

Illinois Famous Person Project



November 30, 2009

Dear Parent(s),

This year our fourth graders will be stepping back in time to make history come alive. Each student will “become” a famous Illinoisan not only by dressing as that person would have dressed, but also speaking to everyone to share the highlights of that person’s life as if s/he is alive and well in Lisle. Our fourth graders will be giving their famous person presentations while dressed up for each other at our Learning Fair on the evening of Tuesday, March 16th.

In the past, students were required to complete an entire report. This year, in order to do the best job of “becoming” that famous Illinoisan, your child will be guided through a three step process: researching, writing, and summarizing for the oral presentation. All classes are modeling each step of the process using Abraham Lincoln. While the instruction is taking place at school, each student will be completing the same step on the person they have selected.

November 30th~December 16th

The first phase of the process, researching, will be done at home over a three week time period. During that time each student will read at least two reference resources to gather the required important information and record that information on a provided research form. They will also list the resources they used on a bibliography form.

January 6th~February 17th

After the research phase is completed each student will be given five weeks to transfer or paraphrase the information into their own words. The paragraphs are to be written in the first person, “I” format, so that it will sound like an autobiographical letter rather than a formal report. Please do not write all paragraphs at once. Students should write only one paragraph each week after that paragraph has been modeled in class. For example, during the first writing week, each teacher will model writing a Lincoln introductory paragraph, and then each student will write an introduction for their Famous Illinoisan at home and turn it in for the teacher to review. During the next three weeks, following the same procedure, the students will complete each of the three body paragraphs. The final week will be spent writing a conclusion. Forms describing required writing elements will be provided for each paragraph. At the end of the five weeks, each student will have accumulated a five paragraph Famous Illinoisan report. In school computer lab time will be used to create a title page and a picture page thus adding the final touches to the report.

February 17th~March 15th

The third step, preparing for the dress-up presentations, will involve the students using class time to summarize the important information on a presentation form. A copy will be given to each student so they can practice at home so they will feel confident on presentation day.

To aid each child with this project a timeline for the completion of each step has been attached. The research packet and a resource listing sheet will also be sent home in the days ahead. After the research packet has been turned in, look for the writing forms to begin coming home in a folder on January 6th.

Thank you for your help in this fourth grade project. We think your child will enjoy this upcoming event. We have had a lot of fun in past years, and our fourth grade team hopes that completing the Illinois Famous Person report in three steps will provide students with an understanding of the research, writing, and time management skills necessary to complete future projects. We hope this will be a rewarding learning experience for everyone.

Sincerely,
The Fourth Grade Team



The famous person from Illinois that I have chosen to study about and “become” is
