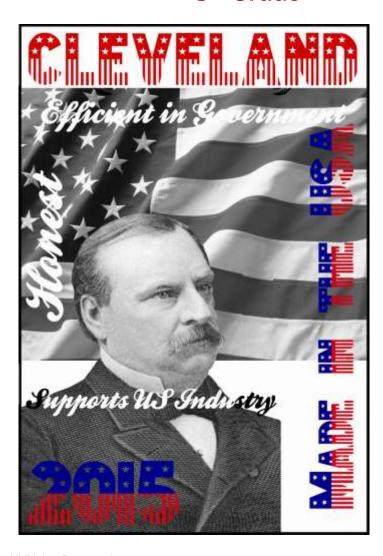# Electing a Historical President

A study of past Presidents, the election system,
and what is needed in a President today
5th Grade

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Electing a Historical President

A comprehensive unit that:

- Aligns with many Common Core Learning Standards

- Encompasses multiple reading and writing opportunities

- Provides valuable hands-on performance-based learning projects

- Stresses the importance of visual learning

- Develops life-long oral and written communication skills

- Offers differentiated learning opportunities

- Engages students in American History and Political Science

Designed and written in collaboration by:

Lynda Holler
Great Software Tools, LLC.
and
Debra Elk
5th Grade Teacher, Brewster, NY

Instructor Guidelines

Thank you for purchasing *Electing a Historical President* for your 5th grade class! We are confident that your students will enjoy learning about our past Presidents and what is required of a President today. You will love how engaged they will become in social studies! We want to give you a few suggestions on how to best utilize this kit:

Electing a Historical President.PDF – This document contains all of the documentation for this comprehensive kit. It is in PDF form to keep it properly formatted and uneditable. Keep an intact copy of this as the reference document for the unit.

Teacher Materials – These pages are provided as a Word document so that you can edit them to meet your own requirements. We have designed this unit with the expectations that teachers will modify it somewhat to make it their own and to meet the individual needs of their classes.
- **Vocabulary** – Feel free to add or delete words and to tweak the definitions if desired.
- **Some Useful Resources** – You can add or delete resources from this list and then provide the students with your final resource list if you wish. Since the links are live, if you open the document on your computer with a projector or interactive whiteboard, you can quickly access the websites for a lesson with the whole class.
- **Essential Questions and Big ideas** – These are supposed to get the creative juices flowing! Brainstorm with the class to come up with other essential questions and big ideas, and then involve the class in great critical thinking opportunities. Remember, it is important for them to see the big picture and understand why they are learning about past Presidents and what is needed from a President today.
- **Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)** – Isn't it exciting to see how many standards you can cover in one lesson?
- **Instructor Details** – These pages give specific suggestions for the individual projects. Feel free to tailor them to meet your needs.
- **Instructional Essay Rubric** - This rubric has been designed using the same terminology and requirements as the student checklist, which has the same terminology as the Common Core Learning Standards. By using these valuable assessment tools, you are providing your students with the opportunity to assess themselves as they are working and to understand the grade you award them at the end.

Student Handouts - This document was compiled with the expectations of you printing and handing these pages out to the students. They are also in Word document format so that you can edit them to meet your needs.
- **Vocabulary without Definitions** –This is for the students to use if you want them to look up the definitions.
- **Performance Task** – You can edit this task to fine tune it with regard to your students and community.
- **Project Details** – We provide basic instructions for the students on these pages with room for you to add more details if desired. Your Instructor Detail Pages provide more detailed project instructions.
- **Student Checklists** – The project checklists are less detailed than the writing checklists. Feel free to add other requirements that you feel are important to the project checklists. The writing assignments have more detailed checklists that use the terminology from the CCLS. The rubric for the Informational Essay uses the same terminology as the CCLS and the checklist, so if you edit any of the writing assessment pieces, be careful to keep them aligned with the appropriate standard.

Project Templates – The templates that you will need for the projects are in a separate folder. Before beginning that project, make sure the template is available to the students on their computers or network drive.

Tutorial Videos – The tutorial videos are accessible from our website. Use the password that you were given to download this kit to access the links to the project videos. The videos will teach the students step-by-step how to make the projects. Pause the video as needed to allow them to work, contemplate, organize and save their work. Manipulating graphics is a very creative form of self-expression. These projects will prove that the students understand the material they have learned and give them an opportunity to teach back in an effective visual format. Let the students have the time to work, make mistakes, correct their mistakes, and revise their layouts so that they can complete a project they can show with pride.

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Introduction

Electing a Historical President is a comprehensive project-based learning unit that has been designed to engage students in a constructive investigation of past American Presidents in the context of campaigning for their election today. How much do we know about past Presidents? We have had over 200 years of qualified men leading our nation, and it is important to know details like: why they were elected, if they did a good job, if they honored their campaign promises, and if the nation thrived under their leadership. Analyzing the past helps us make better decisions today.

This study will help students better understand the role of a U.S. President. They will learn what is needed in a President today: what qualities are required, what people expect of him or her, the demands of the position, and the benefits and the sacrifices of the job. Then they will use their constructive, investigative skills to explore past Presidents, compare them side by side while ignoring the decades and centuries that divide them, and determine which man would be best suited to lead our country today.

We hope that you and your students learn as much from using this unit as we did from developing it! Please contact us with your feedback. We are continuing to expand our library of Common Core Learning Units, and we are interested in your comments on this kit and your suggestions for future topics. Happy learning!

