

TITLE: Analyzing Historical Quotes: An Insight into Lincoln

ABSTRACT: In this lesson, students will examine the words of Lincoln and observations about Lincoln from those who actually knew or met him. The students will compare and contrast the way people in his time saw him and the way Lincoln actually acted and spoke.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS/ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:

- Collected recollections of events and people are truer than those of one person.
- Why do we analyze things that have happened in the past?
- Analyzing multiple perspectives over time gives us a truer picture of historical events.

ASSESSMENT: Students will finish the He Said They Said Compare and Contrast Worksheet for teacher evaluation and participate in a classroom discussion.

SETTING THE PURPOSE: Students will examine the differences between personal perspective and the perspectives of others. Students will then examine how history is a collection of perspectives, both personal and historical.

DURATION: One class period.

PROCEDURE:

- Write on board or overhead “Does everything you say accurately represent you? Is everything others say about you accurate?” Give students a moment to think of their answers and write them down before discussing these questions as a group.
- Discuss: How do we decide what a person is truly like if we cannot rely on the validity of one separate statement, either said by others or said by him or herself?” Students should get at that is necessary to look at a history of quotes and actions to get a full picture of what the person is really like.
- At this point, distribute the He Said They Said Worksheet. Depending on how the teacher sees fit, he/she may pull a number of quotes from a book and develop a handout of quotes, one page said by Lincoln, one said about Lincoln. Another strategy would be to have students actually investigate the sources listed below by themselves or small teams. (This will largely depend on the amount of resources available, and time constraints.)
- As students finish, discuss the last question on the worksheet-do the students think that others accurately saw Lincoln as he was? Do students think that others saw Lincoln the way he saw himself?

C. Adrian, June 2006

- Can we rely only on someone's words to understand who they are, or do we need the observations of others? Why?
- This question will lead to a wrap up conversation about the upcoming project. Explain to students that tomorrow they will start their own work on understanding Lincoln as he really was.

ANALYSIS OF LOCAL PRIMARY SOURCES: While students will not directly use local primary sources, they will connect them to the local primary sources analyzed in previous lessons.

TIES TO NATIONAL PRIMARY SOURCE OR SOURCES: Students will examine a number of historic quotes from various famous figures and Lincoln himself.

LIST OF MATERIALS AND RESOURCES:

- [He Said They Said Worksheet](#)
- Lincoln As I Knew Him by Harold Holzer. Algonquin Books, 1999.
- The Wit and Wisdom of Abraham Lincoln. Plume Publishing, 1992.
- Mr. Lincoln and Friends (The Lincoln Institute Website – www.mrlincolnandfriends.org)
- Lincoln quotes from the National Park Service – www.nps.gov/liho/writer/writer.htm
- Wikiquote page of Lincoln Quotes – http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Abraham_Lincoln
- Lincoln Seen and Heard by Harold Holzer. University Press of Kansas, 2000.
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ATTACHMENTS:

- He Said They Said Worksheet