

Teaching American History

Nathan Mattia

Grant Lesson: The Assassination of President Lincoln

Essential Questions

1. How do we know what really happened in history?
2. What were the consequences of the American Civil War?

Objectives

1. Students will examine primary and secondary source documents for understanding of the events surrounding Lincoln's assassination.
Rockwood CCOs: HP2, HP11c
2. Students will predict the national events that followed Lincoln's assassination during reconstruction.
Rockwood CCOs: HP5, HC18

Procedures

1. As a class, students will examine the \$100,000 Reward poster for John Wilkes Booth.
Examination Questions for this document
 - A. What features of this document stand out to you?
 - B. Who wrote this document?
 - C. Why was this document written?
 - D. What new information have you gained from this document?
2. In groups of 3, students will travel in stations and examine these other documents, using the questions above:
 - A. Booth's Cipher page (plus a short cipher worksheet)
 - B. Appeal to the colored people
 - C. Letter to Major General Dix
 - D. Lincoln paycheck
 - E. Wanted pictures
 - F. \$30,000 reward poster
 - G. Letter to Andrew Johnson
3. Each student will record their findings in their own notebook at each station. Students will spend 5 minutes at each station. After every 2 stations, they must get their findings stamped by the teacher who will be checking for uniqueness (no copying) and honest attempts to answer all questions.
4. Group processing: Student groups will present their findings from one document to the class. Teacher will clarify misinterpretations and ask leading questions that will prime students for the next reading.

5. Reading: Students will read “A Play at Ford’s Theater” chapter from Joy Hakim’s book War, Terrible War.

Reading Questions to add to station notes: (post these questions on the board as students finish reading) The purpose of these questions is to help students to clarify their own thinking, fill in the gaps of the story, and think critically about what they’ve examined and what happened.

1. List some new information you gained while reading this chapter.
2. As far as we can tell, what was Booth’s motivation for this murder?
3. What do you think he and his associates wanted to get out of this plot?
4. Do you think they accomplished their goals?

Assessment Writing #1 (To be done before the Hakim Reading, between Procedures steps 4 and 5)

Piece together the story of Lincoln’s assassination and do your best to tell what really happened, based on your reading today. Write as if you were making a history textbook of the events. Make sure your writing includes:

- short descriptions of all the people involved and what they did.
- motives of the assassins.
- information from ALL of your primary sources.

Assessment Writing #2 (To be done upon completion of the entire lesson)

Based upon what you’ve learned today, predict the northern government’s reaction to Lincoln’s assassination. How will the United States change socially, politically and economically because of this assassination? Back up your predictions with at least 3 pieces of evidence from the documents we examined.

Be sure to consider the following in your answer.

- Social changes
- Political changes
- economic changes
- The background and motivations of the assassins.

Scoring Guide for Assessment Writing #1

4- Student composes a plausible and compelling story that could have happened. Student includes all descriptions of the people involved, accounts for the motives of the assassins, and includes information from all 8 sources.

3- Student composes a plausible story that could have happened. Student includes descriptions of most of the people involved, accounts for the motives of the assassins, and includes information from at least 6 sources.

2- Student composes a story of the assassination that has some holes in it. Student includes descriptions of some of the people involved, accounts for the

motives of at least one assassin, and includes information from at least 4 sources.

1- Student composes an implausible explanation of what happened in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. Student may not include descriptions of the people involved or the motives of the assassins. Student includes information from less than 4 sources.

Scoring Guide for Writing Assessment #2

4- Student thoroughly and thoughtfully predicts the Social, Political and Economic changes to come and uses at least 3 pieces of evidence from the documents to do so.

3-Student predicts the Social, Political, and Economic changes to come and uses at least 3 pieces of evidence from the documents to do so.

2-Student predicts 2 out of 3 types of change and/or uses only 2 pieces of evidence from the documents to do so.

1-Student predicts only 1 of the 3 types of changes and/or uses only 1 piece of evidence from the documents to do so.

Teacher Notes

This lesson is to be taught in the larger context of a civil war unit that has examined the causes of the civil war, the actions of President Lincoln, the range of public opinion about Lincoln in the early 1860's, and the events of the United States Civil War. This lesson will most likely take one or two 90 minute classes, depending on how familiar students are with examining primary source documents.

