

GSCI Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area Patch Program

Earn
this
patch!



Complete 6 of the following 16 activities to earn your GSCI Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area patch! Patches will be available for purchase at all GSCI Trefoil Boutiques.

Road Trip Activities

These activities are best done in person and are a fun way to explore our council! No time to travel or completing this patch program from outside of Illinois? No worries- one of these is a virtual road trip!

Activity #1: Become a Stamp Collector

In Illinois, 34 counties have a special designation- they're part of the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area! According to the NPS, "National Heritage Areas are places where historic, cultural, and natural resources combine to form cohesive, nationally important landscapes." These special areas are part of our country's National Parks System, which means they're part of the super fun Passport to Your National Parks program! The stamps are free to collect at so many locations all across our council. From Quincy to Danville or from Hillsboro to Ottawa, you'll be able to fill a passport book with so many stamps! How many can your troop or family collect? To learn more about this program, use this link: tinyurl.com/5n7bw5tw.

Activity #2: Take a Trip

Our friends at Looking for Lincoln have pre-made itineraries that would make a great day trip or even overnight exploring Illinois! Check them out here: tinyurl.com/47v867tt.

Activity #3: Discover Local History

Did you know that here in Illinois, we have a Story Trail with 215 different stops where you can learn about life in Lincoln's time and how our current communities are connected to the famous 16th president? You can find more information and maps to these locations here: tinyurl.com/36usxuz6.

Pro Tip: If you or your troop are working on navigational skills, these Story Trail spots are also listed by coordinates and could be a great way to practice your orienteering. Here's a printable version of the Story Trail map so younger Girl Scouts can help plan this road trip: tinyurl.com/4kwz8k95.

Activity #4: Take a Virtual Tour of Lincoln's Springfield Home

Can't travel? No problem! Take a virtual tour of Lincoln's Springfield home here: tinyurl.com/mu97smkn.

Other Fun Activities

Activity #5: Be Honest Like Abe

Be honest like Honest Abe! With your family, friends, or troop play 2 truths and 1 lie. You might tell truths and lies about your favorite things. Have your friends guess which one is the lie. Was it easier to tell the truth or the lie? Sometimes pretending can be fun. But making up things that are untrue can hurt feelings. Talk about why lying can be hurtful.

Activity #6: Host a Strawberry Party

When living in Illinois, the Lincolns attended Strawberry Parties in the early summertime. Learn how you can host your own Strawberry Party: tinyurl.com/2v3xcaee.

Activity #7: Learn from a Lawyer

Abraham Lincoln was a self-taught lawyer. With your family or troop, talk with a lawyer. What kinds of things do they do at work? What kind of law do they practice? What kind of education does it take to become a lawyer? Are there any challenges to their job? What is the most rewarding part of their job? What was their most memorable case that they worked on? What made them want to be a lawyer?

Activity #8: Invent Like Abe

Did you know that Abraham Lincoln was an inventor? When Lincoln was 19, he worked as a riverman- taking boats full of cargo from one place to another along the Mississippi River. While he worked on the river for only a short time, this time in his life left an impact. One impact of his experience boating is his patented invention- “adjustable buoyant air chambers.” While his invention was never produced for practical use, he is the only president who has a patent, which is pretty cool! This invention was his solution to a problem he encountered on the river- getting stuck on a sandbar. What’s a problem in your life that you could make an invention to solve? Draw your invention and then make a model of it! (If you want to add some badge work, check out the Create and Innovate badges for Daisies, Brownies, and Juniors!)

Activity #9: Visit the Post Office

In his 20s, Abraham Lincoln worked at his local post office. With your friends, family, or troop- visit your local post office and mail a letter! Be sure to address the envelope yourself. If you need help, here’s a tutorial of how to address an envelope: tinyurl.com/34xe82du.

