railroad granted permission to use these paintings by Fletcher Ransom