

Abraham lincoln biography

[History](#)



Abraham Lincoln (Abraham Lincoln Biography) Abraham Lincoln is arguably the greatest American president of all time. His contributions to American social life in general and to global politics in particular cannot be forgotten as long as human kind exists in this world. Lincoln's greatness can be understood properly only when we compare him against some of the corrupted politicians of the modern world. He was a president who worked for the people. " His distinctively human and humane personality and historical role as savior of the Union and emancipator of the slaves creates a legacy that endures" (Abraham Lincoln Biography). Lincoln's greatest contributions were abolition of slavery in America and the formulation of a clear definition of democracy. This paper briefly analyses the life and contributions of Abraham Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln was born on 18 February 1809 as the second child to Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks Lincoln in Kentucky. His mother died during his childhood which forced him to undertake hard works even during his childhood. As a loyal son, Lincoln had no hesitation to give all his earnings to his father until he became 21 years of age. During his teenage period, he worked in various disciplines such as shopkeeper, postmaster, and a general store owner. Lincoln failed to get proper education during his childhood; however, he was able to self-educate with the help of reading books from libraries. At age of 22, Lincoln started to concentrate more in politics. His experiences in politics made him aware of the different characteristics of slavery in American social and political life. " It was around this time he decided to become a lawyer, teaching himself the law by reading Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England"(Abraham Lincoln Biography). Lincoln married Mary Todd, a well-educated spiritual lady, in 1842 and he had four children in this relationship.

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Lincoln's political career attained a different proposition after his entry into Republican Party in 1856. " In 1857, the Supreme Court issued its controversial decision Scott v. Sanford, declaring African Americans were not citizens and had no inherent rights" (Abraham Lincoln Biography). The findings of the Supreme Court were indigestible to Lincoln. He has strongly criticized this finding and argued that all citizens of America have equal rights irrespective of their skin color. In fact Supreme Court's controversial decision in Scott v. Sanford case forced Lincoln to contest in the US Senate elections from Illinois. His opponent was sitting senator, Stephen Douglas. He has challenged not only the Supreme Court's decisions, but also the favorable attitudes of political leaders in America in continuing slavery and double standards in American social life. Even though Lincoln failed to win the election, he did succeed in creating a wave and awareness in America against slavery. Lincoln charisma started to grow in American politics even though he failed in the senate elections because of his liberal views about American politics and social life. In 1860, some of the political activists in Illinois started to project Lincoln as the president candidate of Republican Party. " On May 18th at the Republican National Convention in Chicago, Abraham Lincoln surpassed better known candidates such as William Seward of New York and Salmon P. Chase of Ohio" (Abraham Lincoln Biography). Even though Lincoln failed to achieve majority in popular votes, he did succeed in achieving majority of electoral votes which made him the President of America. Perhaps Lincoln's greatest contribution to politics as president of America is his definition of democracy. " Abraham Lincoln defined democracy as: Government of the people, by the people, for the people" (A Short Definition of Democracy). Even though democracy existed <https://assignbuster.com/abraham-lincoln-biography/>

in politics even before Lincoln, a clear definition of democracy was not there. Lincoln's definition of democracy gave different dimensions to democracy and its acceptance among the public started to increase. Earlier, people had a lot of concerns about the functioning of democracy. However, Lincoln succeeded in making democracy popular among the public with this definition. As the president of America, the major challenge faced by Lincoln was the civil war. Even though Lincoln worked hard to stop the civil war, it was difficult for him to control it. Even though Lincoln faced so many criticisms against his handling of the Civil War, he was successful in winning the presidential election again in 1864. It should be noted that he had secured an absolute majority both in popular and electoral votes in this election. Lincoln's greatest contribution to American social life is the abolition of slavery by law. The 13th amendment, which formally abolished slavery in the United States, passed the Senate on April 8, 1864, and the House on January 31, 1865. On February 1, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln approved the Joint Resolution of Congress submitting the proposed amendment to the state legislatures (13th Amendment to the U. S. Constitution: Abolition of Slavery (1865)). His brave stands against slavery finally cost him his life. " Lincoln was assassinated on April 14, 1865, by well-known actor and Confederate sympathizer John Wilkes Booth at Ford's Theater in Washington, D. C." (Abraham Lincoln Biography). The reason for his assassination is believed to be the abolition of slavery. To conclude, Abraham Lincoln was the greatest American president. His major contributions were the abolition of slavery and the definition of democracy. Works Cited " 13th Amendment to the U. S. Constitution: Abolition of Slavery (1865)". Web. 21 January 2012. " Abraham

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