

## Training For The Presidency

CCSSR2: Figure out ideas when you read.

*Includes questions you can ask about any story.*

Public Domain Text by Orison Swett Marden; Questions by Center for Urban Education

“I meant to take good care of your book, Mr. Crawford,” said the boy, “but I’ve damaged it a good deal without intending to, and now I want to make it right with you. What shall I do to make it good?”

“Why, what happened to it, Abe?” asked the rich farmer, as he took the copy of Weems’s “Life of Washington,” which he had lent young Lincoln, and looked at the stained leaves and warped binding. “It looks as if it had been out through all last night’s storm. How came you to forget, and leave it out to soak?”

“It was this way, Mr. Crawford,” replied Abe. “I sat up late to read it, and when I went to bed, I put it away carefully in my bookcase, as I call it, a little opening between two logs in the wall of our cabin. I dreamed about General Washington all night. When I woke up I took it out to read a page or two before I did the chores, and you can’t imagine how I felt when I found it in this shape. It seems that the mud-daubing had got out of the weather side of that crack, and the rain must have dripped on it three or four hours before I took it out. I’m sorry, Mr. Crawford, and want to fix it up with you, if you can tell me how, for I have not got money to pay for it.”

“Well,” said Mr. Crawford, “come and shuck corn three days, and the book is yours.”

Had Mr. Crawford told young Abraham Lincoln that he had fallen heir to a fortune the boy could hardly have felt more relief. Shuck corn only three days, and earn the book that told all about his greatest hero!

“I don’t intend to shuck corn, split rails, and the like always,” he told Mr. Crawford’s wife, after he had read the volume. “I’m going to fit myself for a leadership profession.”

“Why, what do you want to be, now?” asked Mrs. Crawford in surprise.

“Oh, I’ll be President!” said Abe with a smile. “I will lead the nation.”

“You’d make a pretty President with all your tricks and jokes, now, wouldn’t you?” said the farmer’s wife.

“Oh, I’ll study and get ready,” replied the boy, “and then maybe the chance will come.”

That was how it all started. You may not believe this story, but it is like what happened. Abe Lincoln was a truly remarkable person. He is the President who really changed our country.

*Write your answers to these questions on another page.*

1. Sequence: Which event happened first? Which happened last?
2. Character Traits: Name one character. What is one trait you infer that character has? Explain why you think that.
3. Motive: What is something that person does? Why do you think that person does that?
4. Summarize: Summarize the story in four sentences. Tell about the characters and what they do.
5. Main Idea: What do you think is the main idea of the story? Why?