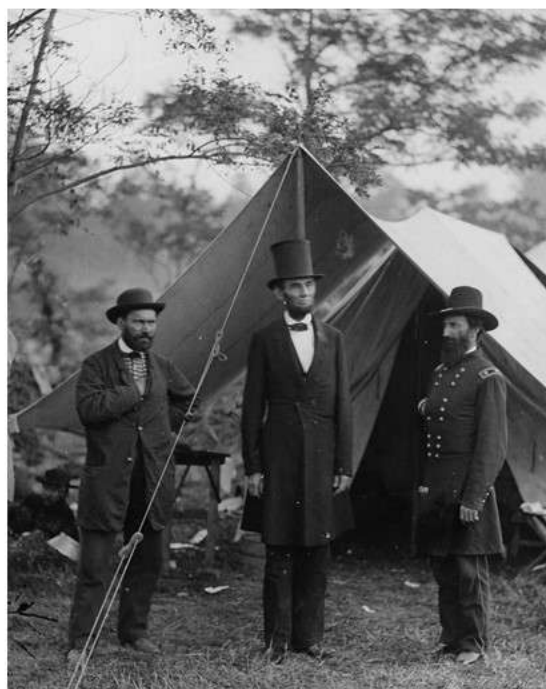


# LESSON 6 - ABRAHAM LINCOLN

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

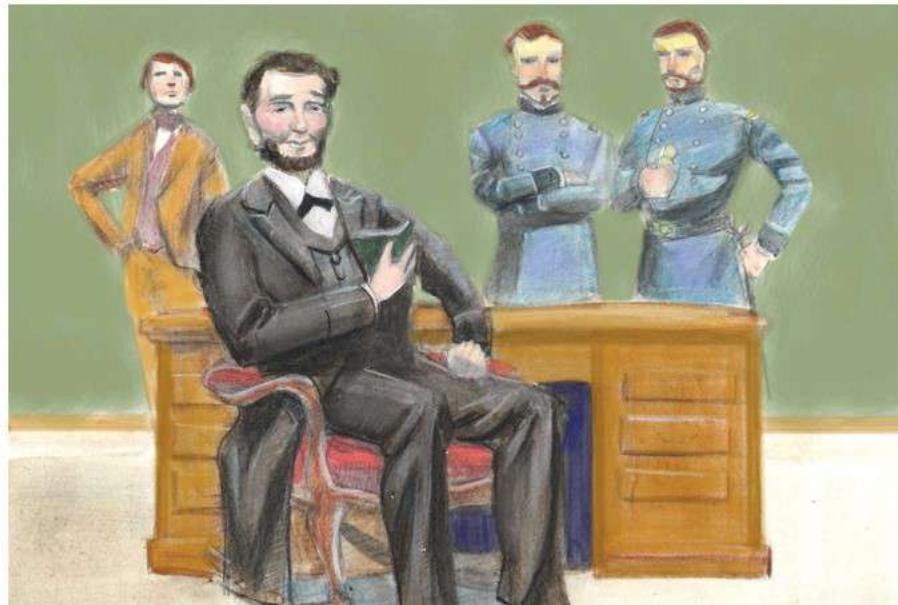
If I asked you what you kept under your hat, you might laugh and say, "My head! What else would I keep under my hat?" *The word head means the part of your body that contains your brain and face.*

President Abraham Lincoln kept his head under his hat, too. You may have seen pictures of a tall, bearded man wearing his tall, black hat. But sometimes Mr. Lincoln kept something more than his head under there, too. Here is the story of what lay beneath Abraham Lincoln's hat. *What do you think is under his hat?*



# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Abraham Lincoln was a busy man, surrounded by many other busy men who helped him make important decisions. They grew impatient when they had to wait to meet with the president. So, on this particular day, as they waited to see their chief, President Abraham Lincoln, they were not in a good mood. *You heard the word chief before. What does the word chief mean? (the person in charge)*

