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## Review of *The Next President: The Unexpected Beginnings and Unwritten Future of America's Presidents* by Kate Messner

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The Next President: the Unexpected Beginnings and Unwritten Future of America's Presidents

Messner, Kate

Illustrated by Adam Rex

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Have you ever wondered what presidents did *before* they were presidents? Abraham Lincoln worked on a riverboat. Bill Clinton played the tenor saxophone. Theodore Roosevelt had a pet badger named Josiah and a small bear named Jonathan Edwards...and that's just the tip of the iceberg! What else is there to know about the presidents? *The Next President* walks through the early lives of each and every US president (save Joe Biden, who had not been elected at the time it was written). Though it was written for children, even adults can read this book and learn things about past presidents that they never knew before! Many presidents had ordinary jobs before they became the leader of America. Some were farmers, others were studying something completely different than law in college, and one even oversaw a mining company in Australia! As America changes, so do the people whose faces become known as presidential candidates. It is impossible to say who America's next president will be, whether they will be a man or woman, white or of color, older or much younger. However, the book's conclusion rings true: our future presidents are busy growing up, "growing into the job". *The Next President* is not afraid to delve into more difficult topics when discussing the lives of America's past leaders. Slavery, duals, assassination—all these are realities of the presidency. However, there are a few times throughout the book where a stark political opinion is implied. It is never explicit, and would be overlooked by a child, but to an adult, it becomes obvious where the author's political agenda lies on the spectrum. However, if that is something that does not bother the reader, then it can easily be overlooked. Bias seeps into everything people do, even writing children's books. Overall, though, the book was wonderfully engaging and interesting, and is recommended by the reviewer. **Recommended** *Katie Gosman, Centennial Library Intern, Cedarville University.*