

Mom's 3 Rules

The Early Lives of Jerry Ford and Betty Bloomer



Topic: Exploring self, family, community, and the development of good character through the lens of Gerald Ford and Betty Bloomers' early years in Grand Rapids.

Grade Level: *K – 2*
(early elementary, home school families, day care centers)

Subject Area: Social Studies

Time Required: 90 Minutes at Museum
(additional classroom time for preparation and follow-up extensions)

Essential Question: How can families and communities contribute to the development of good character in children?

Connections to Curriculum Standards:

Common Core: SL.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 / SL.2, 4, 5, and 6 / SL 2 and 6

RL. 1, 3, 7, and 9 / RI.1-3, 6-7, and 10 / RF 4

GLCES: K-C2.0.1 and 2 / K-C5.0.1 / K-H2.0.4

1-H2.0.1, 3, 4, 5, and 6

1-C1.0.1-3 / 1-C2.0.1 / 1-C5.0.1-2

2-H2.0.1-4, 6 / 2-G1.02 / 2-G2.02 / 2-C1.0.1-2 / 2-C3.0.1 /

2-C5.00.1-2

Living and Working Together in Families and
Communities, Now and Long Ago.

K: Myself and Others

1st: Families and Schools

2nd: The Local Community

Goals / Rationale:

Family, School, and community play a major role in the development of children. They not only contribute to physical, social, and emotional growth, but also to the development of responsible adults living their lives with good character. *Mom's Three Rules* is designed to help students explore self, family, community, and character development in the context of Gerald Ford and Betty Bloomers' early lives in Grand Rapids. As part of the program, we will make connections to the students, their families, schools, and everyday life in Grand Rapids in the 21st century.

Content will focus on four areas:

The Ford's early lives including family struggles, family love and support, and the importance of hard work.

The importance of following rules in all areas of our lives from family, school, and work to activities like athletics and scouting.

How to analyze photographs, artifacts, and simple documents as primary sources, for information.

Select aspects of Grand Rapids during the early part of the 20th century compared to the present day City.

Objectives:

- Students will learn that families are alike and different.
- Students will learn that families / schools / communities have rules.
- Students will learn basic facts about the early years of Gerald Ford and Betty Bloomer.
- Students will learn how to gather information from historic photographs, artifacts, and simple texts.
- Students will begin to make decisions about how they want to be seen and remembered by others.

Prior Knowledge and Skills:

Students should have basic knowledge of Gerald Ford and Betty Bloomer Ford, including that they both grew up in Grand Rapids and he became President of the United States.

Students should understand the concept of rules, with specific examples from home and school.

Students need a basic understanding of appropriate Museum behavior. (see page 30)

Historical Background and Context:

Work Hard, Tell the Truth, and Always Come to Dinner on Time

Gerald Ford was born Leslie Lynch King, Jr. in Omaha, NE on July 14, 1913. His mother, Dorothy Gardner King, left Omaha with her infant son to escape an abusive relationship. After spending time in Chicago with her parents, Dorothy brought her young son to Grand Rapids. Several years later she met and married Gerald R. Ford Sr. Soon afterward, the young boy became known as Jr. Ford, or Junie. Though he was never formally adopted, he did legally change his name in 1935, and always considered Gerald Ford, Sr. to be his father. It wasn't until high school that Jerry learned Ford Sr. was not his biological father when his birth father arrived in Grand Rapids unannounced. Though the Ford family suffered several serious financial setbacks during Junior's youth, it was always a close knit, loving family including Mom and Dad, Jerry and his three half brothers, Dick, Tom, and Jim. All four boys were expected to follow their father's example and their mother's three rules ... *Work Hard, Tell the Truth, and Always Come to Dinner on Time.*

Betty Ford was born in Chicago, IL on April 8, 1918 to Hortense Neahr and William Bloomer, the youngest of three children. The family moved to Grand Rapids in 1920. Two years before she graduated from Grand Rapids Central High School Betty Bloomer's father died, leaving her mother to support the family. Betty began to dance when she was eight years old, studied at Bennington School of Dance after high school graduation and, when she was 20 years old, moved to New York City to study dance and perform under world-renowned dancer Martha Graham. When Betty returned to Grand Rapids in 1941 she began work as fashion coordinator at Herpolshimer's Department Store. In October 1948 Betty Bloomer and Gerald Ford were married in Grace Episcopal Church. Two weeks later, Gerald Ford was elected to the United States Congress. Shortly after, Betty Ford lost her mother.