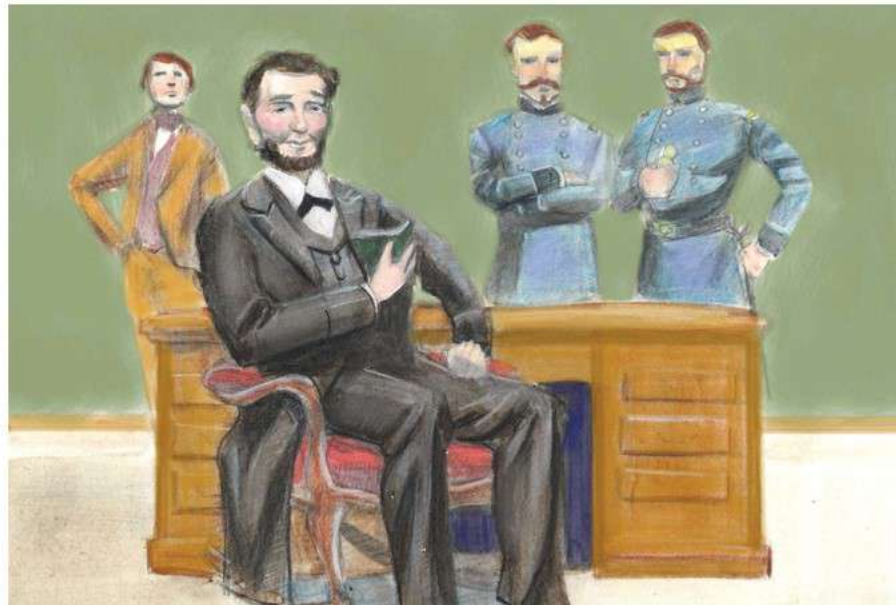




# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

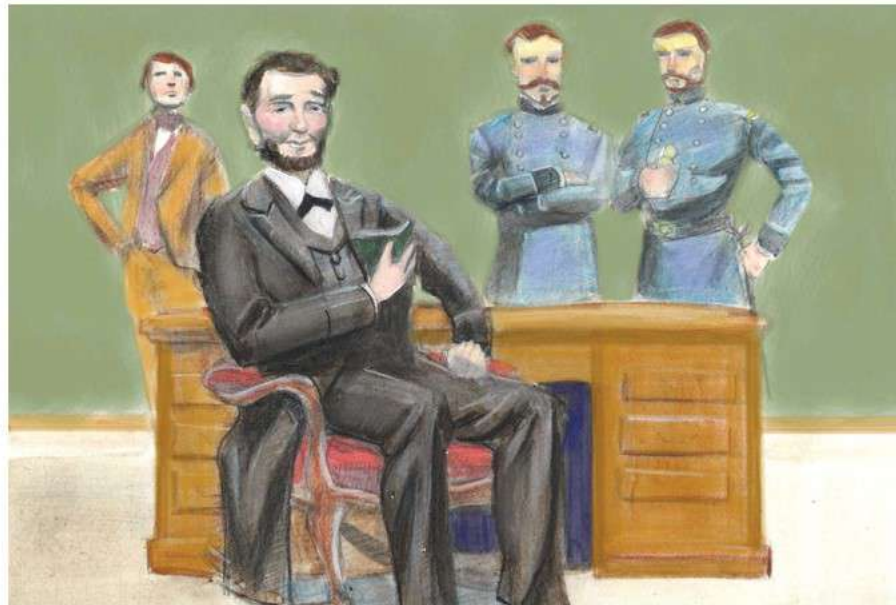
They became even angrier when they entered President Lincoln's office and found him in his rocking chair, his long legs stretched out before him, holding a book and laughing aloud. Each man thought, "We are in the middle of a war. Does the president think we have nothing better to do than to listen to him laugh? We do not like war! We do not like sending people off to fight! We worry all the time about whether we are doing the best jobs we can, yet he does not look worried, even though he is in charge of the whole war."

