

## USA: Slaves no more

**Level:** Pre-intermediate / Intermediate

**Age:** Teenagers / Young adults

**Duration:** Approx. 60 minutes

**Aims:** In this lesson the students will:

1. learn about Abraham Lincoln, slavery and black American history;
2. practise extensive and intensive listening and a range of listening sub-skills, including listening for specific information and listening for detail;
3. learn a range of language related to the end of slavery – *the declaration, slavery, society, push a / the bill (through), abolish, fundamental principle, the House of Representatives, the Civil Rights Movement, set in motion*;
4. consolidate the above language with a collaborative writing task.

**Materials:** one copy of the worksheet per student; Track 1 (introduction); Track 2 (remaining audio) and Track 3 (Lincoln final monologue soundscape) – all downloaded from onestopenglish

**Summary:** Join time traveller Amber Adams on an exciting adventure as she goes back in time to meet Abraham Lincoln and show him how his desire to pass the 13th Amendment changed the course of American history forever.

### Warmer activities

**Aim:** to introduce students to the character of Amber, the secret watch and the context of the episode

Play Track 1 (introduction). Discuss the questions below with the whole class. At this stage, don't worry about pre-teaching vocabulary, encourage your students to simply listen for enjoyment. Stress that they don't need to write anything down but merely listen.

- Who is Amber Adams?
- Why does she go back in time to meet Lincoln?

### Lincoln task

1. Before you hand out the worksheets, write Abraham Lincoln on the board and find out what your students know about him. There's a good chance they might have seen the feature film starring Daniel Day Lewis. Write notes on the board as you elicit their ideas.

2. Direct students to the short excerpt about Lincoln taken from *USA – A Macmillan Cultural Reader* by Coleen Degnan-Veness with Chantal

Veness. Ask your students to read the excerpt and discuss the questions below it.

### Language task

**Aims:** to focus on some of the more complex language related to the end of slavery; to enable students to enjoy the listening passage with more ease

Ask students to match the words in the box to the definitions below.

As an optional pronunciation task, you may wish to bring the main stress patterns of the words or phrases to your students' attention. Ask them to underline the main emphasis and then model and repeat.

**Key:**

1. voted into power;
2. slavery;
3. a society;
4. a fundamental principle;
5. the Civil Rights Movement;
6. set in motion;
7. the House of Representatives;
8. to push a bill (through);
9. the declaration;
10. abolish

### Listening task

**Aim:** to practise sub-skills by listening for general understanding

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1. Direct your students to the five moments in history. Amber takes Lincoln to three of these moments. Ask them to tick the ones they hear.
2. Play Track 2 (remaining audio)

### Key:

#### True

Rosa Parks sitting down on a bus, which ignited the Civil Rights Movement in 1955  
the White House in 1965, where the Voting Rights Act was passed through Congress  
Barack Obama being voted into power in 2008

#### False

Lincoln's own statue being erected in 1922  
Martin Luther King's speech in 1963 – 'I have a dream'

### Memory task

**Aim:** to allow students to fully consolidate what they have heard

Put your students into small groups to discuss the questions below to see how much they can remember.

### Key:

1. He feels slavery is a part of society and questions who will work on their farms.
2. He believes it will fail.
3. the war
4. not to listen to the Senator
5. You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time.
6. He doesn't have time for jokes.
7. A bus, to see Rosa Parks.
8. He's always hoped this would happen and is lost for words.
9. To Chicago in 2008, when Barack Obama is voted into power.
10. Lincoln and the 13th Amendment!

### Speaking task

**Aims:** to encourage students to enjoy the process of speaking an extended piece of dialogue aloud; to help students imagine how Lincoln would have felt during his presidency;

to practise pronunciation and intonation whilst delivering a profound statement

1. Put your students in pairs and ask them to look at the short Lincoln monologue taken from the listening passage. Encourage them to read the words aloud in an evocative manner. Ask them to imagine that they are Lincoln and to try to grasp how he would feel realizing the importance of his decision to end slavery. Double check that everyone is familiar with the 13th Amendment (see below).

*Passed by Congress on January 31, 1865, and agreed on December 6, 1865, the 13th Amendment abolished slavery in the United States and provides that "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction".*

Source: <http://www.archives.gov/>

2. Once both partners have had a few read-throughs, play Track 3 (Lincoln final monologue soundscape) as a background sound to their short monologue. Ask them to practise again with the soundscape. Finally, ask for volunteers to perform their monologues to the whole class.

