



## Teacher Guide: “Lincoln’s Assassination” on Fords.org

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Webpage: <https://www.fords.org/lincolns-assassination/>

### Overview of webpage

This page uses first-person accounts and an image of the Ford’s Theatre stage in 1865 to talk about the events of the night of April 14, 1865, when John Wilkes Booth shot President Abraham Lincoln.

### Structure of page

- The menu on the right side of the page, just below the image of Booth shooting Lincoln, navigates to the other main pages of this website section: [Lincoln’s Death](#), [Investigating the Assassination](#), [Impact on a Nation](#), and [Ford’s Theatre History](#).
- This page has a short introduction /overview before getting into the interactive map and eyewitness accounts.
- This also asks the following questions about the first-person accounts presented:
  - As you look at each testimony, consider:
    - How does this evidence match—or not—with other evidence? Who gave the testimony?
    - What might the person’s motives be for saying what they did?
    - When did this person give the testimony? Was it soon after the event? Much later? How might that affect what they said?

### Interactive Map

The interactive map includes the following “hot spots,” each representing one moment during the Lincoln assassination. Each stop includes first person accounts, some of which link to the original source of the first-person account.

- *Booth Enters the Presidential Box*
  - Quotes from eyewitnesses James P. Ferguson and Jeannie Gourlay.
- *The Laugh Line*
  - Quotes from eyewitnesses Jeannie Gourlay and Harry Hawk.
- *The Fatal Shot*
  - Quotes from eyewitnesses Harry Hawk, James P. Ferguson, Jeannie Gourlay, Julia Adeline Shepherd and Frederick A. Sawyer.
- *Booth Fights with Rathbone*
  - Quotes from eyewitnesses W.J. Ferguson and James P. Ferguson.
- *Booth Leaps Onto the Stage*
  - Quotes from eyewitnesses W.J. Ferguson, Daniel H. Veader, Julia Adeline Shepherd and Frederick A. Sawyer.
- *“Sic Semper Tyrannis”*
  - Quotes from eyewitnesses Harry Hawk, W.J. Ferguson, Daniel H. Veader, Jeannie Gourlay and Julia Adeline Shepherd.
- *Booth’s Escape*

- Quotes from eyewitnesses Jeannie Gourlay, W.J. Ferguson, Harry Haw, Daniel H. Veader, Frederick A. Sawyer and Edwin Bates.
- *The Wound is Mortal*
  - Quotes from eyewitnesses Frederick A. Sawyer, Jeannie Gourlay, W.J. Ferguson, Daniel H. Veader and Julia Adeline Shepherd.

### **Questions and Listing of Primary Source Accounts**

- *Attending Doctors*
  - Charles Sabin Taft
  - Dr. Charles Leale
- *The Dress Circle Section*
  - Julia Adeline Shepherd
  - James P. Ferguson
  - Laura H. Freudenthal
  - Will T. Kent
  - Theodore McGowan
  - G.B. Todd
- *Backstage*
  - William Withers
  - J.L. Debonay
  - Jeannie Gourlay
  - Jacob Ritterspaugh
  - John Miles
  - John “Peanuts” Burroughs
- *The Orchestra Section*
  - Daniel Veader
  - Frederick A. Sawyer
  - Edwin Bates
  - John L. Bolton
  - James S. Knox
- *On Stage & Presidential Box*
  - Clara Harris
  - Major Henry Rathbone
  - Harry Hawk
  - John Wilkes Booth

### **Interactive Map of Painting**

The page continues to a painting “Lincoln Borne by Loving Hands” by Carl Bersch, based on his sketches from the night of Lincoln’s assassination. It is the only first-hand visual account. This painting has 7 “hot spots” to allow the viewer to learn more about some of the imagery:

1. American flag: “A sign of celebration”
2. Building: “A state of panic”
3. President being carried: “A theatre is no place for a president”

4. Road: “Unpaved roads”
5. Petersen House: “Bird’s-eye view”
6. Person in street: “Bring him here”
7. Torchlights: “The torchlight parade”

### **Examine the Evidence**

This section links to pages for either individual artifacts or groups of artifacts, including:

1. Material Evidence: John Wilkes Booth
2. Deringer
3. A Night at Ford’s Theatre
4. Material Evidence: Dr. Mudd
5. Lincoln’s Clothes
6. Material Evidence: Powell & Atzerodt
7. Lincoln’s Life Masks
8. Coffin Tools & Frame
9. Lincoln’s Pillow
10. Trial Memorabilia

### **Printable Worksheet**

Link to an activity for students—based on the content of this webpage—to complete on their own without requiring the assistance of a teacher or adult.

### **Suggested Activities**

1. Write a newspaper article

Use this page to gather source material for writing a newspaper account of Lincoln’s assassination. Include primary source accounts in your article describing what happened. Are your sources credible? Why or why not. Start with a headline and develop the angle of your story.

2. Create an exhibit

It’s your turn to be the curator. Create an exhibit on the story of the manhunt. Use primary source accounts from witnesses, photographs, images of artifacts and anything else that will help you tell a story with your exhibit. Your exhibit can be a series of drawings, a poster board, a series of Instagram posts, a power point, a play, a song – whatever you’d like to use to tell your story.

3. Write a letter to a friend living in another city

Imagine you were in Ford’s Theatre and saw Lincoln shot. What details would you share with someone else? What emotions would you express?