



Abe Lincoln Grows Up

Carl Sandburg

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A beautifully told story of young Abraham Lincoln's coming-of-age

Drawn from the early chapters of Carl Sandburg's Pulitzer Prize-winning biography, *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years*, this is the story of Abraham Lincoln's childhood. Growing up poor on the family farm, Abe did chores, helped his father cut down trees, and expertly skinned animals and cured hides. As a young man, he became an avid reader. When he witnessed a slave auction while on a flatboat trip down the Mississippi, he was forever changed—and so was the future of America. This is the remarkable story of Lincoln's youth, early America, and the pioneer life that shaped one of our country's greatest presidents.

Abe Lincoln Grows Up Details

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Preston says

This is a beautifully written and illustrated book. This slim volume is a reprint of the first twenty- seven chapters of Carl Sandburg's "Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years". It is a true classic, with original illustrations by James Dougherty. These early chapters were selected because it was felt that they would be most interesting to young readers, so the book is usually found in the youth non-fiction area. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

This is also the story of America as it "grows-up" along with Abe Lincoln. Interesting stories of barefoot Johnny Appleseed, clothed only in a coffee sack with holes cut for arm holes, and newly elected corn cob smoking President Andrew Jackson, who sweeps an aristocratic administration from the White House with his rough buckskin manners and supporters.

Easy to read. Hard to put down.

Susan Mortimer says

This reprint is taken from a portion of Carl Sandburg's Pulitzer Prize winning 1926 biography of our 16th President (Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years). In the Publisher's Note from this edition, it is said that since 1926, "...it has become increasingly evident that the book lives for people of all ages and kinds; but the later chapters on Lincoln's political life are of necessity less interesting for boy and girl readers of today than the earlier ones about his own boyhood." This segment of Sandburg's work, from the first twenty-seven chapters of the original, depicts Lincoln's life from birth until age nineteen.

Without a doubt, Sandburg continues to stand the test of time. His prose is both eloquent and evocative, and this abridgment is simple enough for the grade-school student without losing any of the charm or grace of the original. This is highly recommended for children interested in almost any aspect of post-colonial American history. For a child interested in Abraham Lincoln himself, this book is essential. (Ages 10-14)

Venessa Buxcel says

You learn about a former president and what he did throughout his life. They grew up poor and it was difficult for them. He worked with his father, and tried the best he could. He became an amazing skinner. He was a young man that loved to read. it was a good story about his younger life and how the country has changed so much.

Lavin Bendt says

This was an easy book to read and to understand. I personally was not overly interesting in the topic, but for those of you who like reading about history will really enjoy this book. This book does a good job of portraying the idea that anyone, even the poorest of poor, can do anything if they set their minds to it.

Christy says

There's a wealth of detail about 19th century life on the American frontier, and there's a lot of information about historical figures like Daniel Webster, Johnny Appleseed, and Andrew Jackson, but there's very little information about Abe Lincoln. I have no idea why this book is so highly regarded.

Vicki G says

I did a report on Lincoln when I was in high school in the 80's. I WANTED to do Reagan (I was totally Republican then) bc I didn't want to work hard to find the information, but everyone wanted Reagan and someone beat me to him, so I did Lincoln.

Natalie says

Enjoyed the writing style of Carl Sandburg. A nice over-view of the younger years of Abe Lincoln.

Craig says

In his book "Abe Lincoln Grows Up", noted author Carl Sandburg examines the heritage, birth and early years of America's 16th President. Born to poor but industrious parents, Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, on February 12, 1809, near Hogdenville, Kentucky, Lincoln was a product of the western frontier. At seven years of age, young Abe's parents moved to the fertile lands of Indiana. There, Lincoln loses his mother to the "milk sick". Shortly after her death, young Abe's father Thomas returned to Elizabethtown, Kentucky, and married the widow Sarah Bush Johnston, who became a loving and supportive mother to Abe. She brought with her three children from her prior marriage who became young Abe's step brothers and sisters.

Sandburg employs a unique style to recount the significant events of Lincoln's early life. He presents young Abe to the reader in the context of extraneous events, notable people and western lifestyle of the time to paint a portrait of the rustic life Lincoln must have known in his youth. While facts are presented, there is much postulation as to how things might have been. Sandburg seasons his narrative with western lingo, idioms, stories, songs and lyrics, neighbor gatherings, religious practices, Jacksonian politics, etc. to portray life as Lincoln likely knew it in his early years. As young Abe grew into adolescence, Sandburg describes Lincoln's stature, ruddy appearance and brute strength developed by his use of the ax and other farm implements as he cleared the land and helped his family eke out a living. His sheer height (6'4") and lanky build set him apart from his peers and gave him a formidable appearance. Sandburg often deviates in his narrative to discuss other frontier notables of the age: Daniel Boone, Johnny Appleseed, John James Audubon, Mike Fink, etc. These characters give added flavor to the age in which Lincoln was born and lived. Not only was Lincoln a man of the soil, but he also operated flatboats to carry people and cargo on the western rivers. One trip took him to New Orleans where he witnessed the auction of Negro slaves. This experience had a profound effect upon his life and values. Lincoln's early penchant for reading is extolled. The book concludes with young Lincoln leaving home in the early 1830s to seek his fortune in New Salem.

