

School House
to
White House

The Education of the Presidents

Integrating the Museum Exhibit into the
Fifth-Grade Classroom



Teacher's Guide

TO THE TEACHER

Welcome to the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum! We are proud to present **SCHOOL HOUSE TO WHITE HOUSE: THE EDUCATION OF THE PRESIDENTS**, a rare and exciting learning opportunity for your students.

In 232 years of presidential history, only 42 people have become President of the United States.* Who were these individuals who came to hold the highest office in the land?

The Presidents were once boys struggling with their studies, teenagers trying to fit in, and young men deciding on a career. They came from many different backgrounds. Most went to public schools. Others had private tutors or attended prestigious private academies. Most were good students, although an occasional poor grade appeared on a report card. Many played sports, acted in theater, or joined clubs. All acknowledged the importance and influence of their education.

We invite you and your students to journey back to the school days of our 13 most-recent Presidents, through the collections of the National Archives' Presidential Libraries. As you and your students move through the exhibit, take a good look around. You may discover that you have something in common with these uncommon men!

PRESIDENTS FEATURED IN THE EXHIBIT

President	Term(s) of Office	Vice President(s)	Location of Presidential Library
Herbert Hoover (R)**	1929 – 1933	Charles Curtis	West Branch, Iowa
Franklin Roosevelt (D)	1933 – 1945	John Garner, Henry Wallace, Harry Truman	Hyde Park, New York
Harry Truman (D)	1945 – 1953	Alben Barkley	Independence, Missouri
Dwight Eisenhower (R)	1953 – 1961	Richard Nixon	Abilene, Kansas
John Kennedy (D)	1961 – 1963	Lyndon Johnson	Boston, Massachusetts
Lyndon Johnson (D)	1963 – 1969	Hubert Humphrey	Austin, Texas
Richard Nixon (R)	1969 – 1974	Gerald Ford	Yorba Linda, California
Gerald Ford (R)	1974 – 1977	Nelson Rockefeller	Ann Arbor and Grand Rapids, Michigan
Jimmy Carter (D)	1977 – 1981	Walter Mondale	Atlanta, Georgia
Ronald Reagan (R)	1981 – 1989	George Bush	Simi Valley, California
George Bush (R)	1989 – 1993	J. Danforth “Dan” Quayle	College Station, Texas
William Clinton (D)	1993 – 2001	Albert Gore	Little Rock, Arkansas
George W. Bush (R)	2001 – 2009	Richard Cheney	Dallas, Texas***

*Grover Cleveland was the only president to serve two non-consecutive terms, listed as president #22 (1885 – 1889) and President #24 (1893 – 1897).

** (R) stands for the Republican Party and (D) stands for the Democrat Party.

*** The George W. Bush Presidential Library is in the planning stages.



PRESIDENTIAL FACTS TO SHARE WITH YOUR STUDENTS

- Dwight Eisenhower’s parents encouraged all six Eisenhower boys to go to college. As a result, Arthur became a bank president; Edgar, a lawyer; Roy, a pharmacist; Earl, an engineer, and Milton, president of three universities.* Dwight became Supreme Allied Commander (Europe) in World War II, a five-star general, president of Columbia University, the first NATO** Military Commander, and President of the United States.
- One of Jimmy Carter’s high school teachers encouraged him to join the debate team in order to overcome his shyness and learn how to communicate his ideas clearly and effectively.
- Ronald Reagan was elected student body president of Dixon High School, where he participated in many sports including basketball, drama, football and track.
- Bill Clinton played the saxophone in his high school’s dance band. He was also a member of the school’s marching band and was selected to be the band major.

BEFORE YOU GO!—Read more about the **SCHOOL HOUSE TO WHITE HOUSE: THE EDUCATION OF THE PRESIDENTS** exhibit in *Prologue*, the quarterly magazine of the National Archives and Records Administration, at www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2007/spring/schoolhouse.html

EXHIBIT FOCUS—Your students will likely enjoy focusing on the upper-elementary and middle-school years of the Presidents. Throughout the exhibit, they will view many types of primary sources, including documents (both official and personal), photographs, and objects, which, along with carefully written captions, tell the story of the educations of the Presidents featured in the exhibit.

