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Grade Level: 5

Primary Source Citation: Abraham Lincoln’s Inaugural Bible, 1861; The Holy Bible, Oxford: 1853, Rare Book & Special Collections Division, Library of Congress. Accessed at American Treasures of the Library of Congress: https://www.loc.gov/item/78317681/

Allow students, in groups or individually, to examine photographs of Lincoln's Bible located at the above links while answering questions below in order.

Level 1: Description
1. Describe what the Bible looks like. How big is it? What is on its cover? When was it published?
2. What was the Bible used for in 1861?
3. Who donated the book to the Library of Congress?

Level 2: Interpretation
1. Why would it be appropriate to use gloves when handling the object in the picture?
2. What does the seal on the last page of the Bible certify?
3. What elements prove that this is a primary source?

Level 3: Analysis
1. Why do you think Barack Obama wants to use the Bible to take his oath as President?
2. What is the significance or what does it represent for him to use it for Americans?
3. How would you compare the ideas or feelings of the citizens during the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln and Barack Obama?