*The war they were in was the U.S. Civil War, between the northern states and southern states. Lincoln and his men fought for the northern states and were against slavery.*



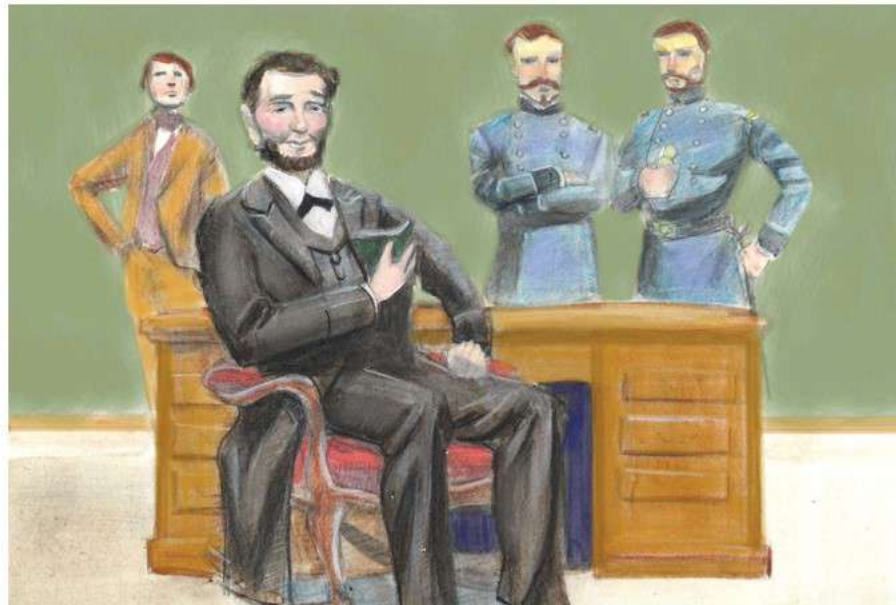
# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Lincoln asked the men to sit down. He said, "Welcome, gentlemen. Before we get down to business, listen to this joke." The men listened as the president read the joke out loud. Then he laughed again, but no one else laughed. One man said, "Mister President, did you ask us here in order to read us a joke? That is a waste of our time."



# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

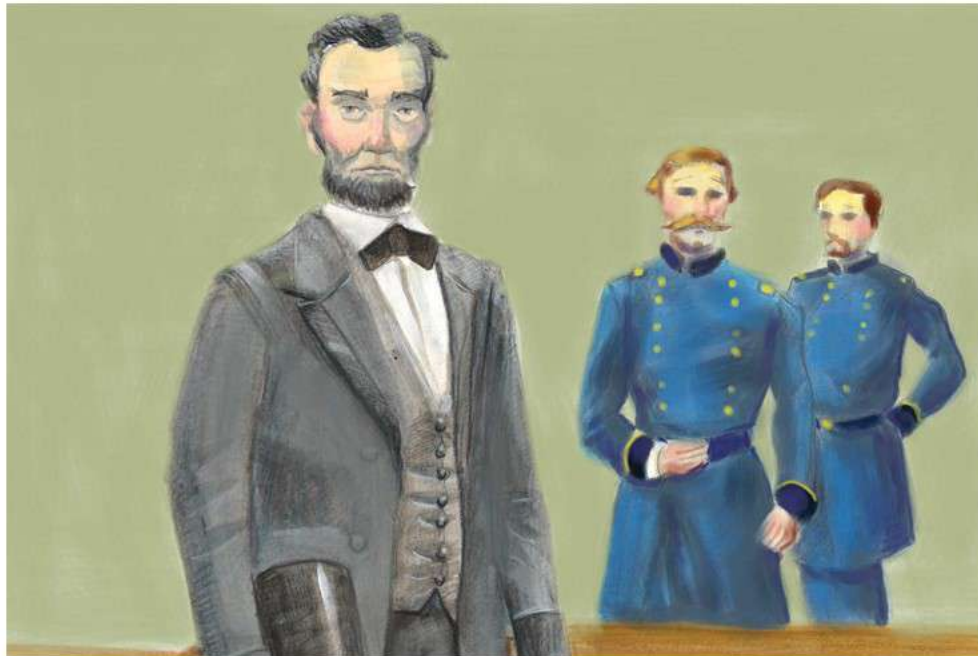
Lincoln set down his book. His face became serious. *Serious means not smiling or happy.* "That is not why I called you here," he said. "But running a war, knowing that people will get hurt or killed, is a sad business. When I can laugh, I do, for if I do not laugh, I might cry. I thought you could use a laugh, too."





