

8th Grade Summer Reading

Chasing Lincoln's Killer

James L. Swanson

Directions

This choice board is your summer reading assignment for *Chasing Lincoln's Killer*. You will complete a total of **6 options** by selecting:

- 1 option from Column A
- 1 option from Column B
- 2 options from Column C
- 2 options from Column D

Write the number and title of each option you choose at the top of your response. All responses must be written in complete sentences and reflect your own reading of the text.

Academic Integrity Notice

*The use of artificial intelligence tools (including but not limited to ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, or any other AI writing assistant) to generate, draft, or complete any part of this assignment is strictly prohibited. **Submissions identified as AI-generated will receive a grade of zero with no opportunity for resubmission.** Submitting AI-generated work as your own is a violation of our school's academic honesty policy and will be treated accordingly.*

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Column A <i>Choose 1</i>	Column B <i>Choose 1</i>	Column C <i>Choose 2</i>	Column D <i>Choose 2</i>
<p>1. Key People</p> <p>List 8 people who appear in the book. For each, write one sentence identifying who they are and their role in the events.</p> <p><i>8 people, 1 sentence each</i></p>	<p>1. In Your Own Words</p> <p>Write a 6-8 sentence summary of the book that captures the most important events and explains how they connect.</p> <p><i>6-8 sentences</i></p>	<p>1. Villain or Product of His Time?</p> <p>Was John Wilkes Booth purely a villain, or does the Civil War era complicate that label? Use at least two pieces of evidence from the text.</p> <p><i>5-6 sentences</i></p>	<p>1. A Letter Across Time</p> <p>Write a letter from the perspective of one person in the book (not Booth or Lincoln) to someone living today. Use specific details from the text.</p> <p><i>1 full paragraph min.</i></p>
<p>2. Words in Context</p> <p>Find 5 unfamiliar words. Copy the sentence each appears in with its page number, then define each word in your own words.</p> <p><i>5 words + definitions</i></p>	<p>2. Cause and Effect</p> <p>Identify 3 cause-and-effect relationships in the book. For each, explain what happened and what resulted, using specific evidence.</p> <p><i>3 pairs + evidence</i></p>	<p>2. Justice on Trial</p> <p>Several people were tried and executed in connection with the conspiracy. Do you think justice was served? Use at least two specific examples.</p> <p><i>5-6 sentences</i></p>	<p>2. Then and Now</p> <p>Identify one way the events in this book still connect to the United States today in politics, culture, or how we remember history.</p> <p><i>5-6 sentences</i></p>
<p>3. Setting the Scene</p> <p>Identify 4 real locations important to the story. For each, describe where it is and what happens there.</p> <p><i>4 locations + descriptions</i></p>	<p>3. Author's Craft</p> <p>Find 2 passages where Swanson's writing feels more like fiction than a history textbook. Explain what techniques he uses and why they work.</p> <p><i>2 passages + analysis</i></p>	<p>3. Loyalty and Betrayal</p> <p>Identify two characters whose loyalty or disloyalty shapes the events. What does the book suggest about what people will do for what they believe in?</p> <p><i>5-6 sentences</i></p>	<p>3. What History Remembers</p> <p>Heroes and villains are both remembered, but not always fairly. Who from this story deserves to be better remembered, and why?</p> <p><i>5-6 sentences</i></p>
<p>4. Sequence of Events</p> <p>Create a timeline of 10 key events in chronological order. Each event must be written as a complete sentence.</p> <p><i>10 events, complete sentences</i></p>	<p>4. Fact vs. Interpretation</p> <p>Find 2 moments where Swanson presents facts alongside his own interpretation. Quote the passage, identify the fact, and explain what his interpretation adds.</p> <p><i>2 passages + explanation</i></p>	<p>4. The Turning Point</p> <p>Choose the single moment you believe changed everything for Booth, the nation, or Lincoln's legacy. Argue why it was the pivot point of the story.</p> <p><i>5-6 sentences</i></p>	<p>4. If You Were There</p> <p>Choose one decision made by any character. Explain what you would have done differently, considering the historical moment, the risks, and the outcome.</p> <p><i>5-6 sentences</i></p>