MAIN IDEA—Explain to students that designing a museum exhibit is a complex endeavor. It involves many steps including (1) determining a theme (main idea), (2) choosing concepts that support the theme, (3) selecting primary source materials to tell the story, (4) writing effective text, and (5) making design decisions about how best to artistically and/or technically present the story. As students move through the exhibit, point out to them, examples of the above criteria to demonstrate the decisions exhibit designers made.

*Kansas State University, Pennsylvania State University, and Johns Hopkins University.

**North Atlantic Treaty Organization



METHOD— As your students explore the exhibit, they will have an unprecedented opportunity to explore a rare collection of primary sources associated with Presidents of the United States. Even more importantly, they will gain insights into how primary sources have the power to intrigue us, to relate a rich and detailed story to us, and to enhance our understanding and appreciation of history.

Directly below is a list of primary sources with which most students will be familiar. They may be divided into three broad categories: (1) documents (2) audio-visual, and (3) artifacts or objects. Before coming to the Eisenhower Library to view **SCHOOL HOUSE TO WHITE HOUSE: THE EDUCATION OF THE PRESIDENTS**, encourage students to become familiar with the primary sources listed below.

PRIMARY SOURCES

photograph	personal letter	official letter	report card
exam or test	class notes	transcript of grades	attendance records
certificate	yearbook	diploma	souvenir program
sheet music	artifact	old newspaper	manuscript (draft of article or book)
birthday card	speech	old textbook	film or video
audio recording	essay	diary or journal entry	cartoon
advertisement	artwork	reminiscence	oral history transcript
map	reading book	workbook	poster

Once at the library, as they move through the exhibit, ask each student to select at least four primary sources for further examination and comment. Using a worksheet similar to the one on page 5, students will record the type of primary source selected, the President associated with it, and at least one fact or observation gleaned from it.



WORKSHEET EXAMPLE

Primary Source Selected	President's Name	I Learned
Transcript of Grades	Dwight Eisenhower	Dwight Eisenhower took English all four years of high school.

BACK IN THE CLASSROOM

Following your visit to the Eisenhower Library to view the exhibit, you may request a CD of all the images included in it for use in your classroom. Please see “contact information” on the last page to order a copy.

Organize students into working groups of three to five students each. Using images (CD) from the *School House to the White House* exhibit and from a variety of traditional and online sources, including presidential library web sites, each group of students will create a power point-type presentation, based on the boyhood years of one or any of the presidents.

Each student group will first determine a theme for the presentation, for example, “activities and sports” of the Presidents as boys. Next, each group will decide how best to organize the information to present the theme. Students will need to make decisions about design, headings, content, transitions, and any special effects. Storyboards are a good way to sketch out ideas to try out and organize their projects. As a culminating activity, each student group will make a presentation to the rest of the class.

Helpful information about creating storyboards maybe found at the **National History Day (NHD)** web site. The advice in the shaded area below comes directly from the NHD experts and is located on their web site, www.nhd.org. Take some time to explore the site.

Creating a Storyboard (<http://www.nhd.org/Storyboard.htm>)

A storyboard is a visual display of a script divided into segments, where each segment is represented by an appropriate image (slides, video clips, etc.) for that segment. This technique is used by people involved in media production to help them decide which pictures will best suit the script. It is important because it allows you to see which visuals



fit best, which still need to be made, what songs need to be recorded, etc. You should create a storyboard after you have completed your research and written a script.

You can create a storyboard by using index cards or by drawing boxes on a piece of paper. Each card or box represents one image and the text or narration that goes with that image. You may also include background music or sounds that need to be recorded. You should rough sketch visual ideas on the upper portion of the card or box and place the part of the script that goes with that image on the lower part. Each segment should be numbered to make certain that it remains in proper sequence. You can attach the cards to a board or piece of paper to look at the entire flow of the presentation and determine what changes need to be made.

Creating Documentary Entries

Constantly changing technology offers students limitless possibilities in developing media-based presentations for the documentary category. Students may create documentaries using slides, film, videos and computers. Whatever presentation format is chosen, students must be able to operate all equipment, both during production and at each level of competition.

The most important aspect of any entry is its historical quality. Students should not get so caught up in the production of a documentary that they lose sight of the importance of the historical quality. Judges are not looking for glitzy productions; rather, they are looking for solid research and a thorough analysis of the chosen topic.

