

Additional Lesson Activity Notes: Storytelling

1. Nancy Hanks: Hi, my name is Nancy Hanks Lincoln. I was the birth mother of Abraham, and he learned many things from me even though I was only in his life a short time. I came to Kentucky through the Cumberland Gap when this state was just a wilderness. I learned to sew really well and so I used that talent to make money for my family. I was hired to sew everything from wedding gowns to funeral attire. As I traveled to doing my sewing for people, I became known for my work ethic, my neatness, my cheerfulness and my intelligence. You must remember, schools were not as easy to get to as they are today, so learning was not the same. I was also very religious, and I read to young Abe daily from the Bible. So think about it. How might Abe have been influenced by me?
2. Thomas Lincoln: Good day to you! I am Thomas Lincoln, and I was the father of this special President you are learning about, and perhaps he modeled some of his ways after me. I was born in Virginia and there were 5 children in my family. My father was killed by native Americans in a raid leaving our family to struggle along. I went to work with my Uncle Isaac on the Watauga River in Tennessee as a hired hand and I stayed there for a year. I was a farmer and a carpenter and was a responsible citizen living on the frontier. I was at times a jury member, a petitioner for a road, and a guard for county prisoners. I never liked books or learning that way, and I never fully understood Abraham's desire to read and learn. I was a good storyteller and was popular with my neighbors. Nancy and I were members of the Little Mount Separate Baptist Church which had broken from the regular church over the issue of slavery. There is lots to learn about me and the impact I had on Abe.
3. Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln: Hello, I'm Abraham's stepmother. After his birth mother died, I married his father and became a mother for him and his sister. I was raised in a family of 9 children. You can bet I had to learn how to get along with others and to share. I married a Methodist preacher and had three children of my own, but he died, and then I married Thomas Lincoln and moved with him to Indiana. I was illiterate, but Abe and I loved each other from the beginning, and he wanted to read so I tried to help him. I had some books and I encouraged him to use them. I also talked to his father and told him to support the boy's reading. I was a mother to a wonderful young boy, and I stayed close to him the rest of his life. I'm sure I made a difference in the way he was.