Sincerely,

Debra Elk

5th Grade Teacher

Summary / Purpose

The projects selected for *Electing a Historical President* were chosen carefully to provide a thorough and exciting opportunity for 5th graders to learn about past Presidents and their contribution to the shaping of our nation. The hands-on projects allow them to go back in time and carefully reflect upon what contribution past Presidents offered their citizens and what they could offer the American people today. Although the topic spans over two centuries, the projects are solidly 21st century. The students incorporate relevant technology and learn to present their perspectives in formats that will be valuable for future classes and adult careers. We have included a variety of English Language Arts opportunities: critical reading research, writing and implementing a campaign speech, and writing an informative essay.

Overall, most of the **Common Core English Language Arts Standards for Grade 5: Reading Informational Text, Writing, Speaking & Listening, and Language** are covered in this unit. As you engage your students in learning, you can be confident that you are aligning your curriculum with the standards that are expected of all 5th graders across our nation.

Expectations

Your students can read about American Presidents from a vast selection of reliable resources keeping each individual trapped in their time period. They can play historical board, computer, and video games to help engage them in the topic, but as contemporary educators, we aren't just looking for them to regurgitate historical dates and facts. We need to develop a generation of critical thinkers. Teaching students to analyze the qualities that make a good president is a rich opportunity to stimulate class conversations about the essential questions and big ideas that this unit relates to. This unit will ask students to critique the contributions of past Presidents and draw their own conclusions as to which one could be an effective President in the 21st Century. Once the unit is completed, you can encourage the students to reflect, not only on what they learned about our American Presidents, but also about how that deeper understanding relates to other periods of history and the development our nation.

By integrating *Electing a Historical President* into your curriculum, you are adding rigor into project-based learning while engaging students in a constructive investigation. You are raising the bar on what you expect from your students and preparing them to be competitive in our highly visual world. The hands-on projects will help the students learn the material in a deeper way, and they will be able to express their own personal creativity in the execution of their projects. You are also helping them to learn to assess their level of knowledge and performance by using the checklists and rubrics that are included with the unit. By giving them this opportunity to learn the material in a more intimate and thorough way, you are helping them achieve 4's on those rubrics!

Unit Projects

1. Campaign Slogan
2. Presidential Poster
3. Campaign Brochure
4. Campaign Speech
5. Informational Essay

Required Software

- Graphics-Toolbox
- Microsoft Word

Suggested Materials

- Presidential Poster and Campaign Brochure
    - Color Printer
    - Photo quality card stock paper – a recommended quality is: Staples Matte Photo Supreme, Ink Jet, 61 lb, Item #19895

Provided Templates

- Campaign Brochure
- Candidate Comparison Sheet

Available Videos

- Making a Presidential Poster
- Making a Campaign Brochure

Common Core State Standards[1] Covered in
Electing a Historical President

English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Informational Text » Grade 5

Key Ideas and Details

RI.5.1. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

RI.5.2. Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

RI.5.3. Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

Craft and Structure

RI.5.4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.

RI.5.5. Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.

RI.5.6. Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RI.5.7. Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

RI.5.8. Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).

RI.5.9. Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RI.5.10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

English Language Arts Standards » Writing » Grade 5

Craft and Structure

W.5.1. Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose.
- Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details.
- Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., *consequently*, *specifically*).
- Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

W.5.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
- Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., in contrast, especially).
- Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.

Production and Distribution of Writing

W.5.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

W.5.5. With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

W.5.6. With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of two pages in a single sitting.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

W.5.7. Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

W.5.8. Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

W.5.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- Apply grade 5 Reading standards to informational texts (e.g., "Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point[s]").

W.5.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

English Language Arts Standards >> Language >> Grade 5
Conventions of Standard English
L.5.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Explain the function of conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections in general and their function in particular sentences.
- Form and use the perfect (e.g., *I had walked; I have walked; I will have walked*) verb tenses.
- Use verb tense to convey various times, sequences, states, and conditions.
- Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.*
- Use correlative conjunctions (e.g., *either/or, neither/nor*).

L.5.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- Use punctuation to separate items in a series.*
- Use a comma to separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence.
- Use a comma to set off the words yes and no (e.g., *Yes, thank you*), to set off a tag question from the rest of the sentence (e.g., *It's true, isn't it?*), and to indicate direct address (e.g., *Is that you, Steve?*).
- Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works.
- Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

Knowledge of Language
L.5.3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.
- Compare and contrast the varieties of English (e.g., *dialects, registers*) used in stories, dramas, or poems.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
L.5.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 5 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
- Use context (e.g., cause/effect relationships and comparisons in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.

L.5.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- Interpret figurative language, including similes and metaphors, in context.
- Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.
- Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, homographs) to better understand each of the words.

L.5.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., however, although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, in addition).

English Language Arts Standards » Speaking & Listening » Grade 5
Comprehension and Collaboration
SL.5.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 5 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
- Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
- Pose and respond to specific questions by making comments that contribute to the discussion and elaborate on the remarks of others.
- Review the key ideas expressed and draw conclusions in light of information and knowledge gained from the discussions.

SL.5.2. Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

SL.5.3. Summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas
SL.5.4. Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

SL.5.5. Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, sound) and visual displays in presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.

SL.5.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, using formal English when appropriate to task and situation.