

**TEACHER GUIDE**

# 1860 DOC. #3: Lincoln/Hamlin Campaign Poster

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In the years before television, one of the few ways to put a candidate’s image before the voters was with the use of a poster. This 1860 campaign poster uses the two-framed style of the period to present images of both the presidential and vice-presidential candidates. The poster was made by W.H. Rease of Philadelphia for the Lincoln campaign.

The Republican platform endorsed a high tariff on foreign imports. It supported the right of each state to decide whether it would allow slavery but opposed the extension of slavery into the new territories. It favored the Homestead Bill to give free land to settlers in the West.

> **Project** the document.

**QUESTION** What messages are given about Lincoln and the Republican Party platform? Give your evidence.

**SUGGESTED ANSWER** Lincoln is a patriot seeking to preserve the union.

**EVIDENCE** bald eagle, U.S. flags; text: “the union must be preserved”

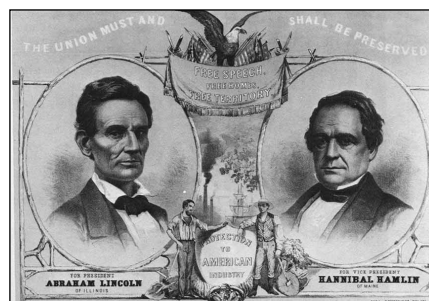
**SUGGESTED ANSWER** Lincoln is a frontiersman, the “rail splitter”

**EVIDENCE** rough-hewn wood border, eagle on the split rail fence, images of felled trees and fresh produce; Lincoln’s collar is open as is the plowman’s below him, as contrasted with Hamlin’s stiff collar

**SUGGESTED ANSWER** The Republican Party values workers and will protect industry and workers from foreign competition.

**EVIDENCE** text: “protection of American Industry”; factory smokestack in background; images of proud and determined workers

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**PowerPoint Slide**

SUGGESTED ANSWER The party supports open dialogue on key issues like slavery

EVIDENCE text on banner: "free speech"

SUGGESTED ANSWER It supports the Homestead Act giving free land to Western settlers.

EVIDENCE text on banner: "free homes"

SUGGESTED ANSWER It opposes the spread of slavery to Western territories.

EVIDENCE text on banner: "free territories"

QUESTION **What are the different target audiences for this poster? What makes you think so?**

SUGGESTED ANSWER Target audiences include working men, anti-slavery voters, those supporting preservation of the Union, homesteaders, voters from the mid-continent & the Northeast.

EVIDENCE image of men working; text: "Protect industry," "Free Territory," "Union preserved"; image of homesteaders with plow and ax; Lincoln "of Illinois" and Hamlin "of Maine"

**ADDITIONAL INFO**

Although we may be accustomed or even fond of Lincoln's image today, in 1860 the "rail splitter's" Republican handlers were concerned with his looks. Judge John Read sent an artist to Lincoln's home in Springfield, Illinois to make a campaign portrait that was, "good looking whether the original justify it or not" (Voss 2004). One answer came from young Grace Bedell of Westfield, New York. She wrote Lincoln during the campaign, "All the ladies like whiskers and they would tease their husbands to vote for you and then you would be president." Lincoln took her advice. On his train trip back to Washington for his inauguration he stopped at Westfield. A call from Lincoln went out to see if Grace was present. She was, and as she approached Lincoln, he bent down to kiss her. The crowd roared with its approval. If a similar event occurred today you can be sure that it would have ample media coverage. But, Lincoln's inaugural preceded the era of photojournalism and television so the story survives only in print.

**FURTHER QUESTIONS**

Examine the similarities and differences between the potential impact of a campaign poster and a short television commercial.

Can you think of modern images in which a candidate combines appeals to patriotism, national security, and freedom? How do such images demonstrate a candidate's qualifications to be President?

Why do you think that Lincoln decided to grow a beard?

**CONNECTIONS**

(see thematic listing)

**Reaching Voters** (poster)