

# A Fine Fella

## Companion Teaching Activities to the historical fiction serialized story



# A Fine Fella

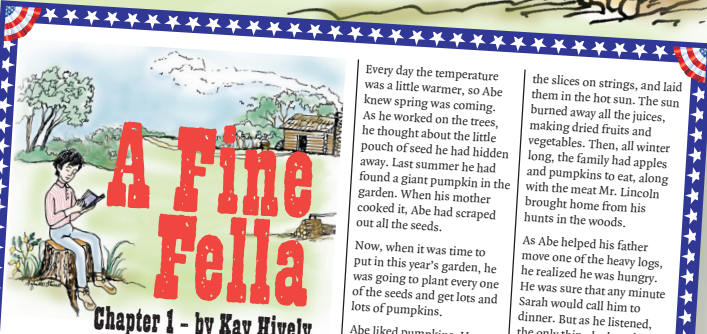
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**Chapter 1 - by Kay Hively**

**Y**oung Abe was just a little guy, but his muscles were strong. As he helped his father cut down oak trees, his muscles bulged out, and he smiled to himself. He smiled because he knew the trees he and his father were felling would one day be a new cabin for the Lincoln family.

Abe was only 7 years old, but he knew how to work. On the Kentucky frontier, work was what kept a family going.

Like other families in that part of the country, the Lincoln family had almost no money, so what they needed had to come from the land or from a barter with someone.

Abe's father, Thomas Lincoln, was a good carpenter so he would often



make something and then trade it to a neighbor for food or supplies. Trading one thing for another, without using money, is called barter. Abe thought his father was very good at bartering.

But one thing Mr. Lincoln had not traded for was a good cabin. That's why Abe was happy as he chopped down trees to make logs for the new home. Abe was born in an old log cabin right there in Kentucky in 1809.

While Abe and his father cut trees, his mother Nancy and his sister Sarah worked in the cabin.

It had been a long winter, and their food supply was low. Times were hard, and everyone was looking forward to putting in a garden and gathering fruits and berries from the woods.

Every day the temperature was a little warmer, so Abe knew spring was coming. As he worked on the trees, he thought about the little pouch of seed he had hidden away. Last summer he had found a giant pumpkin in the garden. When his mother cooked it, Abe had scraped out all the seeds.

Abe liked pumpkins. He ate them raw right out of the garden. And, of course, he ate them cooked in a kettle or baked into bread. But best of all, he liked them after they were dried in the sun.

Each summer, the Lincoln family sliced some of their pumpkins and apples, put

the slices on strings, and laid them in the hot sun. The sun burned away all the juices, making dried fruits and vegetables. Then, all winter long, the family had apples and pumpkins to eat, along with the meat Mr. Lincoln brought home from his hunts in the woods.

As Abe helped his father move one of the heavy logs, he realized he was hungry. He was sure that any minute Sarah would call him to dinner. But as he listened, the only thing he heard was the sound of something coming through the woods.

Looking up, Abe saw a man on horseback riding straight toward him. Strangers were rarely seen around the Lincoln farm. Abe wondered who this might be.

### Next Week: Chapter 2 - A Sudden Move

### Things to Think About and Do

1. The Lincoln family dried pumpkins and apples in the sun. The next time you visit the grocery store, look for dried fruits and vegetables. Count how many kinds you see.
2. Abraham Lincoln was born in 1809. How old would he be if he were still alive? Why wasn't Abe born in a regular hospital?
3. Find an ad for something you'd like in the newspaper. If you were going to barter, what could you trade in exchange?

GLEs: MN1A, MN2A, MN3C, R1G, R1I

Learn more about Abraham Lincoln by visiting the following Web sites:  
<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/twhp/www/ps/lessons/126/iboi/>  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/presidents/abrahamlincoln/>  
<http://home.att.net/~jngorton/lincoln177.html>  
[http://www.conservapedia.com/Abraham\\_Lincoln](http://www.conservapedia.com/Abraham_Lincoln)

Author Kay Hively and Illustrator Billie Gofourth-Stewart are both from Neosho, MO. Produced by the Missouri Press Foundation, ©2009

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**A Fine Fella**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapter 1**

**GLEs:** R1E, R1G, R1H, R1I, SS4A, SS6A, W2B, W2C, W2D, W2E, W2F, W3A

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What is a synonym for barter? Give an example of a fair barter from the early 1800s.

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2. Why did Lincoln’s family dry fruits and vegetables?

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3. Name signs in nature that would show that spring is approaching.

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4. Compare and contrast the chores Abe had when he was young to the chores young boys have today.

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**Newspaper Connection:** Search your local newspaper for things you’d like to own. Choose your favorite item, then cut and paste it on a separate piece of paper. Write a paragraph telling what possession you’d barter for this new item, and describe why it is a fair trade.