Activity #10: Write a Speech

Have you ever heard of the Lincoln-Douglas Debates? These debates were between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas who were both campaigning for the IL senate seat. Lincoln ultimately lost these debates, but what he did afterwards is what is unique: he published all the speeches. Lincoln knew that if people read his words and knew what he stood for, he would have better chances at winning future elections. Basically, he did what modern influencers and marketing teams do- he got people’s attention and spread the word about what he was wanting to do as an elected official. What’s a message you want people to be aware of? Write a speech or draw a poster about your message and have an adult in your life help you share that with others. Want to learn more about these famous debates? Here’s a great overview that may interest older Girl Scouts: tinyurl.com/3h2dyasz.

Activity #11: Learn About Mary Todd Lincoln's Home

Lincoln used the phrase "a house divided" to describe what the country was like during the Civil War. This was very literal in many parts of the United States- with families split and even fighting each other on the battlefield. Learn more about how Mary Todd Lincoln's family was divided with an activity book from our friends at the Mary Todd Lincoln Home Museum: tinyurl.com/34pba3w5.

Activity #12: Learn About Lincoln's Significance for Thanksgiving

Do you know who started the American tradition of Thanksgiving? If you guessed Abraham Lincoln, you're right! In July of 1863, President Lincoln issued a proclamation that designated the last Thursday in November as a day of Thanksgiving. This day was supposed to not just celebrate all the things to be thankful for, but also to acknowledge the ways our country/society has messed up and for people to care for those who are hurting (at his time, this meant those who had become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers due to the civil war). The idea was that Thanksgiving was a time we would work towards healing the wounds of our nation so that all may live in peace and harmony. How has Thanksgiving changed since 1863? What do you have to be thankful for? Who in your community is hurting?

Write or draw: How can you or your Girl Scout troop care for those who hurt? Since Girl Scouts make the world a better place, what are some things you can do to make the world more peaceful and harmonious?

Fun fact: President Lincoln was the first president to pardon a turkey- but it was actually Jack, his son's pet turkey and it was not at Thanksgiving time!

Activity #13: Learn About the 13th Amendment

Abraham Lincoln is often referred to as The Great Emancipator, a name that celebrates his role in ending slavery in the United States. The word emancipator may make you think of Lincoln's famous Emancipation Proclamation. This proclamation declared "that all persons held as slaves....shall be then, thenceforward, and forever, free." Unfortunately, this proclamation was legally limited- it applied only to states that had formally seceded from the United States, it didn't apply to any states that the Union army (the North) had regained control of, and most importantly, it entirely depended upon the Union winning the Civil War. Because of these limits, Lincoln knew he needed to protect the freedom of all people in the Constitution itself with an amendment- the 13th amendment to be specific. Learn a bit more about the 13th amendment with a behind the scenes peek at some special items in The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum's collection: tinyurl.com/ybrhwptw.

Activity #14: Lincoln's Love for Animals

The Lincolns loved animals! They had all sorts of pets over the years- dogs, cats, horses, turkeys, goats, rabbits, and even a pig! Several of these animals lived in the White House and some even were involved in President Lincoln's funeral. (Old Bob the horse wore a black mourning blanket trimmed with silver fringe and tassels as he followed the hearse with a family friend. Fido the yellow dog attended the funeral of his old friend with the Roll family who he moved in with when the Lincolns moved to the White House.) Of all the animals though, cats were one of Abraham's favorite- Mary even referred to cats as his "hobby." To honor this love of animals, with your family, friends, or troop, make some treats, toys, or bedding for a local animal shelter. You can focus on a specific animal, like cats, or you can craft for many animals. Be sure to ask the animal shelter what kinds of things they need as well as what kinds of things they can not accept as donations. Here's some ideas to get you started:

Cat Treats: tinyurl.com/vy4fzskc

Dog Enrichment Toys: tinyurl.com/34ertnd2

Make a Snuffle Mat (used by many kinds of animals): tinyurl.com/yvamuvup

Donate your time: Get in touch with your local shelter and ask how you can help out! Even if you can't help in person at the shelter, you may be able to help from home by making posters, organizing a bake sale, managing pet profiles on adoption websites, and more!

