Registration

To register for an education program at President Lincoln’s Cottage, please contact the Programs Department at LincolnEd@lincolncottage.org.

Cost for education programs at President Lincoln’s Cottage is $15 per student. A non-refundable deposit is required to secure your reservation; final payment is due one week in advance of your visit. The Cottage welcomes groups that include a specialized focus on African American history. Participants in these groups will have access to the Robert H. Smith Visitor Education Center and a modified tour of President Lincoln’s Cottage.

Curriculum areas met in College programs:
- Social Studies/Students
- Language Arts
- Computer Science
- History

Materials:
- A copy of the Cottage’s Osage orange for each student, plus one for the group leader
- Colored markers, pencils, or pens

Procedures:
Optional Opening Discussion: Begin, by creating a definition of family collaboratively with your student(s). Do or members of a family have to be related to each other? What makes someone a part of a family? What other qualities do family members have? Can you start from the definition below?

1. Talk with your student(s) about family values. Family is a group of people related by blood or persons who are committed to taking care of each other. Give your student(s) a copy of the Osage orange tree. Illustration and explain that they will be thinking about their own families as they develop the project.

2. Complete the tree with student(s):
   a. First, student(s) should write/choose a 1. Their family members – people who are significant to them in a positive way – onto branches. All families are different. What does your family look like?

   b. Then, student(s) draw leaves onto the branches. How do you support each other? And what legacies do they want to pass on to future generations? As students create a personal tree, encourage them to think about ways they are different from other students and ways they are like others. Students can add fruit to the tree, plus one for their family. What fruit or vegetable best describes their family?

   c. Discuss together how the tree represents ideas that are important to the family. A family tree ultimately represents the lives of family members, the values they hold, and the contributions they make to the world.

   d. Ask: what do you want to leave to the world/What kind of difference do you want to make?” These prompts will help them to focus on what they consider important to their families. In the last 5-10 minutes of the class, encourage students to add a personal symbol to their tree. They can connect specific leaves to specific people (branches) or not, as they desire.

3. Discuss Lincoln’s work and the nation as family. Lincoln worked to unite the Southern states, as above. Who are the members of the American family? What values would you add to the branches of the tree? How do they support each other? And what legacies do you want to leave in the world as members of the American family?

The tree shown below—an Osage orange—grows on the grounds of the Cottage. The family tree where the students sought sanctuary after tragedy, and where the president thought through big questions facing the nation. Trees like this one are abundant on the Cottage grounds, and it’s easy to imagine President Lincoln and his family finding comfort in their shade, climbing their twisted branches, and spending time with loved ones in the shadow of their sturdy trunks.

I See The President

Grades 4-5

During the Civil War, President Lincoln worked from the Cottage through the heat of Civil War Washington to the White House. Along the way, Lincoln encountered soldiers heading for the front lines; emancipated men, women and children living in contraband camps; wounded soldiers; and Washington residents, such as Walt Whitman.

Lincoln’s Hat

Grades 4-5

As a young man, Abraham Lincoln began forming his ideas on issues of justice and freedom. As he worked in the law office of the Cottage, President Lincoln developed his ideas on the Civil War and emancipation and turned them into action. In Lincoln’s Hat, students discover the ideas that President Lincoln developed as president and how they influence the world today.

Lincoln’s Toughest Decisions: Debating Emancipation

Grades 4-12, College Students, and Adults

Abraham Lincoln’s presidency was marked by development of bold ideas and risk-taking actions. A key element of Lincoln’s collaborative process was to consult the ideas of those around him. In Lincoln’s Toughest Decisions, students learn more about the evolution of his emancipation strategies. They are guided through President Lincoln’s approach to developing and testing ideas, and how he sought to understand the value of conflicting ideas and build support to achieve positive change.

Toughest Decisions: Debating Emancipation is an award-winning program that pushes students in the role of President Lincoln’s collaborators. Students use touch-screen monitors to explore and recreate the heated discussions that President Lincoln had with his advisors and cabinet.

Program typically lasts 2 hours but can be modified into a classroom or computer lab for 4th–12th grade.

Students Opposing Slavery

Grades 9-12

Students Opposing Slavery (SOS) is a grassroots program that encourages high school students to join the movement to end modern-day slavery. SOS provides a rich visual for teaching about the history of American slavery and the civil war, including the role of the women and men who made up the Union army.

Program typically lasts 2 hours but can be modified into a short modified tour of President Lincoln’s Cottage. Students can connect specific leaves to specific people (branches) or not, as they desire.

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Often, trees like the Osage orange are used as symbols of life and family. What does your family look like? What values would you add to the branches of the tree? How do they support each other? And what legacies do you want to leave in the world as members of the American family?