



Lincoln Idea Card

Grade Level:
5-8

Basic Democratic Ideas

Lesson idea:

Analyze basic democratic ideas and the historical reality of slavery.

Open:

Have students write “Democratic Ideas” in large letters to fill one side of a piece of paper. On the other side of the paper, have them use markers to create an outline of a jigsaw puzzle incorporating three pieces. Write one of these terms on each puzzle piece: liberty, justice, equality. Have students use a dictionary to learn the meaning of these words and write a definition in their own words on each puzzle piece.

Show:

video segments 11 (The Issue of Slavery) and 13 (Slavery and the Formation of the Republican Party) from the documentary *Lincoln: I, too, am a Kentuckian* (available online at www.ket.org/lincoln/resources.htm). As students view the video, they should think about whether slavery fits in with the basic democratic ideas of liberty, justice, and equality.

Discuss:

Students’ ideas about slavery and whether it fits with in the basic democratic ideas.

Expand:

Have students examine how Lincoln’s personal values and belief in democratic ideas influenced his views of slavery. Show video segment 18 (The Emancipation Proclamation). Lincoln said the Declaration of Independence strongly informed his political views. Discuss this excerpt from the Declaration of Independence and contrast it to the reality of slavery: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal...” Have students read and analyze the Declaration of Independence (available online at www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html). Create a class bulletin board display around the phrase “Democratic Ideas Fit America.” Students could enhance their puzzles with drawings, definitions, or quotes, and these could be posted on the bulletin board.

Kentucky Standards: democracy, basic democratic principles-liberty, justice, equality

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