Procedures:

Mom's Three Rules will include a tour, discussion, photograph analysis, hands-on activity, and reflection. We will begin with an introduction to our program and an introductory lesson on looking at photographs to find clues and information using the *Pictures Tell a Story* analysis worksheet. We will then tour select exhibits. When we return to the classroom we will analyze additional photographs as part of our discussion of what students learned about Gerald and Betty in the exhibits. To wrap up students will complete the *Who Are You?* activity incorporating concepts learned about self, family, community, and good character. To conclude, students will be given brief instructions for completing the Family Tree activity at home.

Exhibits:

Foundations of a Civic Life, Oval Office, Betty Ford, Grave Site (weather permitting)

Technology:

Images and analysis worksheet will be displayed on large screen for introductory lesson on interpreting photographs. It will also be used for display of select Gerald Ford boyhood sites in Grand Rapids and illustration of the Family Tree classroom activity.

Classroom Space:

Second floor classroom.

Materials and Supplies:

Materials:

Photographs, Photograph Analysis Worksheets, Timeline, Ford Sites Map

Supplies:

Paper, Scissors, Glue, Markers / Crayons

Pre and Post Visit Tie-ins:

Pre-Visit Preparation:

- Using the brief biographies included in the packet, introduce your students to Gerald Ford and Betty Bloomer.
- Use the Gerald Ford – Donald Trump chart and timeline included in the packet to help students understand that Gerald Ford was once President of the United States and to put his life and career in perspective.
- Information in the Growing Up Grand driving tour and QR code can also be used to make Gerald Ford's life in Grand Rapids come alive for students.
- Discuss Rules
 - What rules do you have at home? At school?
 - What rules would you like to make for home or school?
- Discuss Families
 - What is a family?
 - Families come in different shapes, sizes, colors, and ages
 - How are families alike and different?
- Discuss Museum rules. (see page 30)

Suggested Follow-up Activities / Extensions:

- Complete *Your Rules* activity
- Complete the *Family Tree* activity
- Have students bring photographs (3-5) of themselves and their families to school. Students attach their photographs to poster board and write simple thoughts about themselves and their families.
- Discussion Questions
 - How do changes affect families? What changes did "Junior" Ford have in his life?
 - How are family members helpers?
 - What are some family roles and responsibilities?
 - How are family members unique individuals?
 - Who are other influential people in your life?
- Read about other presidents or role models and their early lives.
- In small groups or as a class, have students write an acrostic poem to help them think about elements of good character. Below are words linked to President Ford that can be used as a starting point.
 - FAIR (Football, Always listened, Interested in others, Respected his opponents)
 - HOME (Honesty, Obey, Manners, Earn)
 - SCOUTING (Self control, Caring, Obey, rUles, Trust, Integrity, take turNs, Gratitude)
- Driving tour of Grand Rapids sites associated with Gerald Ford's early life.

Assessment:

Use the *Who Are You?* activity to evaluate student understanding of good character and family structure.

Use discussion and photograph analysis to determine student understanding of Gerald Ford and Betty Bloomers' early lives, families, and hard work in various settings.

Summarize, with student input, what was covered during the program including family relationships and struggles, rules and hard work, and what it might have been like to live in Grand Rapids almost one hundred years ago.

An ornate, gold-colored picture frame with intricate carvings and a scalloped inner border. The frame is centered on a light gray background.