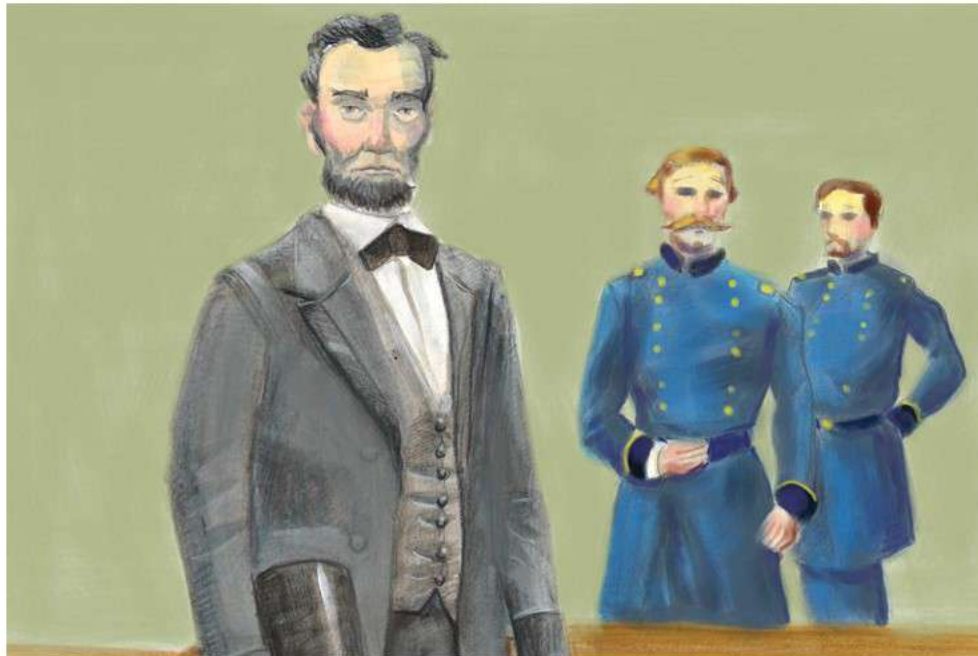
# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

He stood up, all six feet, four inches of him— that was a lot taller than most men in his time. Walking to his desk, he picked up his tall, black hat and reached inside. Pulling out a folded piece of paper, he said, “I have been carrying this paper inside my hatband for more than three months, waiting for the right day to show it to you. Today is that day. I have word that our army has won a great battle. Perhaps we are beginning to win this terrible war at last. Now I feel safe in telling people what I want to do next.” *What is the “terrible war” Lincoln is talking about?*



# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

When George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and others started the United States a hundred years earlier, they tried to make a country in which people could be free to do as they wished and to travel wherever they chose to go. They did many wonderful things, but they failed to do one important thing: they did not end slavery in **America**. *Slavery is the situation in which people, called enslaved people, are forced to work for someone else without pay and without having the freedom to live their lives the way they want.*





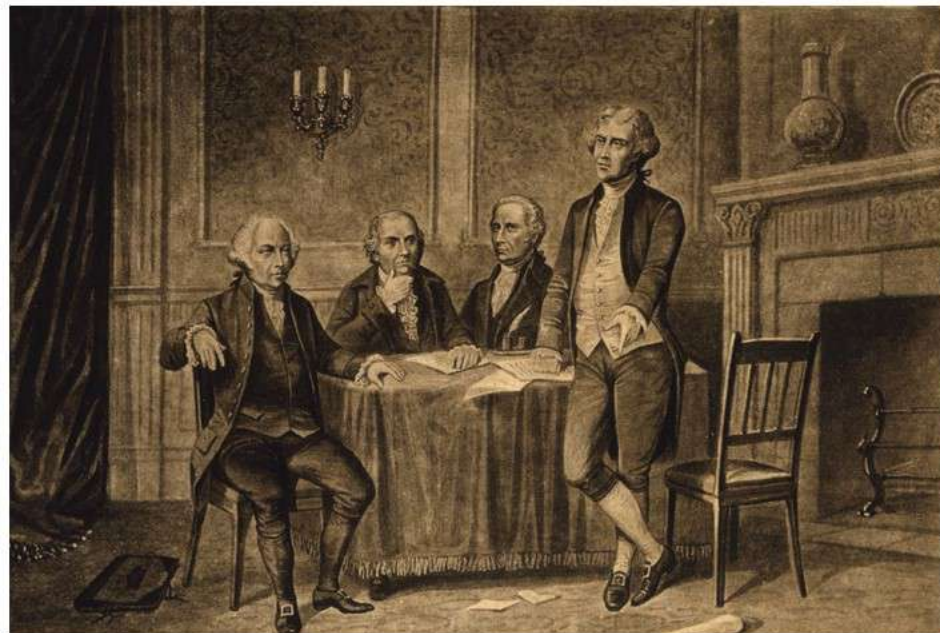
# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Being an enslaved person was the worst thing a person could be. An enslaved person had to do whatever he or she was told. The enslaved person did not get paid to work, but only received very plain food to eat, clothes to wear—often, old clothes—and a place to sleep. The enslaved person could not choose to leave or decide how to live his or her life.



# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

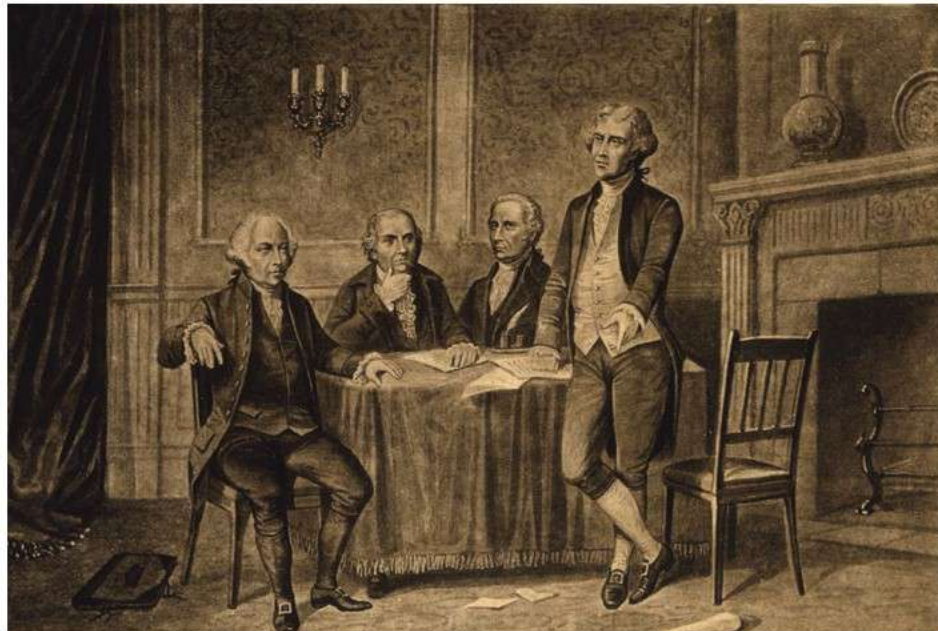
Some of the people who started the United States said, "Slavery is a terrible thing! We must not allow it in our new country. We believe in freedom. How could we have enslaved people here?" But other people answered, "Slavery is fine. The rest of us will be free to decide things for ourselves, but enslaved people will not. If you say there will be no slavery, we will not help start the new country."





# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

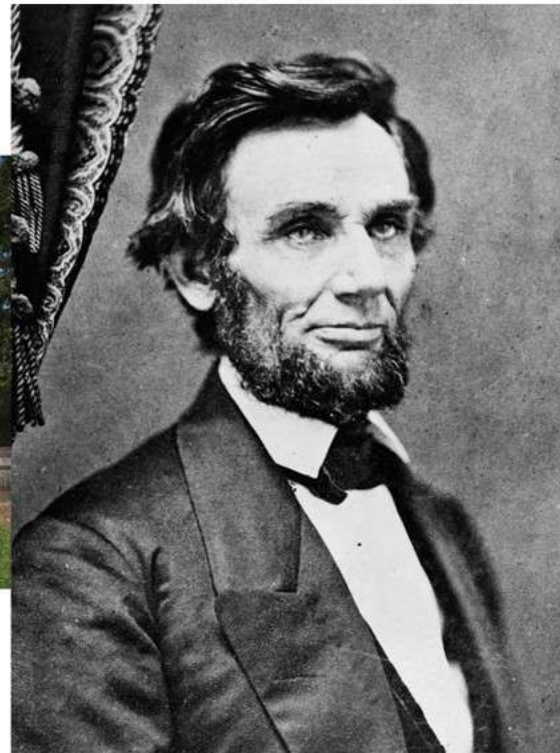
George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and their friends knew slavery was wrong, but they thought, "We need enslaved people to help us start the country. Afterward, we can end slavery." *People thought they needed enslaved people to help them do their work, especially the farmers in the South.* But after America was born, year after year, many people still held onto slavery. The year before Thomas Jefferson died, he called slavery "a tornado that will burst on us sooner or later." He feared there would be a war between those who wanted to end slavery and those who supported it.