### Extension activities

- **Paraphrasing task**  
Using the language from the lesson, ask students to continue the story.  
*Lincoln felt slavery was morally wrong so...*
- **Letter of admiration to a great hero**  
Ask your students to write an informal letter to thank a historical figure they admire.
- **Mini research teams**  
Put students into small groups to research any of the following: slavery, Lincoln, the 13th Amendment, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, the Civil Rights Movement, Barack Obama. In small groups they can then present their ideas to the group or create a class magazine about black American history.

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### Lincoln task

Read the article about Lincoln and discuss the questions below.

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN

In 1837, Abraham Lincoln spoke publicly against slavery. By 1850, slavery was against the law in the north, but not in the south. Lincoln became president in January 1861 and, when the southern states tried to leave the USA in April of that year, the war began. The southern states wanted to keep slavery, even if it meant they had to make a different country of their own. Many people were killed in the long and terrible civil war but, in the end, the north won and slaves were free. At the end of the war, on the evening of April 14, 1865, Lincoln went to the theatre. John Wilkes Booth, an actor who had wanted the south to win the war, went to the theatre with a gun. There, Booth killed the president. Abraham Lincoln is remembered by many as one of America's greatest heroes of the nineteenth century.



Adapted from *USA* (Macmillan Cultural Readers)  
by Coleen Degnan-Veness with Chantal Veness  
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1. Is there a great leader from your country that is remembered for changing society forever?
2. Has your country ever had a civil war?
3. Has anybody well-known from your country ever been assassinated? Do you know why?

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### Language task

In Amber's adventure you hear language about the end of slavery. Fill the gaps in the sentences below with the words or phrases from the box.

the declaration to push a bill (through) the Civil Rights Movement	abolish a fundamental principle set in motion	slavery the House of Representatives voted into power	a society
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1. When a party or political leader wins an election they are \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ is the system of owning people as slaves.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ is a group of humans that have shared institutions and a common culture.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is an important truth and belief that you live by.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ was a movement in the United States beginning in the 1960s and led primarily by black Americans in an effort to establish the civil rights of individual black citizens.
6. When something is \_\_\_\_\_ it starts something moving or working.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ is one of the two houses of the Congress. It is frequently referred to as 'the House'. The other house is 'the Senate'.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ is to encourage a law to pass.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ is an official statement of American independence.
10. To formally put an end to something is to \_\_\_\_\_ it.

### Listening task

Amber and Lincoln visit three important moments in history. Which do you hear in the adventure?

- Barack Obama being voted into power in 2008
- Lincoln's own statue being erected in 1922
- the White House in 1965, where the Voting Rights Act was passed through Congress
- Martin Luther King's speech in 1963 – 'I have a dream'
- Rosa Parks sitting down on a bus, which ignited the Civil Rights Movement in 1955

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### Memory task

Work in small groups and discuss the questions below. How much can you remember?

1. Why does the Senator feel abolishing slavery is wrong?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Why does the Senator warn Lincoln about pushing the bill through?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What does Lincoln predict will end soon?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What does Amber encourage Lincoln to do?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Finish this famous Lincoln quote – *You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool \_\_\_\_\_ the people \_\_\_\_\_ the time.* What does this quote mean to you?
6. What does Lincoln say when Amber tells him she is from the future?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What transport do Lincoln and Amber get on in 1955? Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. How does Lincoln feel when Amber takes him to 1965?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Where does Amber take Lincoln next?  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. When Amber goes back to her class, what does she prove to her teacher that she knows?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Speaking task

Look at what Lincoln says when Amber has brought him back to his own time.

**Lincoln:** *I need to sit. There was an old poet who said, "Truth is the daughter of Time". You have shown me the truth Amber and it seems that maybe I was born for a reason. America is a place where all things are possible and for a long time I have dreamed of a future where all men are equal. Through the 13th Amendment it is now time for me to make this happen.*

### Work in pairs and:

1. Firstly, read the words aloud to each other. Think about how emotional Lincoln must feel realizing his importance in American history. Try to speak slowly and with emotion and try to imagine his mood knowing what he now knows.
2. Now, listen to the background sounds taken from the listening and say the words aloud again. Use the music and sound effects to make the words even more important.
3. Would you like to perform to the rest of your class? Volunteer!

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**Amber:** Hi! I'm Amber, Amber Adams! Now, keep this to yourself but I've got something amazing to show you. OK, it's a watch, but it's not just any old watch – listen to what happens when I touch it! I can use it to travel through time to anywhere I want to go. So, what do you reckon? Are you ready to come on an adventure?

Track 1

**History Teacher:** Quieten down class. Today we're going to be learning about Abraham Lincoln, who was one of the greatest American presidents. He is remembered by many as one of America's greatest heroes of the nineteenth century ...