Looking at Photographs

Pictures Tell a Story

Photograph Analysis Worksheet

Step 1. Observation

- A. Have students look at the photograph and tell what they think it is about. Then divide the photo into quadrants and have students look at each quarter separately. Do they see new details?
- B. Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

People

Objects

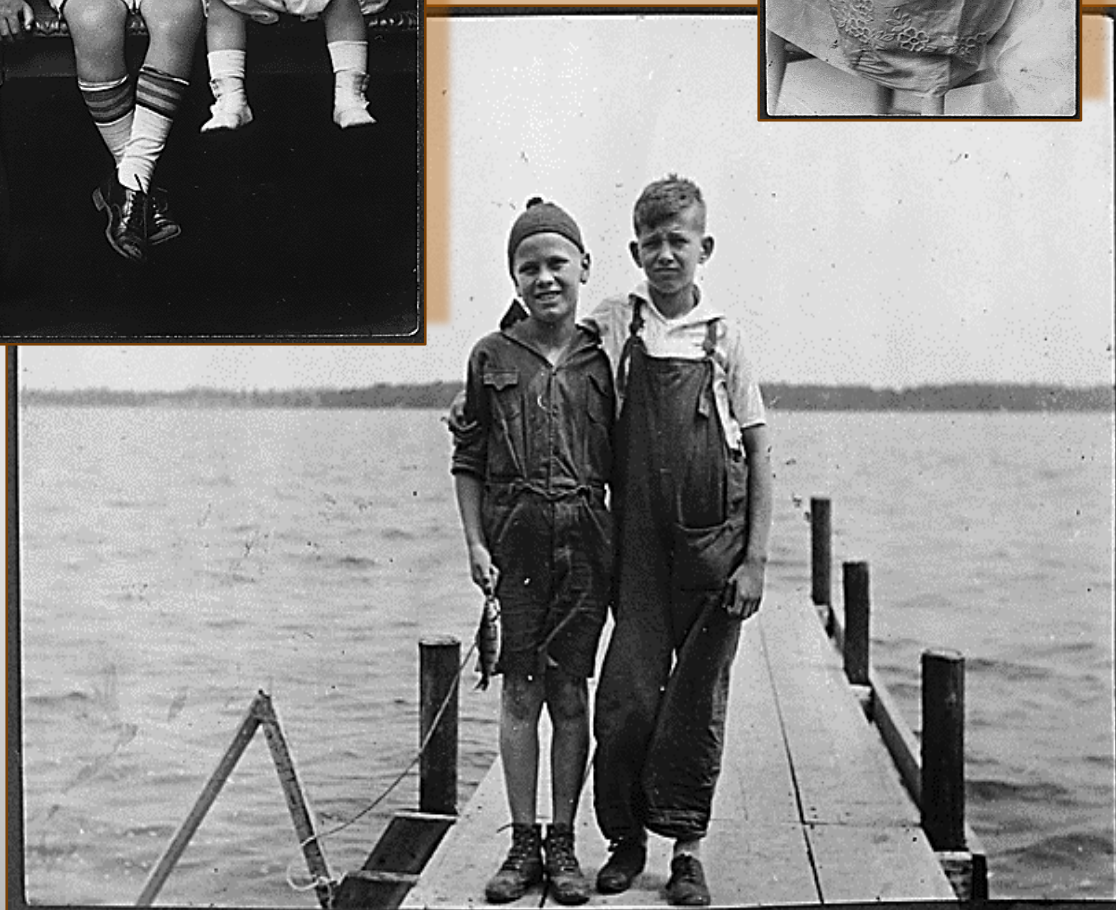
Activities

Step 2. Inference

What does this photograph tell you about Gerald Ford / Betty Bloomer Ford?

Step 3. Questions

What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?



Young Jerry Ford



High School Years



University of Michigan Football



Elizabeth Bloomer

School Days





Studying Dance after High School

On the following pages you will find the following materials:

Pictures Tell a Story Worksheet

Who Are You? Worksheet

Mom's Three Rules Worksheet

Family Tree Worksheets

One with Gerald Ford's family and one blank for students to complete.