Though the book is touted for young readers, they may find it a bit difficult at times. Sandburg's style is not always sequential and straight forward, but is often scattered and disjointed and not easy to follow and assimilate. Sandburg seems to presume that the reader knows more about the times, persons, places and age than may be the case with young readers. That being said, the biography is informative, colorful and a great read.

English Education says

Sandburg gives us a biography of the youth of one of America's greatest presidents: Abraham Lincoln. Since his birth in a log cabin and the migrations through Illinois, Indiana and Kentucky, he grows through in the impoverished, agrarian lifestyle that takes place in the American frontier. With his family he endures the hardships—having little-formal education, arduously settling in the wilderness, battling Native Americans, and watching strange illnesses take lives such as his mother's—as well as the joys—enjoying a wedding feast with delicious wild game, becoming an avid-reader who is passionate for law, politics and the world (especially after watching a slave auction), and attending his two daily church services to stay reverent to his God. Abe Lincoln grows up offers a valuable story of a classic American literary theme: “success is the result of persevering in the face of obstacles.” The novel is sure to delight its intended young-adult audience with its realistic and fascinating old-fashioned context, which is populated with prominent historical figures of the time, (namely, Andrew Jackson and Napoleon Bonepart). Similarly to Mark Twain's text Tom Sawyer, Sandburg lacks the modern collective conscious of an anti-oppressive and a pluralistic society, by its glorification of physical violence, and prejudice towards both blacks and Native Americans. A critical examination of these old-time attitudes, asking “why they felt that way?” and “what are our attitudes today?” would benefit students' perspective on promoting a multi-cultural awareness and acceptance.

Naomi Thayer says

I very much liked this book. Unlike other biography's about Abe Lincoln that tell about him being a president this one goes deeper. though out this book it foreshadows that he would become the president but even to the end never said it. This book is just plainly about Abe growing up. It starts before he is born and ends when he is an adult and leaves his family to make a life for himself. Over all this book was really good, and even though it doesn't have as many pages as books I usually read it has a lot of good information.

Zebardast Zebardast says

Jennifer Wrage says

Written in Sandburg's distinct style, this was a very informative text about Abe Lincoln's childhood. I enjoyed the "stories" that were included.

Steve Hemmeke says

Lincoln has always intrigued me, and even more so since moving to the South and discovering people who still revile him.

Carl Sandburg wrote a classic biography in 1926, and this is something of a children's version of it, I gather. Sandburg's writing exquisitely captures the spirit of the nation during Lincoln's childhood years. This book covers Abe's life until he leaves his parents at 19 years of age.

Westward expansion was front and center, Lincoln's own father moving them several times from Kentucky to Indiana and Illinois. Indian hostility was intense. Johnny Appleseed and Mr Audubon make cameo appearances.

Besides this, I'll mention three formative events Sandburg highlights.

1. The death of his mother early, and arrival of his step-mother. This brought a higher standard of living and expectations on Abe. At the same time, his father looked down on "eddicatin."
2. Andrew Jackson's presidency showed him a backwoodsman could make it big.
3. Taking cargo on flatboats down the Mississippi to New Orleans showed him the wide world and the slave markets.

Sandburg subtly foreshadows Lincoln's later political life: the teenager practicing speeches, delighting in stories, and always reading and writing. Young Abe seemed to know the power of the spoken word, and he wanted to wield from a young age.

Kevin M says

To Be Honest i really didn't like this book but I'm not gonna hate on it. The author did a great job but the book wasn't really as interesting to me as i thought it would be. Im Gonna give him 4 stars, though.

Pete says

carl sandburg is antique enough that some of his stuff transcends corniness. but a looooot of it is still corny. still you can't stop me from reading YA biographies of abe lincoln.

one thing that fascinates this about me is insistence on singing the body of abe lincoln -- he has to be socially/economically "virile" in the sense of winning at rastling, out-chopping, while still pursuing bookish interests. works as a post facto campaign biography. weems' biographies of george washington and francis marion come up as some of yung abe's preferred reads, and there's a (lightly) ironic echo of that secular

hagiography happening here. anyway good if you want to know what cows and people were dying from in 1820s indiana, and also if you are stealing texture for your own work