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**Chapter 2**

**GLEs:** R1E, R1G, R1H, R1I, SS5B, SS3aF, SS5G, SS6A, W2F, W3D

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Abe Lincoln’s Knob Creek farm is now an historical site. Name the city location of this historical site and locate it on the map. Why was Knob Creek a good location for a frontier home?

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2. Describe how you’d feel if one of your relatives was taken away to work as a slave.

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3. What does meager mean? Use details from the story to explain your answer.

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4. Tell about a time when you worked really hard for no rewards.

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5. Use three details from the story to support that the Lincoln family was poor.

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**Newspaper Connection:** Volunteers work hard, but receive no monetary rewards. Locate an article about a local volunteer in your newspaper, and then summarize the article on a separate piece of paper.

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**Chapter 3**

**GLEs:** R1E, R1G, R1H, R1I, R3C, W2F, I1A, I1B, I1C, SS6A, SS5F

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Kentucky and Indiana are in two separate United States regions. Name the two regions and describe how the regions are different.

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3. What does it mean to be a squatter? Why do you think the Lincoln family chose to be squatters?

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**Use reference books, safe search engines on the Internet, or history books to answer the following questions.**

4. What is a blab school? Describe the advantages and disadvantages of attending a blab school.

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5. What is another name for “milk sickness?” What are the symptoms?

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**Newspaper Connection:** Lincoln’s family traveled by horse and wagon then crossed the river on a ferry. Look for means of transportation in your local newspaper. Cut and paste words and pictures on poster board to create a transportation collage.

**A Fine Fella**  
**Chapter 4**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**GLEs:** R1E, R1G, R1H, R1I, W1A, W2F, W3B, SS6A

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What is a terrapin? Use details from the story to explain your answer.

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2. Use the chart below to compare the burden on Abe’s back to the burden on the terrapins back.

<b>Abe Lincoln</b>	<b>Both</b>	<b>Terrapin</b>

3. Abe slept on a corn husk mattress. Describe what it might feel like to sleep on a corn husk mattress.

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4. Who did Lincoln talk to about his troubles? Who do you talk to about your troubles? Why?

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**Newspaper Connection:** Besides mattresses, many other things have changed since Abe Lincoln was a boy. Create a T-chart comparing Abe’s time period to modern day. Locate and cut out pictures and words of modern day items in your local newspaper, then paste them in the chart. Then, describe what Abe would have used instead.

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**Chapter 5**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**GLEs:** R1E, R1G, R1H, R1I, R2B, SS5G, SS6A, W2B, W2C, W2D, W2E, W2F, W3A

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What are britches? Use details from the story to explain your answer.

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2. Why was digging up the seed from the mud so important to Abe? Explain your answer.

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3. Name at least two ways pioneers got water when Abe was a boy.

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4. What simile did the author use to describe the Lincoln's garden after the rain?

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**Newspaper Connection:** Wrestling was a popular sport with frontier people. Find a picture of people playing a popular sport in a recent newspaper. Cut out the picture and paste it on a separate piece of paper, but do not read the cutline that follows the picture. Write your own creative cutline for the picture.

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**Chapter 6**

**GLEs:** R1E, R1G, R1H, R1I, SS6A, W2B, W2C, W2D, W2E, W2F, W3C

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Why did the girls have to dance with each other?

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2. Why did the Lincoln family replace the old corn husks in their mattresses with new ones?

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3. Abe was a good storyteller. Name at least three characteristics of a good storyteller.

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4. What was Abe's joke? Why didn't Sarah appreciate his joke?

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**Newspaper Connection:** Pretend you are a writer for an Indiana newspaper in the early 1800s. Write a feature article about wrestling, gardening or dancing.

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**Chapter 7**

**GLEs:** R1E, R1G, R1H, R1I, W2F, W2B, W2C, W2D, W2E, W2F, W3C, W3D

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Name two surprises Abe had when his father returned from his trip.

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2. Was the feather tick mattress a good gift for Abraham Lincoln? Explain your answer.

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3. How do you think life changed for the Lincoln's with the new family members in their house?

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4. Why was Abe described as "a fine fella" throughout the story? Use details from the story in your answer.

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**Newspaper Connection:** Abe saw many problems that needed to be solved. Look through your local newspaper for pictures and stories of problems in your community that need to be solved. Summarize the problem and give suggestions on how the problem can be solved.



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**Chapter 8**

**GLEs:** R1E, R1G, R1H, R1I, W3B, SS3aF, SS3aG, W2B, W2C, W2D, W2E, W2F, W3C, W3D

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Describe Abe Lincoln’s political career including offices he held and terms in each office.

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2. Using dates from the story, create a timeline below of Abe Lincoln’s life.

3. Using characters from the story, create Abe Lincoln’s family tree.

**Newspaper Connection:** Write a news story about a famous event in Abe Lincoln’s life. Choose one of the following topics.

- Emancipation Proclamation
- Gettysburg Address
- Abraham Lincoln’s death