Gerald Ford and Donald Trump Comparison Chart

Gerald Ford and Donald Trump Timeline

Biographies of Gerald Ford and Betty Bloomer Ford

Gerald Ford Grand Rapids Sites Map

Pictures Tell a Story

Photograph Analysis Worksheet

Step 1. Observation

- A. Have students look at the photograph and tell what they think it is about. Then divide the photo into quadrants and have students look at each quarter separately. Do they see new details?
- B. Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

People

Objects

Activities

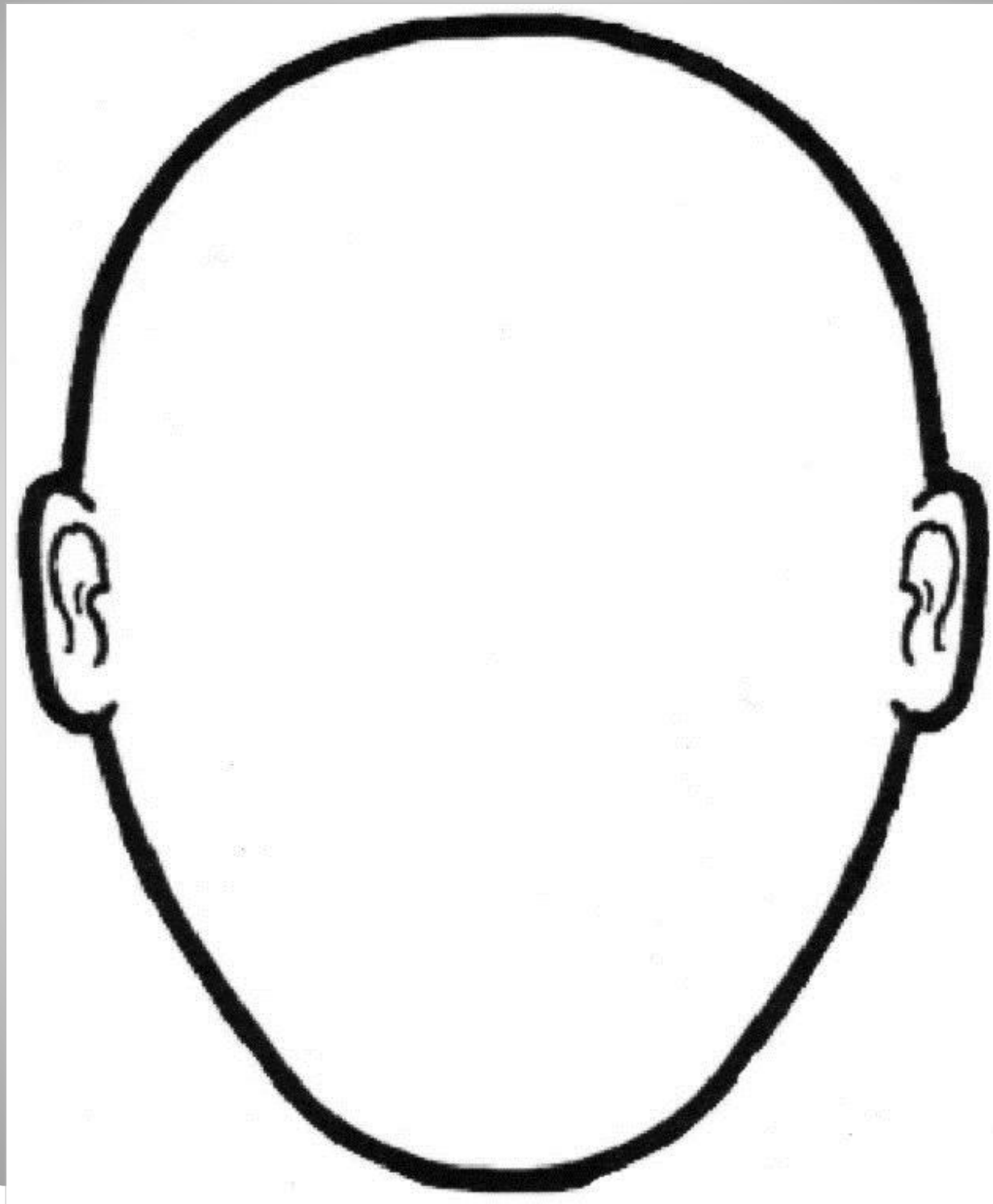
Step 2. Inference

What does this photograph tell you about Gerald Ford / Betty Bloomer Ford?

Step 3. Questions

What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

Who Are You?



Color in your eyes, mouth, and hair. Around your face write words that tell people about you.

Mom's Three Rules

Gerald Ford's mother had three rules that her boys had to obey. The rules were: Work Hard, Tell the Truth, and Always Come to Dinner on Time.

What rules do you have at home?