Bibliography

All sources come from the National Archives, Washington D.C.
www.archives.gov

War Department Washington, April 20, 1865,

\$100,000 REWARD

THE MURDERER

Of our late beloved President, Abraham Lincoln,
IS STILL AT LARGE.

\$50,000 REWARD

Will be paid by this Department for his apprehension, in addition to any reward offered by Municipal Authorities or State Executives.

\$25,000 REWARD

Will be paid for the apprehension of JOHN H. SURRETT, one of Booth's Accomplices.

\$25,000 REWARD

Will be paid for the apprehension of David C. Harold, another of Booth's accomplices.

LIBERAL REWARDS will be paid for any information that shall conduce to the arrest of either of the above-named criminals, or their accomplices.

All persons harboring or secreting the said persons, or either of them, or aiding or assisting their concealment or escape, will be treated as accomplices in the murder of the President and the attempted assassination of the Secretary of State, and shall be subject to trial before a Military Commission and the punishment of DEATH.

Let the stain of innocent blood be removed from the land by the arrest and punishment of the murderers.

All good citizens are exhorted to aid public justice on this occasion. Every man should consider his own conscience charged with this solemn duty, and rest neither night nor day until it be accomplished.

EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.

DESCRIPTIONS.—BOOTH is Five Feet 7 or 8 inches high, slender build; high forehead, black hair, black eyes, and wears a heavy black moustache.

JOHN H. SURRETT is about 5 feet, 9 inches. Hair rather thin and dark; eyes rather light; no beard. Would weigh 145 or 150 pounds. Complexion rather pale and clear, with color in his cheeks. Wore light clothes of fine quality. Shoulders square; cheek bones rather prominent; chin narrow; ears projecting at the top; forehead rather low and square, but broad. Parts his hair on the right side; neck rather long. His lips are firmly set. A slim man.

HAROLD is a little chunky man, quite a youth, and wears a very thin moustache.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B
D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	
E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	
F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	
G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	
H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	
I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	
L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	
M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	
P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	
Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	
R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	
T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	
U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	
V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	
W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	
X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	
Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	
Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	



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THE MURDER OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

APPEAL TO THE COLORED PEOPLE!

HEADQUARTERS MIDDLE MILITARY DIVISION,

WASHINGTON, D. C., APRIL 24, 1865.

To the colored people of the District of Columbia and of Maryland, of Alexandria and the border counties of Virginia:

Your President has been murdered! He has fallen by the assassin and without a moment's warning, simply and solely because he was your friend and the friend of our country. Had he been unfaithful to you and to the great cause of human freedom he might have lived. The pistol from which he met his death, though held by Booth, was fired by the hands of treason and slavery. Think of this and remember how long and how anxiously this good man labored to break your chains and to make you happy. I now appeal to you, by every consideration which can move loyal and grateful hearts, to aid in discovering and arresting his murderer. Concealed by traitors, he is believed to be lurking somewhere within the limits of the District of Columbia, of the State of Maryland, or Virginia. Go forth, then, and watch, and listen, and inquire, and search, and pray, by day and by night, until you shall have succeeded in dragging this monstrous and bloody criminal from his hiding place. You can do much; even the humblest and feeblest among you, by patience and unwearied vigilance, may render the most important assistance.

Large rewards have been offered by the Government, and by municipal authorities, and they will be paid for the apprehension of this murderer, or for any information which will aid in his arrest. But I feel that you need no such stimulus as this. You will hunt down this cowardly assassin of your best friend, as you would the murderer of your own father. Do this, and God, whose servant has been slain, and the country which has given you freedom, will bless you for this noble act of duty.

All information which may lead to the arrest of Booth, or Suratt, or Harold, should be communicated to these headquarters, or to General Holt, Judge Advocate General, at Washington, or, if immediate action is required, then to the nearest military authorities.

All officers and soldiers in this command, and all loyal people, are enjoined to increased vigilance.

W. S. HANCOCK,

Major General U. S. Volunteers,

Commanding Middle Military Division.

Head Quarters ~~Canada~~, A. of S.

