The President and Music of the Civil War

Learning Activity-Elementary Level

OVERVIEW

Throughout these activities, the students will be able to learn about President Abraham Lincoln and the type of music throughout the Civil War by analyzing Primary Sources. These Primary Sources were from The Library of Congress Website. Students will be able to analyze a couple Primary Sources associated with Abraham Lincoln. Furthermore, the students will learn a little bit about the music during the Civil War, being that Abraham Lincoln was President during that time period. At a young age, students may not have to focus specifically on the events of the Civil War, but rather explore other components of the Civil War. The students will be able to listen to an audio clip of “When Johnny Comes Marching Home,” a familiar song during the Civil War. Additionally, they will be able to view the Primary Source of the lyrics associated with that song to further analyze the meaning of that song. Nonetheless, these activities all do a good job of letting students explore Abraham Lincoln as a President and briefly, the Civil War.

TEXT STRUCTURE: Analysis (Students will be examining several Primary Sources to learn about Abraham Lincoln and music during the Civil War).

“Through analyzing different types of Primary Sources, how can we learn about President Lincoln and music during the Civil War?”

OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Analyze portraits of two Primary Sources; they will use the Primary Source Analysis Tool to complete this process.
- Create their own campaign sign if they were to run for president.
- Listen to the song “When Johnny Came Marching Home” and use The Primary Source Analysis Tool: Analyzing Sound Recordings to examine the lyrics to the song.
- Listen to the story “Mr. Lincoln’s Whiskers” and verbally respond to questions before, during, and after reading.
- Compose their own letter to Mr. Lincoln asking him a question of their choice as well as telling him a little bit about themselves.

SUBJECT: Social Studies
GRADE(S): 2-3

MATERIALS:

Primary Source: Portrait of Abraham Lincoln


- [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/service/pnp/pga/02900/02917r.jpg](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/service/pnp/pga/02900/02917r.jpg)

Primary Source: “For President: Abram Lincoln. For Vice President: Hannibal Hamlin.”


- [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3b40000/3b48000/3b48200/3b48243r.jpg](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3b40000/3b48000/3b48200/3b48243r.jpg)

Primary Source audio of “When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again.”


- [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/loc.natlib.ihas.100010360/default.html](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/loc.natlib.ihas.100010360/default.html)

Primary Source Text (Literature) {sheet music} to “When Johnny Comes Marching Home.”


- [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/loc.natlib.ihas.200001128/pageturner.html](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/loc.natlib.ihas.200001128/pageturner.html)

Secondary Source Non-Fiction Historical Informational Text: Mr. Lincoln’s Whiskers


RESOURCES:

The following resources were used from the Library of Congress to create this lesson:

Library of Congress Website
PROCEDURE:

1. The teacher will display the **Primary Source: Portrait of Abraham Lincoln** on the board as students enter the classroom. Allow several minutes for students to discuss the portrait amongst themselves.
   - Pass out a copy of the **Primary Source Analysis Tool** to each of the students. Discuss with them how they will complete the tool. Some questions to prompt the students could included:
     - Does this picture look like it was created recently? Why or why not?
     - What stands out in this photo?
     - Why might the colors in this photo look different than a photo may look today?
     - What do you notice about his clothing in the photo?
     - By looking at this picture, what does it look like this man does for a living?
     - Does he seem important to the world? Why or why not?
     - What can we conclude from looking at this photo?
• After the students have had time to complete the **Primary Source Analysis Tool**, inform the students that the portrait was of a man named Abraham Lincoln, a former President of the United States.
- For the “further investigation” portion of the **Analysis Tool** the students will research President Lincoln and find at least three facts about him.

2. The teacher will display the **Primary Source**: “**For President: Abram Lincoln. For Vice President: Hannibal Hamlin.**” The teacher will first break students up into groups of three or four. Give the students another copy of the **Primary Source Analysis Tool**.

   *(Stripling Model of Inquiry)*
   - Now, the students will use what they know to **CONNECT** what we had done in the previous step to analyze another Primary Source.
   - After students have had time to complete the Analysis Tool allow students to **EXPRESS** their findings and understanding of the Primary Source with one another.

3. Next the students will construct their own campaign sign as if they were running for president. (This could be done for the “further investigation” portion on the **Primary Source Analysis Tool**).

   *(Stripling Model of Inquiry)*
   - Students will **CONSTRUCT** a campaign sign by **CONNECTING** previous knowledge. Students will use what they already know about current campaign signs. Also, they will **CONNECT** what they learned in the previous skill to apply what they had learned about Abraham Lincoln’s Campaign sign.

4. The teacher will then have a brief discussion with the students explaining how Abraham Lincoln was president during a war. That war was called the Civil War. Explain to students that they are going to listen to a piece of music that was known very well known during the Civil War.

   • Using the **Primary Source audio** of “**When Johnny Comes Marching Home,**” the teacher will play the song for the students to listen to. For the first time, allow students to just listen to the song.

   • The second time the students listen to the song, the teacher will display the **Primary Source Text (Literature) {sheet music}** to “**When Johnny Comes Marching Home**” on the board so that students are able to follow along. (The teacher will have to point to the words as they are said due to this being a younger group of students and varying reading levels in the classroom).

   • Next, the teacher will use the **Primary Source Analysis Tool: Analyzing Sound Recordings**. The teacher and the students will analyze the lyrics and complete this together.

   *(Stripling Model of Inquiry)*
-The students will **INVESTIGATE** the lyrics to the sheet music of “When Johnny Comes Marching Home.” The students will use investigation to try and find the meaning of the lyrics to this song. Using the **Analysis Tool**, students will **WONDER** about the lyrics to the song. Nonetheless, they will develop questions and make predictions about the lyrics to the song.

-For the “furthering investigation” portion of the **Analysis Tool**, the students may research the composer of the sheet music, Louis Lambert.

5. Lastly, the teacher will share the **Secondary Source Non-Fiction Historical Informational text: Mr. Lincoln’s Whiskers** with the students.

- The teacher will pose questions throughout the duration of the story.

- **Before reading**—show the story to the students and ask questions such as:
  - What will this story be about?
  - How might you connect this story to what we have been learning about?
  - Is this story fiction or non-fiction?
  - What do you think the title of the story means?

- **During reading**—because this lesson is directed towards younger students, the teacher will need to stop reading after at least every two pages. Questions could include:
  - Who is Mr. Lincoln?
  - What is the little girl’s name in this story?
  - What did the little girl want to tell Mr. Lincoln?
  - Why are we reading this story?
  - Does this story relate to what we have been learning about?

- **After reading**—questions should be asked after reading the story as well. Questions might include:
  - What did you think of Mr. Lincoln?
  - Does Mr. Lincoln remind you of anybody that you know?
  - What would you have asked Mr. Lincoln in a letter after everything we’ve learned?

- As a closing activity to this lesson the students will compose a letter to Abraham Lincoln. Inform the students that they need to include a little bit of information about them and at least ask him one question of their choice. The teacher should refer to the letter that the little girl wrote to Mr. Lincoln in the story “Mr. Lincoln’s Whiskers.”

*(Stripling Model of Inquiry)*

- The students will **CONNECT** what they learned about the letter in the story “Mr. Lincoln’s Whiskers” to compose their own letter to Mr. Lincoln. The students will **EXPRESS** and apply their new understandings to write their letter.
-Finally, have the students share their letters to Mr. Lincoln with one another. Their letters should REFLECT on their new understanding of Abraham Lincoln.