Gerald Ford's Rules

Your Rules

Work Hard

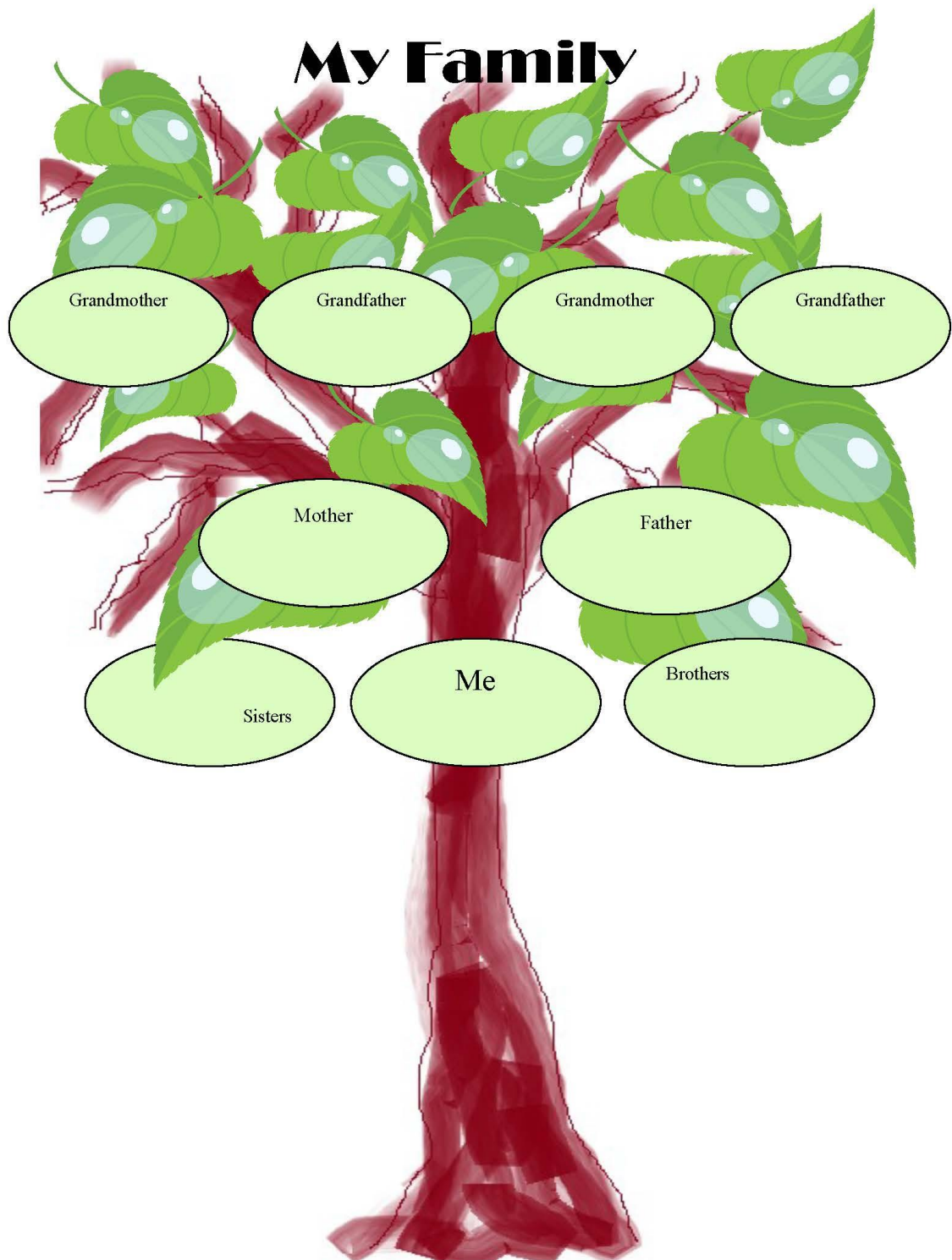
Tell the Truth

Come to Dinner on Time

Gerald Ford's Family



My Family



Presidential Comparison

Gerald R. Ford and Barack Obama

President Gerald R. Ford



38th President of the United States

