

Dear Readers,

After meeting many extraordinary young people over the years, I am excited to have created a book that I hope will help them better understand how great leadership and citizenship can be developed through knowing the stories of how four kids—from different parts of the country with varied backgrounds and talents—grew to become president of the United States.

Using as examples the four presidents I have studied most closely over the past fifty years—Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Lyndon Johnson—I have focused on each of their childhoods so that today’s young people can identify with their individual circumstances, their successes, and their struggles.

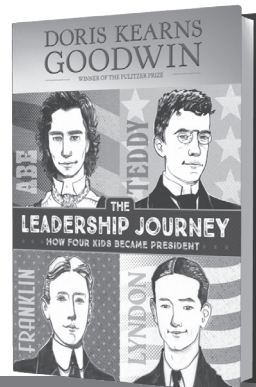
I believe we ignore history at our peril—including the difficult parts. The great protection for our democratic system, Lincoln counseled, was to “read of and recount” the stories of our country’s history.

I hope that young people will read this book and relate to the families, friends, and colleagues that helped four boys develop into leaders. Readers can imagine walking alongside Abe as he searched for books, horseback riding with Teddy, studying maps like Franklin did to explore the world, and listening to the stories of their parents and grandparents like Lyndon did.

I hope that young people will be encouraged to follow in the footsteps of these leaders and the courageous and collaborative men and women in this book who worked together to expand opportunities for us all.

With my warm regards,

Doris Kearns Goodwin



Is there a President you want to learn more about? Do you want to explore a specific era of American history? All roads of knowledge begin with the same first steps: research! But diving in can seem a bit intimidating with all the books, articles, and resources that are out there. Use the tips below to help guide your own research journey.

- **Decide on a topic that interests you.**

Find a person, an event, a place, or a time that you want to learn more about or care about.

- **Discuss the topic with an adult.**

You can talk to a parent, caretaker, teacher, or librarian. They can help guide you to the right areas and resources. Who knows, maybe they even have a personal connection to your topic!

- **Gather your resources.**

Whether at a library or online, you can start with primary sources—immediate firsthand accounts—found in books, newspaper reports, speeches, diaries, letters and interviews, photographs, and videos. The possibilities are endless.

- **Take notes as you research.**

Interacting with what you read and discover can help you retain information and make connections. It’s a good idea to have paper or a notebook nearby. You can also print out and highlight articles or add some Post-it notes to a book.

- **Make sure you are citing credible sources.**

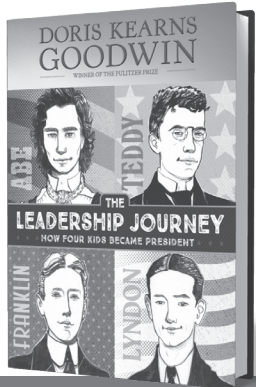
It’s important to keep track of and credit all your research. And not all sources are the same. Some are rigorously fact-checked and peer-reviewed, while others might purport misleading or false information. If you are having trouble determining if a source is good and credible, ask an adult for help.

- **Stay organized.**

As you continue to research, you can organize the information by date, by topic, by people, etc. This will be helpful as you begin outlining how you might share.

- **Share your discoveries!**

This might be in the form of a paper, a presentation, a school project, or a discussion with friends and family. Outlining your ideas will help you focus on the most interesting and surprising things you have learned.




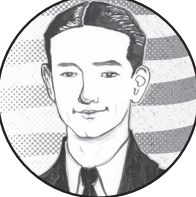


# ★ HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR HISTORY? ★

Across their lives, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Lyndon Johnson made history. Test your knowledge below and see if you can put each respective president's major historical events in the correct year. And discover some fun facts with the True and False section.

## TRUE OR FALSE

1. Abe Lincoln attended less than a year of formal schooling, but educated himself by reading.
2. Abe Lincoln was our tallest president, measuring 6-foot-4-inches!
3. Despite early problems with asthma, Teddy Roosevelt went on to compete in boxing at Harvard.
4. Teddy Roosevelt is the older brother of later president Franklin Roosevelt.
5. Franklin Roosevelt passed the bar exam without ever finishing law school.
6. Franklin Roosevelt only served one term as president.
7. Lyndon Johnson's first career was as a teacher.
8. When elected to the Senate, Lyndon Johnson was the oldest Democratic Majority Leader in history.

|   |      |      |      |      |
|---|------|------|------|------|
| <b>ABE</b>        | 1858 | 1860 | 1861 | 1863 |
| <b>TEDDY</b>      | 1898 | 1901 | 1902 | 1906 |
| <b>FRANKLIN</b>  | 1921 | 1929 | 1933 | 1941 |
| <b>LYNDON</b>   | 1937 | 1958 | 1963 | 1964 |

- A. Civil War begins
- B. Lincoln-Douglas Debates
- C. Elected President
- D. Issues the Emancipation Proclamation

- A. The "Teddy Bear" is named
- B. The Rough Riders are formed
- C. Becomes President after the death of William McKinley
- D. Receives the Nobel Peace Prize

- A. Launches The New Deal
- B. The United States enters World War II
- C. Diagnosed with Polio
- D. The Great Depression

- A. Becomes President after the assassination of John F. Kennedy
- B. Signs the Civil Rights Act
- C. Helps create NASA
- D. Meets his hero Franklin Roosevelt

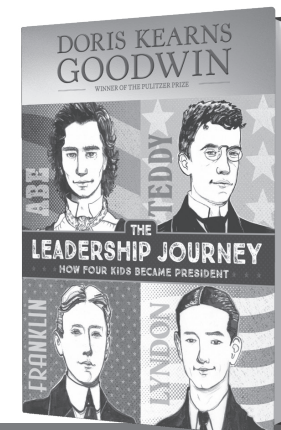
## ANSWER KEY:

- TIMELINES**
- Abraham Lincoln**  
 (1858) Lincoln-Douglas Debates  
 (1860) Elected President  
 (1861) Civil War begins  
 (1863) Issues the Emancipation Proclamation  
 (1864) Signs the Emancipation Proclamation
- Theodore Roosevelt**  
 (1898) The Rough Riders are formed  
 (1901) Becomes President after the death of William McKinley  
 (1902) The "Teddy Bear" is named  
 (1906) Receives the Nobel Peace Prize
- Franklin Roosevelt**  
 (1921) Diagnosed with Polio  
 (1929) The Great Depression  
 (1933) Launches The New Deal  
 (1941) The United States enters World War II
- Lyndon Johnson**  
 (1937) Meets his hero Franklin Roosevelt  
 (1958) Helps create NASA  
 (1963) Becomes President after the assassination of John F. Kennedy  
 (1964) Signs the Civil Rights Act

- TRUE OR FALSE**
1. True
  2. True
  3. True
  4. False, they were related, but only as distant cousins.
  5. True
  6. False, he was the only president in history to be elected to serve four terms!
  7. True
  8. False, he was actually the youngest!

## THE LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

★ ★ ★ HOW FOUR KIDS BECAME PRESIDENT ★ ★ ★



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