Slide Presentations

Although the use of video and computer-based presentations in the documentary category is growing, slide presentations are still popular and effective. Slides can be either purchased or produced by students. The key to an effective entry is a good combination of visual images and recorded narrative. Here are some things to keep in mind:

Make a storyboard of the types of images that explain the theme.

Photograph pictures from books to build a slide collection and avoid too much repetition.

Music is an important addition to the recorded narrative.

Make sure the narrative fits with the image on the screen.

THE PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES

Presidential Libraries, operated by the National Archives and Records Administration, house and preserve documents and artifacts saved for each President from Hoover to Clinton, including materials that tell the story of the education of these 20th-century Presidents. These are not libraries in the usual sense. They are archives and museums, bringing together in one place the materials of a President, his administration, and his era, presenting them to the public for study and discussion without regard for political considerations or affiliations.



The **SCHOOL HOUSE TO WHITE HOUSE: THE EDUCATION OF THE PRESIDENTS** exhibit presents documents, artifacts, photographs, and film, which illustrate for you what these leaders accomplished in the classrooms of their youth. You may learn more through visits to Presidential Libraries located across the country.

Visit a Presidential Library and experience history firsthand. The Presidents are expecting you!

PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY WEB SITES

Below is a list of Presidential Libraries web sites. With a minimum of searching, usually in the “Education” or “Kids” pages, there are photographs of the presidents, including those as children, of family members, teachers and classmates, and pets and activities. You may download, print, and add these images to the classroom exhibit. In addition, a program or portion of the web site is identified, in the chart below, which may be of interest to you and your students.

Herbert Hoover	www.hoover.archives.gov	“Hoover Wore Many Hats” on the “Kids” page
Franklin Roosevelt	www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/	“Roosevelt Rap” on the “Education” page
Harry Truman	www.trumanlibrary.org	“Kids” under the Main Menu, for a great variety of online activities
Dwight Eisenhower	www.eisenhower.archives.gov	“Dreams of a Barefoot Boy: 1890 – 1911,” on the “Education page”
John Kennedy	www.jfklibrary.org	“A President’s Day,” “Education and Public Programs,” then, “Materials, Resources, and Activities for Students”
Lyndon Johnson	www.lbjlib.utexas.edu	“What Do You Know,” on the “Education” page, under “LBJ for Kids!”
Richard Nixon	www.nixonlibrary.gov	“Moon Landing,” on the “For Kids” page, under “Speeches for Kids”



Gerald Ford	www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov	“My Photo Album,” on the “Education Program” page under “Fun Facts”
Jimmy Carter	www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov	“Take the Diplomacy Challenge” on the “Youth Space” page
Ronald Reagan	www.reagan.utexas.edu	“Early Ronald Reagan” on the “Photographs” page
George H.W. Bush	http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu	“My Own Room at the White House” on the “Education,” then, “Programs” page
William Clinton	www.clintonlibrary.gov	“Clinton White House Photographs” on the “Research,” then, “Audio Visual Research,” pages. Scroll down to “Photo Gallery”

ADDITIONAL PRESIDENTIAL WEB SITES TO VISIT

www.nps.gov Many of the Presidents’ homes are National Park Service historic sites. Additional information, including photographs, about their formative years can be found on these web sites.

www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/presidents/ Check the “Kids” category on the menu at the top of the page. The pull-down “Select a President” menu offers brief overviews of each President.

www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/ The White House web pages about the Presidents.

americanhistory.si.edu/presidency/home.html The Smithsonian Institution’s web pages about the Presidents. It includes portraits, objects, online activities, teacher materials, and resources.

www.americanpresidents.org/ This C-Span web site offers a survey of Presidential Leaders, which ranks each president. Under “Resources,” there are photos and videos. In addition, check out “American Presidents Archive” under “Resources,” for accessible video on each President.



LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEACHERS

“**Primarily Teaching**” is an exciting summer program that introduces educators to the holdings of the National Archives and Records Administration. Best of all, participants spend an entire week in the archives researching a topic of interest to them and developing an original lesson plan. More information is available at

<http://www.archives.gov/education/primarily-teaching/>.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about **SCHOOL HOUSE TO WHITE HOUSE: THE EDUCATION OF THE PRESIDENTS**, contact the education office at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum.

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