Became President in 1973

Served as President for 3 years

Died in 2006 at 93 years old

President Barack Obama



45th President of the United States

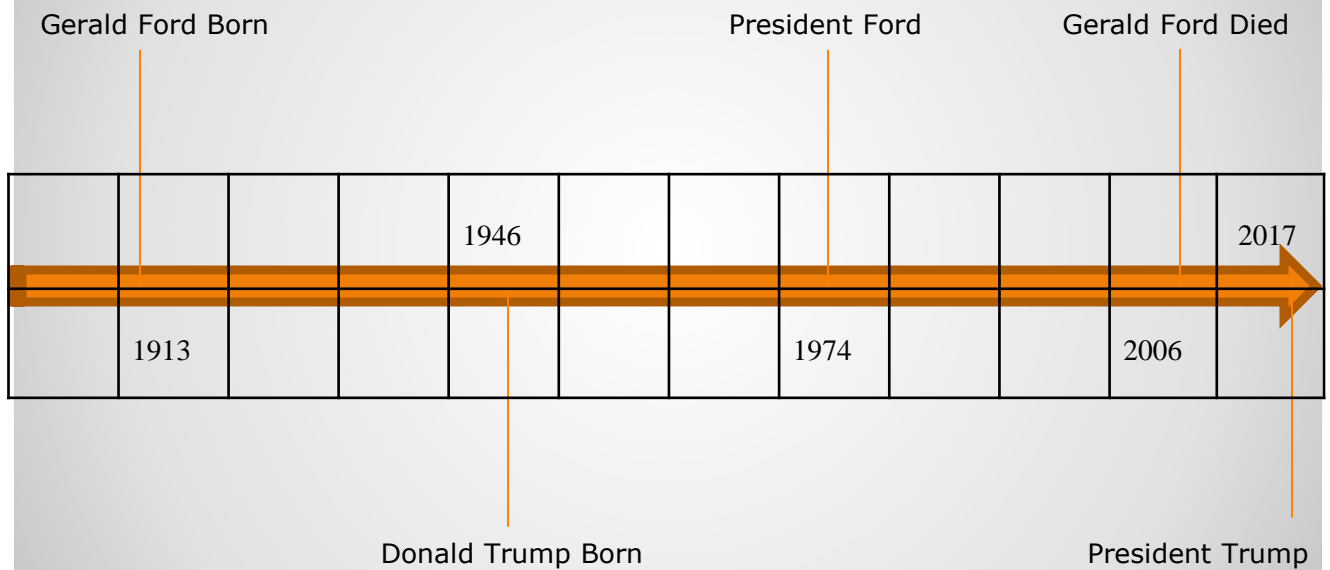
Became President in 2017

Current President of the U.S.