Activity #15: We're All Human, Even Lincoln Was!

One of the most important things to consider when learning about people is that they're people. People are messy, imperfect, and change their minds as they learn and grow. While we often talk about all the amazing aspects of Lincoln's life, our 16th president was still a human and had his bad days.

Daisies, Brownies, and Juniors: As we learn and grow, we are sometimes challenged to rethink things we think. A famous example of this is in 2006 when the scientific community reclassified Pluto as a Dwarf Planet- formally excluding Pluto from the "main solar system planets", a move that probably shocked and disappointed many of the adults in your life. But, as scientists learned more about Pluto, they realized they had judged too early and needed to rethink what they believed to be true about Pluto. Lincoln also changed his mind, not about planets, but about our nation. As he traveled the country, met people with different backgrounds, and learned more, his vision for the future of the United States shifted- in a good way! **Think about it with your troop or family:** Can you think of anything you've changed your mind about? Maybe you've learned to like a food you didn't enjoy before, or realized that maybe the new kid in class isn't actually a vampire (she's just a regular kid!). Maybe after several attempts to climb the rock wall at camp, you've learned you don't mind heights because you trust your counselors to have your back on belay. Is changing your mind a bad thing? What if you learned new information and instead of admitting you were wrong, you stood firm in your original belief? Do you think you have to know everything all the time? Is it realistic to expect someone to be perfect and know everything? Is it difficult or easy to admit that you were mistaken?

Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors: Compare and contrast Lincoln's speeches from early in his career with speeches from during his presidency. What opinions changed? What might have factored into this change of viewpoints? What role did the Civil War play in Lincoln's perspective? Had Lincoln fully formed his beliefs at the time of his earlier speeches? What might have helped inform his beliefs? View his speeches here: tinyurl.com/yc4hemdr.

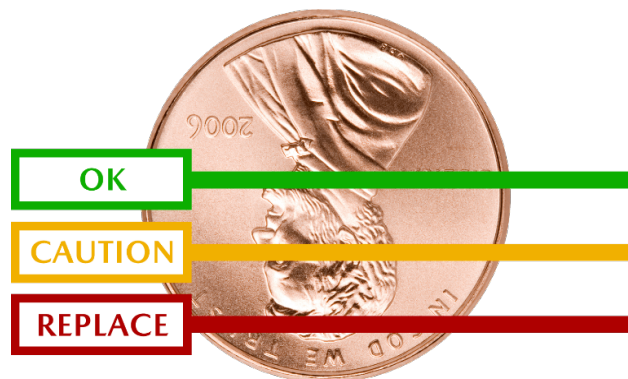
Activity #16: Do the Penny Test

While new pennies aren't being produced anymore, you probably have a coin featuring our 16th president somewhere in your house- let's use it to do a helpful test!

Step 1: Find a penny. It doesn't matter how new or shiny, as long as you can still see Lincoln's head.

Step 2: Find a vehicle with tires, like a car, SUV, truck, or motorcycle. Be sure this vehicle is off when you do the test.

Step 3: The Penny Test is simple but it helps you know if your tires are too thin (or bald) to be safely driven. Take your penny and place it in between the treads of the tire (the grooves) with Abraham Lincoln's face towards you but upside down. Kind of like this picture.



Make sure the ~tread~ covers Lincoln's ~head~

His whole head doesn't have to be covered to be safe, but if none of his head is covered by the tire tread, it will be time to replace your tires soon.

NOTE: If your tires don't cover Lincoln's head you may not have to immediately replace the tires, but you should make an appointment to do so very soon. Sometimes we have to wait a few days to get things fixed- that's normal. It's important to remember that while reminding your grown ups about safety is good, we want to be kind when reminding. Neither GSCI nor pennies can accurately predict the exact amount of use a tire can take before popping.