**Amber:** You know what? I think it's much more exciting when you're actually there. How about we go and meet President Lincoln for ourselves ...?

**Amber:** Quick! Behind this tree!

**Lincoln:** All I've been hearing recently is no, no, no and no ...

**Senator:** But Mr President. It simply will not work! Slavery is a part of our society! Without it, who will work on our farms?

Track 2

**Lincoln:** Nonsense, Senator. I believe the declaration that all men are created equal is the great fundamental principle of our country and that slavery goes against that principle! It must be abolished!

**Senator:** It is too dangerous to try and push this bill through the House of Representatives. It will fail, and remember we are still at war!

**Lincoln:** I feel the heavy burden of this war every day, sir. Look at these soldiers. They are little more than children – marching off to die for what they believe in. The war will end, and soon. However, slavery must end too. It is morally and politically wrong!

**Senator:** I bid you good day.

**Amber:** He's coming over here!

**Lincoln:** Slavery must be abolished. But to risk everything ... What, who are you?

**Amber:** Ah ... Hello ... Mr President.

**Lincoln:** Boy, what are you doing here?

**Amber:** My name's Amber and ... umm ... don't listen to the Senator, Mr President, slavery is a terrible thing!

**Lincoln:** The Senator is a good man and he has much to lose. But maybe the Senator is right. Maybe this is the wrong time. War is nearly over. I need to choose: should I bring peace at the cost of keeping slavery, or should I free the slaves but risk keeping us at war?

**Amber:** It is the right time! One day all the American people will thank you for this.

**Lincoln:** Hmm. You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of

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- the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time.
- Amber:** You don't need to fool anybody! You will convince everyone and slavery will be abolished.
- Lincoln:** You speak as if you know the future?
- Amber:** I come from the future where there are no more slaves. Would you like me to show you?
- Lincoln:** I don't have time for jokes boy!
- Amber:** This isn't a joke. Put your hand over my watch.
- Lincoln:** Very well.
- Lincoln:** What's happening? How did we get here?
- Amber:** Nothing to be alarmed about! We've just travelled through time to 1955 and we're about to see something very important indeed, let's get on this bus.
- Man 1:** You there, black woman, get out of your seat – there's a white man that wants to sit in it ... Get up!
- Parks:** No.
- Man 1:** Why don't you stand up?
- Parks:** I don't think I should have to stand up.
- Man 1:** Well, if you don't stand up, I'm going to have to call the police and have you arrested.
- Parks:** You may do that.
- Amber:** Let's go.
- Lincoln:** I don't understand; why is this so important?
- Amber:** Well, you freed the slaves, but for a long time they weren't really free as they didn't have equality. Rosa Parks, the woman we just saw who refused to move out of her seat, ignited the Civil Rights Movement and set in motion events that ensured that the rights of all people, regardless of the colour of their skin, were equally protected by the law.
- Lincoln:** I see ... That's amazing.
- Amber:** Put your hand over my watch, sir.
- Lincoln:** That's ... That's the White House, but it looks ... different.
- Amber:** The year is 1965 and the Voting Rights Act is about to be passed through Congress. It will mean that any American citizen, from any background, has the right to vote.
- Lincoln:** I've ... I've always hoped that this would happen one day ... I'm lost for words.
- Amber:** Put your hand over my watch for the last time.

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- Lincoln:** Where are we now? These people! Look at their clothes!
- Man 2:** Duuude, nice Lincoln costume!
- Amber:** It's 2008. We're in Chicago and the first black President of the United States of America has just been voted into power.
- Lincoln:** My goodness. Who would believe it? Please take me home ...  
I need to sit. There was an old poet who said, "Truth is the daughter of Time". You have shown me the truth Amber, and it seems that maybe I was born for a reason. America is a place where all things are possible and for a long time I have dreamed of a future where all men are equal. Through the 13th Amendment it is now time for me to make this happen. Thank you Amber.
- Amber:** Thank you Mr President, and goodbye.
- History Teacher:** Boring you am I, Miss Adams? Or are you daydreaming again? You probably think the 13th Amendment is something to do with the lunch menu changing in the school cafe. Do you take me for a fool Miss Adams? Do you even know anything about Abraham Lincoln?
- Amber:** Well, as President Lincoln once said: "You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time."
- History Teacher:** Do go on ...
- Amber:** He abolished slavery by adding the 13th Amendment to the constitution of the United States of America and, under his command, the north went on to win the War of Independence.
- Lincoln:** "Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."
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