

Lincoln's Choice

CCSSR1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Source: Public Domain, adapted by Center for Urban Education, may be copied with citation.

This is a story that someone told about Abe Lincoln.

Abe Lincoln saved my life. We had been going to school together one year. The next year we had no school, because there were so few students to attend, there being only about twenty in the school the year before.

Consequently Abe and I had not much to do; but, as we did not go to school and our mothers were strict with us, we did not get to see each other very often. They knew there were dangers in the countryside. One Sunday morning my mother waked me up early, saying she was going to see Mrs. Lincoln, and that I could go along. Glad of the chance, I was soon dressed and ready to go. After my mother and I got there, Abe and I played all through the day. We were out in the hills near the river.

While we were wandering up and down the little stream called Knob Creek, Abe said: "Right up there"—pointing to the east—"we saw a lot of blueberries there yesterday. Let's go over. We can bring a lot home."

The stream was too wide for us to jump across. We saw a foot-log and decided to try it. It was narrow, but Abe said, "Let's do it." He was like that; he would take a chance if it was important to do something.

He went first and reached the other side all right. I went about half way across, when I slipped. He shouted, "Don't look down nor up nor sideways, but look right at me and hold on tight!" But I fell off into the creek and the water was about seven or eight feet deep. I could not swim, and neither could Abe. I was splashing and calling out.

So he got a stick and climbed out and held it out to me. I came up, grabbing with both hands, and he put the stick into my hands. I clung to it, and he pulled me out on the bank, almost dead. He got me by the arms and shook me well. Then he rolled me on the ground, and the water poured out of my mouth.

I was all right very soon. We promised each other that we would never tell anybody about it, and never did for years. My mother would have been so angry. I never told any one. But I can tell you now. He was a great problem solver even when he was a boy.

What is a lesson people can learn from this story?

Underline the parts of the story that show that is the lesson you can learn.