70 years old at time of Inauguration

Presidential Comparison Timeline

Gerald R. Ford and Donald Trump



Gerald Ford Biography – the early years

Gerald Rudolph Ford, the 38th President of the United States, was born Leslie Lynch King, Jr., the son of Leslie Lynch King and Dorothy Ayer Gardner King, on July 14, 1913, in Omaha, Nebraska. His mother fled Omaha and an abusive relationship two weeks after his birth. The Kings divorced later that same year. Dorothy King eventually settled in Grand Rapids, Michigan where her parents lived, and on February 1, 1916, married Gerald R. Ford, a Grand Rapids paint salesman. The Fords began calling her son Gerald R. Ford, Jr., or "Junior," although he did not legally change his name until December 3, 1935.

The future president grew up in a close-knit family with three younger half-brothers, Thomas, Richard, and James. Their parents were strict, but loving. There were three rules in the Ford household - work hard, tell the truth, and always come to dinner on time. Junior attended Madison Elementary and South High School in Grand Rapids, where he excelled scholastically and athletically. In December 1924 he joined Boy Scout Troop #15 at Trinity Methodist Church and achieved the rank of Eagle Scout in November 1927. As a high school student Junior was named to the honor society and the "All-City" and "All-State" football teams. He earned spending money working part-time jobs. Prior to his senior year, the Ford family moved to East Grand Rapids. With the approval of his parents, Jerry Ford chose to stay at South High School, a city school with a diverse student body.

By the time Ford left Grand Rapids for the University of Michigan his family and community had instilled the values of hard work, integrity, discipline, honesty, teamwork and more into the young man.

From 1931 to 1935 Ford attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where he majored in economics, graduating with a Bachelor's Degree in June 1935. He financed his education with part-time jobs, a small scholarship from his high school, and modest family assistance. A gifted athlete, Ford played on the University's national championship football teams in 1932 and 1933, and was voted the Wolverine's most valuable player in 1934.

He received offers from two professional football teams, the Detroit Lions and the Green Bay Packers, but chose instead to take a position as boxing coach and assistant varsity football coach at Yale hoping to attend law school there. Ford earned his LL.B. degree in 1941, graduating in the top 25 percent of his class in spite of the time he had to devote to his coaching duties. His introduction to politics came in the summer of 1940 when he worked in Wendell Willkie's presidential campaign.

After returning to Michigan and passing his bar exam, Ford and a University of Michigan fraternity brother, Philip A. Buchen set up a law partnership in Grand Rapids. He had just become active in a group of reform-minded Republicans, the Home Front, who were interested in challenging the hold of local political boss Frank McKay, when the United States entered World War II. In April 1942 Ford joined the U.S. Naval Reserve, was first assigned as athletic director and gunnery division officer, then as assistant navigator, with the *Monterey*. He was discharged as a lieutenant commander in February 1946. Upon returning to Grand Rapids Ford became a partner in the law firm of Butterfield, Keeney, and Amberg.

Wartime experiences caused young Ford to reject his previous isolationist leanings and adopt an internationalist outlook. With the encouragement of his stepfather, the Home Front, and Senator Arthur Vandenberg, Ford decided to challenge isolationist incumbent Bartel Jonkman for the Republican nomination for the U.S. House of Representatives in the 1948 election. He won the nomination by a wide margin and was elected to Congress on November 2, receiving 61 percent of the vote in the general election.

On October 15, 1948, during the height of the campaign, Gerald Ford married Elizabeth Anne Bloomer Warren at Grace Episcopal Church. They had four children: Michael Gerald, John "Jack" Gardner, Steven Meigs, and Susan Elizabeth.

Betty Bloomer Ford – the early years

When I was a young girl, I went to a fortune teller who told me I would be meeting kings and queens. I interpreted that to mean I was going to be a great dancer. I was wrong.