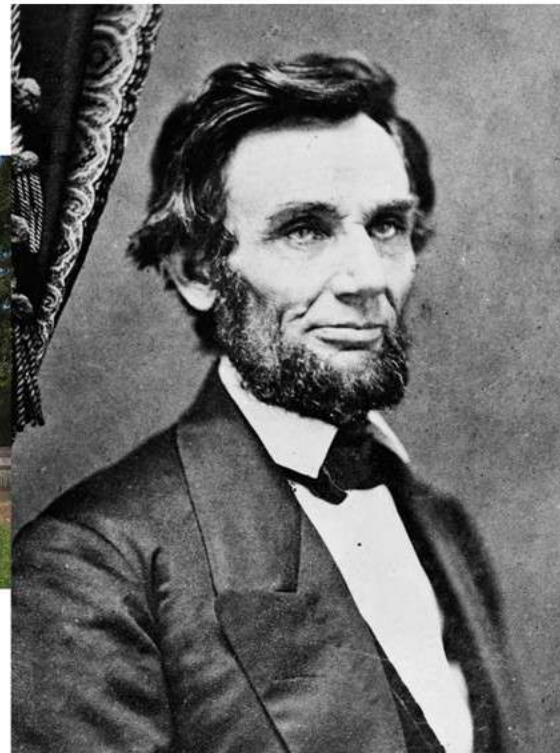
# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Abraham Lincoln was born in Kentucky the year Jefferson finished being president. Lincoln was born to a poor family living in the forest in a tiny cabin made of logs. His parents did not know how to read or write. Lincoln had to work hard to help them, and since he was a fair, honest person, he grew up believing everyone who worked should be paid fairly and treated fairly.



# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

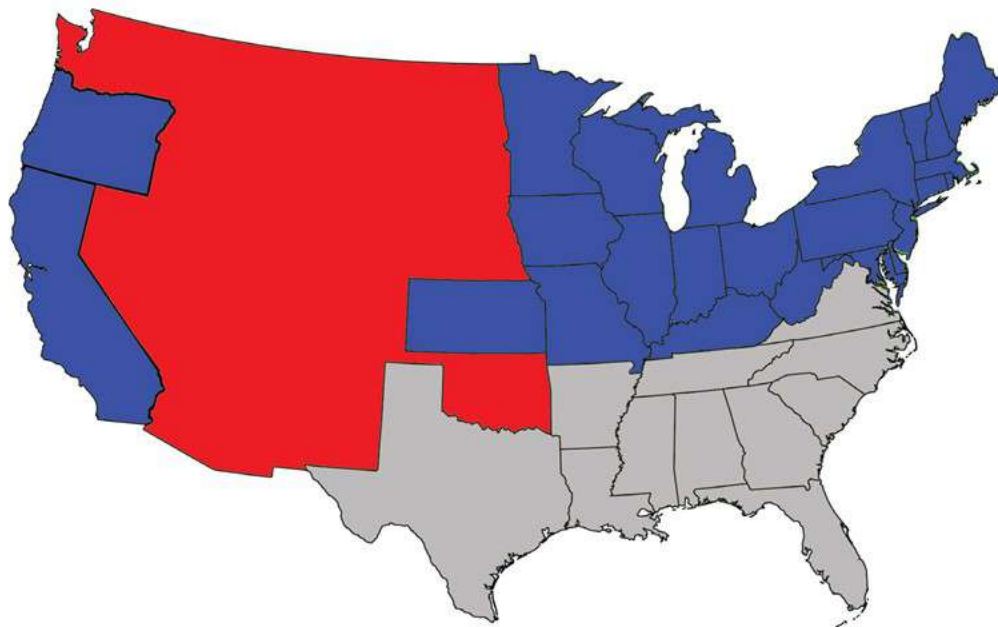
Later, as a young lawyer, he gained a reputation of being the most honest lawyer in Illinois and was known by the nickname "Honest Abe." *Your reputation is how most people think of you. Who else have you heard about who had a reputation for being honest?* Lincoln hated slavery. However, he also hated war, and when he became president, he tried to prevent the war from starting. But too many people on both sides were angry about many different issues, including slavery.





# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

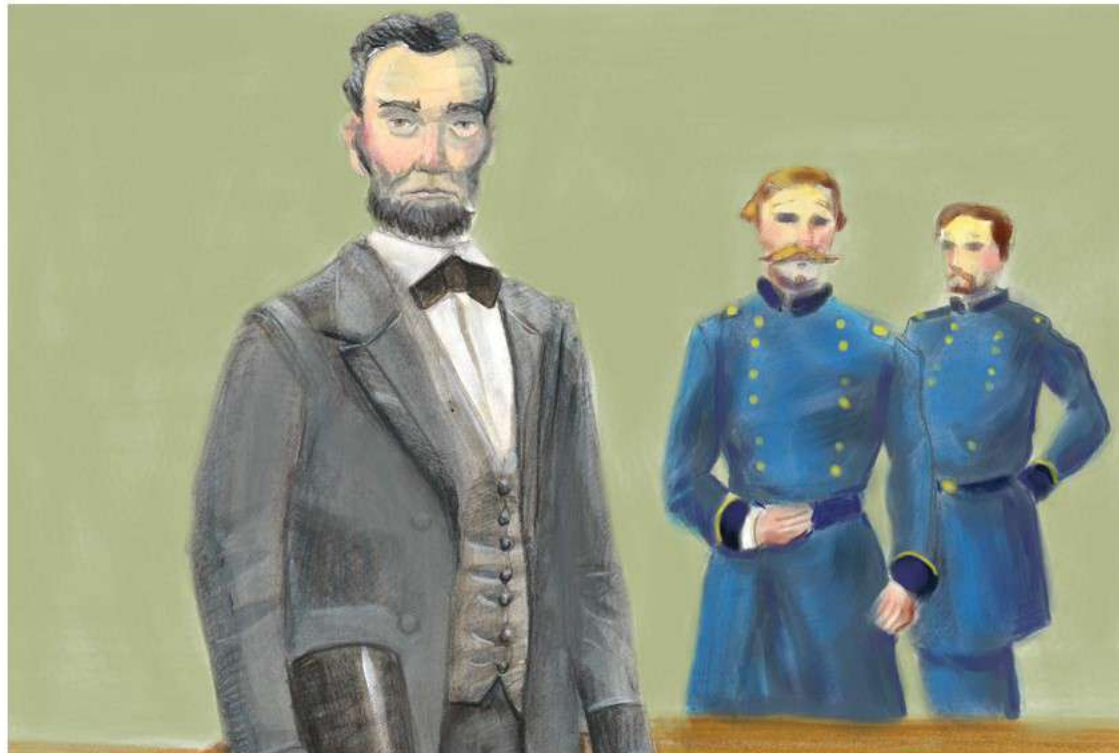
In the South there were large areas of land to farm, and that is the area where there were the most enslaved people. Because of this, the nation was divided—the North *colored in blue on the map* against the South. *colored in gray on the map* People in most southern states decided, “We’ll start our own country that allows slavery.” The North, with Lincoln as president, refused to let the South do that, saying, “We should be one country, and we should not allow slavery.” The war Thomas Jefferson had warned against began. This was the U.S. Civil War.





# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

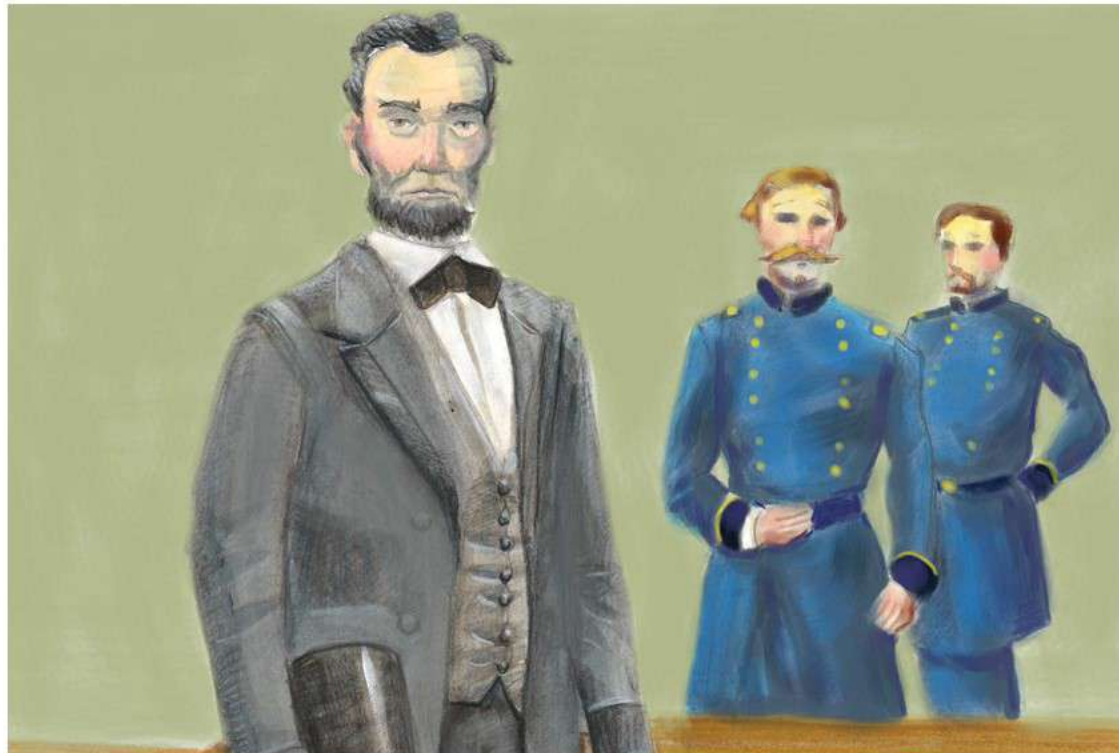
On the day that President Lincoln invited these men from the government to his office, he told them, "I am going to announce that enslaved people in southern states will now be free, according to the law. I wrote that law on the paper I have been carrying in my hat. I call the law the Emancipation Proclamation. I'll proclaim *or let everyone know* that the enslaved people are emancipated *or set free*. Anyone who doesn't let them go is breaking the law."



# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

President Lincoln went on, "Everyone must understand that America is truly a land of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, just as Thomas Jefferson wrote."

The other men replied, "Mr. President, we will gladly listen to your jokes if this is what happens afterward."

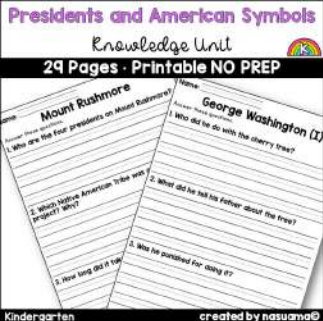


# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

But even after President Lincoln told everyone about the new law, many people who supported slavery would not give up. It took nearly three more years of war before the army of the South surrendered to Lincoln's northern army. The war ended. Now, slavery was over. And the important paper that had helped make it happen was what Abraham Lincoln had been carrying under his hat.

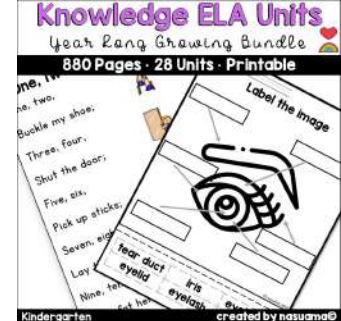






# PRESIDENTS AND AMERICAN SYMBOLS

## BUNDLE



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Abraham Lincoln**

Answer these questions.

**1. What did Lincoln proclaim?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. What was the main issue for the US Civil War?**

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## DO YOU NEED EXTRA ACTIVITIES?

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