INDIAN MILITARY DIVISION,

April 27th 1865

General

The following telegram just received is furnished
for your information.

Washington D. C.

April 27, 1865

Maj. Gen. Dix

J. Wilkes Booth and Harrold were
driven from the swamp in St. Mary's Co. Md. pursued
yesterday morning to Smiths farm near Port Royal
on the Rappahannock by Col. Baker's force. The barn
in which they took refuge was fired. Booth was shot
and killed and Harrold was captured. Booth today
and Harrold are now here.

(Signed) E. M. Stanton

Secy of War.

Very Respectfully

Yours Very Truly

Wm. A. Rorer, Jr.

Asst. Surg. Genl.

No. 1217 TREASURY WARRANT No. 2492

\$1981.67

TREASURY OF THE United States



Washington No. 10

AT SIGNATURE, Pay to the order of George Smith U.S.

order of ten thousand eight hundred and fifty DOLLARS

JUN 26 1865 BY RECEIVED IN FULL

No. 1217

McCormick & Co. Washington D.C.

G. S. Owen Treasurer of the United States No. 5

Wm. C. Cress Registrar of the Treasury



ATZERODT.



SPANGLER.



HEROLD.



BOOTH.



O'LAUGHLIN.



ARNOLD.



Payne

BA-92

\$30,000 REWARD

DESCRIPTION

OF

JOHN WILKES BOOTH!

Who Assassinated the PRESIDENT on the Evening
of April 14th, 1865.

Height 5 feet 8 inches; weight 160 pounds; compact built; hair jet black, inclined to curl, medium length, parted behind; eyes black, and heavy dark eye-brows; wears a large seal ring on little finger; when talking inclines his head forward; looks down.

Description of the Person who Attempted to Assassinate Hon. W. H. Seward, Secretary of State.

Height 6 feet 1 inch; hair black, thick, full and straight; no beard, no appearance of beard; cheeks red on the jaws; face moderately full; 22 or 24 years of age; eyes, color not known—large eyes, not prominent; brows not heavy, but dark; fire not large, but rather round; complexion healthy; nose straight and well formed, medium size; mouth small; lips thin; upper lip protruded when he talked; chin pointed and prominent; head medium size; neck short, and of medium length; hands soft and small; fingers tapering; shows no signs of hard labor; broad shoulders; taper waist; straight figure; strong looking man; manner not gentlemanly, but vulgar; Overcoat double-breasted, color mixed of pink and grey spots, small—was a sack overcoat, pockets in side and one on the breast, with lapells or flaps; pants black, common stuff; new heavy boots; voice small and thin, inclined to tenor.

The Common Council of Washington, D. C., have offered a reward of \$20,000 for the arrest and conviction of these Assassins, in addition to which I will pay \$10,000.

L. C. BAKER,

Colonel and Agent War Department.

Given Sunday April 16th 1865



Washington City D.C. ✓
April 15, 1865. —

Sir:

Abraham Lincoln, President of the
United States, was shot by an assassin
this evening, at Ford's Theatre in this
City and died at the hour of ¹² ~~11~~ ^{midnight} ~~11~~ ^{of the evening}.

About the same time at which the
President was shot, an assassin entered
the sick chamber of the Hon^{ble} W. M. Seward,
Secretary of State, and struck him in
several places, in the head, neck, and
face, ~~in the head~~ ^{in the head}, mortally wounding him.

Other members of the Secretary's family
were dangerously wounded by the assassin
while making his escape. By the death
of President Lincoln, the office of President
has devolved under the Constitution upon you.
The emergency of the government demands
that you should immediately qualify, according
to the requirements of the Constitution, and enter
upon the duties of ~~the~~ President of the
United States. If you will please
make known your pleasure, such

W. M. Seward,
Secretary of State.

arrangements as you deem proper will
be made.

Your Obedient Servants

Amphibian by Secretary of the Treasury

Edwin M. Stanton Secretary of War

Richard Welles Secretary of Navy

W. D. Dennis Postmaster General

J. P. Mohr Secretary of the Interior

James Speed Attorney General

Wm. A. R. ...

To
Andrew Johnson
Vice President of the United States