

# Discover Coin Collecting with the Lincoln Cent!



## Lesson Plan Summary

Coin collecting is one of the world's most popular hobbies, and Lincoln cents are among America's most popular coins to collect. Participants of this initiative will learn the basic concepts of coin collecting, including coin terms. They will use a magnifier to identify key components on a coin. They will learn about U.S. history and Abraham Lincoln. They will use their knowledge to build a starter coin collection.



## Approximate Time -1:00-1.5 hours



## Materials:

- Each child will get a coin collector kit. The kit contains:
  - Informative coin collector card
  - Bag of 20 Uncirculated Lincoln cents, dated from 1999-2011
  - Handy magnifier
  - *Collector's Guide to Lincoln Head Cents*



## Preparation:

- Pass out a kit and collecting card to each child
- The child places the card in front of them with the images of the cent facing up
- Child takes out magnifier to use on the coins
  - Depending on age of child, familiarize them with magnifier and lenses



## Terms and Concepts:

Following along with the front of coin card, discuss the following topics:

## What is collecting?

- The facilitator introduces the concept of collecting including the following:
  - Collecting coins has been around for thousands of years
  - People collect or keep all types of things as reminders of the past
    - What types of things can be collected?
      - Stamps, baseball cards, dolls, sea shells, etc.
  - Lincoln cents (pennies) are among the most popular U.S. coins to collect
  - One way to collect coins is by getting all the dates and mint marks of every coin in a series – cents, nickels, dimes, quarters etc.
    - The date tells you **when** the coin was made
    - Mint mark – D for Denver, P for Philadelphia (or no mint mark) tells you **where** the coin was made

## Identifying parts of a coin

- Following the front of the coin card, the facilitator discusses the different parts of a coin, including:
  - The obverse – front or “heads” of a cent shows Lincoln’s profile
  - The reverse – back or “tails” of a cent shows the Lincoln Memorial
  - The rim or edge of a coin
  - The denomination, or the amount the coin is worth – the penny is valued at one cent
  - The date – when the coin was “minted” or made
  - The mint mark – Where the coin was made – “D” for Denver, “P” or “blank” (no mint mark) for Philadelphia
  - The engraver’s initials – the people who designed the cent were Victor David Brenner (obverse) and Frank Gasparro (reverse)
  - The mottos – LIBERTY and IN GOD WE TRUST
  - The reverse and the cent’s different designs: Lincoln Memorial, Anniversary designs and Union Shield
  - The distinctive color comes from what it’s made of, or its “composition” – it’s made of 95% copper, 5% tin and zinc

## Who was President Abraham Lincoln?

- Discuss Abraham Lincoln and his contribution to the United States of America
  - America’s 16<sup>th</sup> president
  - Born and raised in a small log cabin
  - Self-educated, studied hard and became president
  - Lead the U.S through the Civil War
  - Abolished slavery
  - His portrait on the coin’s obverse was first issued to honor the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth (1909)

- The reverse of the 1959-2008 Lincoln cents show the Lincoln Memorial
  - Located in Washington D.C.
  - It is a national monument dedicated to Lincoln
  - It features a huge sculpture of Lincoln by Daniel Chester French
- In 2009, to honor the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lincoln cent, the U.S. Mint issued new reverse designs to recall Abraham Lincoln's life. The designs honor: his Birthplace, Formative Years, Professional Life and the Presidency
- From 2010-date, the Lincoln cent shows the Union Shield
  - Honors how Lincoln kept America together (united) through the Civil War



### Steps:

#### How to Collect the Lincoln cent

1. Turn over Collector Card to the back side
2. Carefully open bag of coins
3. Place the coins obverse side up
4. Use magnifier to find the coin date
5. Use magnifier to find mint mark
6. Place coins with dates other than 2009, 2010 to the side
  - a. Flip the 2009 dated coins to the reverse side and identify the four anniversary designs honoring the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Lincoln's birth
    - i. Childhood (Kentucky log cabin)
    - ii. Formative Years (Log splitting in Indiana)
    - iii. Professional Life (Illinois State Capital)
    - iv. Presidency (The Capitol Dome in Washington, D.C.)
  - b. Place coins with the 2010 date reverse side up
    - i. Notice the Shield design - this Union shield design recalls President Lincoln's commitment to preserving the United States of America as a united country. It consists of 13 vertical stripes bound by a single horizontal bar. The stripes represent the original 13 states. The design dates back to the 1780's and was used as a central symbol during the years of the Civil War.
7. Match the dates of the coins identified to matching circles on the card
8. Match the anniversary coin designs to their coin spaces
9. Talk about how they can find additional Lincoln cents in their pocket change
10. Discuss putting their coins in a folder for long-term storage
11. Encourage them to visit [www.littletoncoin.com/lincolncent4kids](http://www.littletoncoin.com/lincolncent4kids) for more information
12. Discuss other coins they could collect
  - a. 50 State and/or National Park Quarters
  - b. Jefferson Nickels
  - c. Roosevelt Dimes
  - d. Presidential Dollars