

# Lesson Plan: Abraham Lincoln & the Civil War (10th Grade)

## Grade Level

10th Grade

## Time

50 Minutes

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## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Analyze the causes of the Civil War, especially slavery and political compromise
  - Evaluate Abraham Lincoln's leadership during crisis
  - Interpret primary source excerpts (Gettysburg Address, speeches)
  - Assess how Lincoln reshaped the purpose of the war
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## Materials


- Teacher document / transcript
  - Projector / board
  - Student handout (quotes + questions)
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## Lesson Structure

### 1. Bell Ringer (5 minutes)

**Prompt:**

“Should a leader ever break or stretch the law to save a country? Explain.”

 This connects to Lincoln suspending habeas corpus.

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## ◆ 2. Direct Instruction (10 minutes)

### Key Concepts:

- Slavery as the central conflict
  - Failed compromises (1820, 1850, 1854)
  - Secession and formation of the Confederacy
  - Lincoln's primary goal: **preserve the Union first, end slavery as the war evolved**
  - Emancipation Proclamation reframes the war
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## ◆ 3. Primary Source Analysis (15 minutes)

### 📖 Use excerpts from your document:

- Gettysburg Address
- "House Divided" speech
- Lincoln's reflections on leadership and slavery

### Student Task (in small groups):

Answer:

1. What does Lincoln believe about equality?
  2. How does he justify the war?
  3. How does his thinking about slavery change over time?
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## ◆ 4. Leadership Evaluation Activity (10 minutes)

### Prompt:

Was Abraham Lincoln an effective leader? Why or why not?

Students must reference:

- Military decisions (Grant, McClellan)
- Emancipation Proclamation
- Handling of the Union

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◆ **5. Whole Class Discussion (5 minutes)**

**Question:**

“Did Lincoln change the war, or did the war change Lincoln?”

Encourage evidence-based responses.

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◆ **6. Exit Ticket (5 minutes)**

1. What was Lincoln’s most important decision?
  2. How did the Civil War redefine the United States?
  3. One piece of evidence that shows Lincoln’s leadership
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## **10th Grade Quiz**

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

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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 **Part 1: Multiple Choice (1 point each)**

**1. Which issue was the primary cause of the Civil War?**

- A. Tariffs
  - B. Slavery
  - C. Land disputes
  - D. Foreign policy
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**2. What was Lincoln’s main priority at the beginning of the war?**

- A. Immediate abolition

- B. Expansion westward
  - C. Preservation of the Union
  - D. Economic reform
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**3. The Emancipation Proclamation primarily:**

- A. Freed all slaves in the U.S.
  - B. Freed slaves in Confederate states
  - C. Ended the war
  - D. Created new states
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**4. Which battle allowed Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation?**

- A. Gettysburg
  - B. Antietam
  - C. Vicksburg
  - D. Bull Run
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**5. Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus shows:**

- A. Weak leadership
  - B. Strict adherence to law
  - C. Expansion of executive power during crisis
  - D. Lack of concern for the Constitution
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**6. Which general did Lincoln ultimately trust to win the war?**

- A. McClellan
  - B. Lee
  - C. Grant
  - D. Jackson
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**👉 Part 2: Short Answer (3 points each)**

**7. Explain why compromise failed to prevent the Civil War.**

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**8. How did Lincoln's goals change during the war?**

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**9. Describe one challenge Lincoln faced as president during the war.**

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 **Part 3: Analysis (5 points)**

**10. Was Abraham Lincoln justified in expanding presidential power during the Civil War? Use evidence.**

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 **Answer Key**

**Multiple Choice:**

1. **B – Slavery**
2. **C – Preservation of the Union**
3. **B – Freed slaves in Confederate states**
4. **B – Antietam**
5. **C – Expansion of executive power during crisis**
6. **C – Grant**

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**Short Answer (Sample Answers):**

**7.**

- Compromises only delayed conflict
  - Did not resolve slavery issue
  - Increased sectional tensions
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**8.**

- Began focused on saving the Union
  - Later included ending slavery as a war goal
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**9.**

- Weak generals early in war
  - Divided country
  - Political opposition
  - Managing war strategy
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**Analysis (Sample Answer):**

**10.**

- Yes: Necessary to save the Union (habeas corpus suspension)
- OR No: Violated constitutional rights
- Strong answers include evidence from wartime decisions