

U.S. Set to Celebrate Lincoln Bicentennial



Abraham Lincoln is probably one of the best known and most popular U.S. presidents. Some historians think Lincoln was the greatest president the U.S. ever had. So this year the whole country is planning a big party to celebrate the 200th anniversary, or bicentennial, of Lincoln's birth, which was February 12, 1809.

On Lincoln's birthday, President Barack Obama plans to take part in a ceremony at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. Several people will place wreaths at the memorial, and there will be music and a special poem read during the ceremony. Students will participate in reading the Gettysburg Address, one of Lincoln's most famous speeches. A special exhibit about Lincoln will be on display at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and later it will travel to other U.S. museums.

NEWS WORD BOX

bicentennial president
anniversary ceremony
overcome

Why do so many people think Lincoln was a great president? He always thought slavery was wrong and ended slavery in the U.S. when he was president. Lincoln was president during the Civil War, the worst time in U.S. history. He said it was important that the U.S. remain one country, and some say that without Lincoln, the country would have remained divided. Lincoln also had to overcome many challenges. His family was very poor and he didn't go to school much. He educated himself by reading books and even read enough books to become a lawyer. Lincoln went on to serve in the Illinois legislature and U.S. Congress before being elected the 16th president.

MORE FACTS ABOUT LINCOLN:

- President Barack Obama is a great admirer of Lincoln.
- Lincoln earned the nickname "Honest Abe" because of his honesty as a boy and young man.

THINK ABOUT THE NEWS

What do you think are some of the characteristics of a "great" person?