**Cause and Effect:** Who is Carl Sandburg and how did Lincoln affect his personal timeline?

**Abstract:** Carl Sandburg has a big effect on how most Americans understand Lincoln history; his Prairie Years/War Years was a major source of information regarding Lincoln for many years in this country. Who was Carl Sandburg? What motivated him to write about Abraham Lincoln when he did? What affect did this book have on Sandburg and the American people?

**Essential questions/enduring understandings:**
- How can one person’s choices affect a whole community of people?
- Does art and culture affect the way we see history?
- Can how we understand history affect our actions in the present?

**Assessment:** Using The Thinking Like a Historian Rubric, the teacher will evaluate worksheets completed and class discussions to ascertain whether students have understanding of the Cause and Effect portion of the rubric.

**Setting the Purpose:** Students will analyze pictures of Carl Sandburg to try to deduce why this man was important, what he might have been like, and why he is connected to Lincoln. Next, students will compare Carl Sandburg’s timeline to a U.S. history timeline to assess how his life fits into that timeline, and what was going on in the U.S. when he was doing his research and writing for his Lincoln volumes. Armed with this information, students will theorize Carl Sandburg’s affect on the American understanding of Lincoln and in general how authors of historical works affect the way we remember our past.

**Grade Levels:** 7-12

**Duration:** 2-4 class periods

**Procedure:**

**Part 1:**
- Start class by displaying the photograph “Associated Press photograph of Carl Sandburg and Congressman Fred Schwengel posing behind a copy of a painting by Ransom showing Lincoln at Gettysburg”.
- Distribute Analyzing Pictures worksheet. In the first box, they can place either the lesson’s question, or any of the essential questions as their primary investigative question.
- Have students complete the other boxes on their own to the best of their ability.
- Once completed, have a class discussion using their answers.
- Explain that the students will learn to think like a historian, following the Thinking Like a Historian Model. Distribute The Thinking Like a Historian Rubric and review. Highlight the cause and effect portion of the rubric; students will utilize this item for this lesson.
- Place students in groups (pairs is often best; teachers can decide group size based on their needs) and distribute the following images:
  1. Carl Sandburg, Portrait of Carl Sandburg. Photograph by Dana Steichen.
2. Carl Sandburg seated on the ground next to a river or stream. He is holding a hat in his hands, with is elbows on his knees. Photograph dated 1923.

3. Carl Sandburg addressing a joint session of Congress.

4. Carl Sandburg and a group of people.


6. Carl Sandburg as a young man with his foot on a rock.

7. Carl Sandburg at Abraham Lincoln’s tomb.

8. Carl Sandburg at the card catalog at the University of Illinois.

9. Carl Sandburg at the opening of the Abraham Lincoln papers at the Library of Congress.


11. Carl Sandburg reading mail.

12. Carl Sandburg receiving award from Eleanor Roosevelt at Beverly Hilton.


14. Carl Sandburg with President Kennedy and five others at White House.


16. Carl Sandburg’s hands writing a poem.

17. Carl Sandburg, address before Congress.

18. Edward Steichen, President Lyndon Baines Johnson, and Carl Sandburg on a balcony.


20. Young Carl Sandburg at typewriter.

• The photographs can be distributed as the teacher sees fit—it is suggested that each pair only have a portion of the photos (perhaps 5) to work with. Have students use the Analyzing Pictures worksheet (you may want to copy this double sided, so that students can use a fresh chart for this collection) to analyze their personal set of pictures.

• When done, have students discuss the photos they had and the conclusions they came to.

Part 2:

• Distribute the Before and After Chart to students. Have students complete the first column based on what they’ve learned about the photographs they have examined.

• Using computers, have students go to Sandburg’s Lincoln-Imagine it! For older students, or higher reading levels, teachers may use Carl Sandburg Chicago Poems Biography, Carl Sandburg from Poets.org (The Academy of American Poets), Carl Sandburg from Modern American Poetry or various Carl Sandburg biographies from Answers.com.

• Have students complete the second column of the Before and After Chart.

• Students should now place “X”s by items that are unique to information gathered from the photos and from the biographies. Students should circle information that is common to both. Discuss answers in small groups (or whole group, if preferred).

Part 3:

• Tell students that now that they know that Sandburg wrote about Lincoln and is well known for this accomplishment they will now compare what was going on in Sandburg’s
life and U.S. history to understand how the events happening around him might have affected his motivation to write about Lincoln.

- Teacher Notes: Before starting this portion of the lesson, it would be beneficial to read Sandburg’s "Lincoln within History" by James Hurt.
- Have kids complete a Sandburg/U.S. History Timeline by using Carl Sandburg from Modern American Poetry, Carl Sandburg Timeline by Lisa Lee, Carl Sandburg Chicago Poems Biography and The American History Timeline from Peter Mays.
- Have a class discussion to theorize how Carl Sandburg’s volumes on Lincoln might have affected how the country saw Abraham Lincoln based on the biographies they’ve read and the prizes he has won. Emphasize that for a long time, most community knowledge about Lincoln was drawn from his 6 volume set.
- Have students complete the Cause and Effect Chart. They may work individually, pairs or in small groups on this chart. This chart should be revisited and revised as students work through the other lessons.

Analysis of local primary sources:

Students will analyze University of Illinois photographic holdings that have been digitized for classroom use:

- Associated Press photograph of Carl Sandburg and Congressman Fred Schwengel posing behind a copy of a painting by Ransom showing Lincoln at Gettysburg
- Carl Sandburg, Portrait of Carl Sandburg. Photograph by Dana Steichen.
- Carl Sandburg seated on the ground next to a river or stream. He is holding a hat in his hands, with his elbows on his knees. Photograph dated 1923.
- Carl Sandburg addressing a joint session of Congress
- Carl Sandburg and group of young people
- Carl Sandburg and three other men studying Abraham Lincoln documents at the Library of Congress
- Carl Sandburg as a young man with his foot on a rock
- Carl Sandburg at Abraham Lincoln’s tomb
- Carl Sandburg at the card catalog at the University of Illinois Library
- Carl Sandburg at the opening of the Abraham Lincoln papers at the Library of Congress
- Carl Sandburg at US Capitol Building with Sam Rayburn and Fred Schwengel
- Carl Sandburg reading mail
- Carl Sandburg receiving award from Eleanor Roosevelt at Beverly Hilton
- Carl Sandburg watching as Frank McGlynn impersonates Abraham Lincoln
- Carl Sandburg with President Kennedy and five others at White House
- Carl Sandburg with W.T. Jebb, Meyer Kestnbaum, and Richard Nixon
- Carl Sandburg’s hands writing a poem
- Carl Sandburg, address before Congress
- Edward Steichen, President Lyndon Baines Johnson, and Carl Sandburg on a balcony
- Painting of Carl Sandburg and Abraham Lincoln
- Young Carl Sandburg at typewriter

Ties to National primary source or sources:

All of the primary sources utilized in this lesson have both local and national significance.
Attachments:

- Analyzing Pictures
- The Thinking Like a Historian Rubric
- Before and After Chart
- Sandburg/U.S. History Timeline
- Cause and Effect Chart