



0. Lincoln Lawyer & Legislator - Story Preface

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In his second term, in the Illinois legislature, Abraham Lincoln became the Whig party floor leader in Vandalia, then the capital of Illinois. Living a simple life, his "home" was a small dark, room. He ate very little, and as cheaply as possible, using every penny he could spare to pay-off the debts he had promised to pay years before.

When the legislature moved to a new state capital, in Springfield, so did Lincoln. He studied law books so well that, when he applied to the bar, he was accepted as a lawyer. By this time of his life, Abe's dislike for his father had not diminished, and he never saw (or spoke to) him again.

In Springfield, Lincoln became the law partner of John Stewart, and when Stewart was elected to the US Congress, Lincoln ran the law practice alone. He was known to have a brilliant mind and a flair for logical home-spun arguments. He only had two problems as a lawyer:

- He found it impossible to defend someone he knew was guilty;
- He accepted cases when he believed someone had been wronged—even if they could not pay.

In the legislature, Lincoln found that his frequent debating opponent was another young politician, Stephen Douglas. In some ways, the two men were very similar—both were young, ambitious, and good debaters—but they were also opposites in many other ways:

- Douglas believed that states should be left alone to govern themselves; Lincoln believed in a strong federal government.
- Douglas was short, blonde, and loud; Lincoln was tall, dark and used down-home humor and common sense to make his points.
- Douglas was well-educated and from a rich family; Lincoln came from a poor family and was self-taught.

When the two men first met, they could not have imagined how their rivalry would shape their lives—not to mention how that rivalry would shape their nation.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Lincoln-Lawyer-Legislator-Abraham-Lincoln>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Lincoln-Lawyer-Legislator-Abraham-Lincoln>



## Lincoln

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