Born Elizabeth Anne Bloomer on April 8, 1918, she was the third child and only daughter of Hortense Neahr Bloomer and William Bloomer. She moved to Grand Rapids with her family when she was barely more than a toddler.

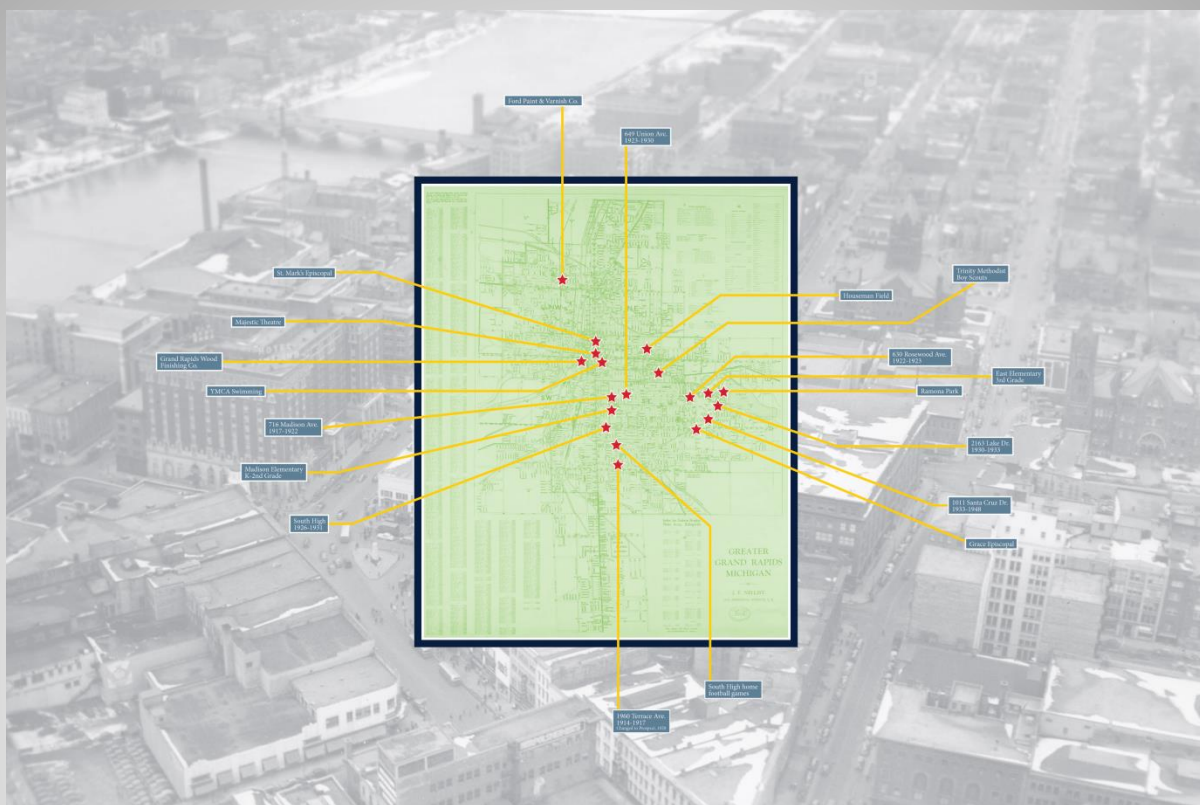
Betty Bloomer began dancing at the age of eight, and later in life said, “Dance was my happiness.” She continued dancing throughout high school and it was during those years that she decided on a career in dance. After graduating from Grand Rapids Central High School in 1936, she spent that summer and the next studying dance at the Bennington School of Dance in Vermont. There she met world renowned dancer Martha Graham. When she turned 20, Betty moved to New York City, studying dance and performing with Martha Graham’s Auxiliary Dance Group.

In 1942 she married Bill Warren but the union ended within five years. During the summer of 1947, mutual friends introduced Betty Bloomer and Gerald Ford. They soon began dating and his proposal came in February 1948. “I’d like to marry you, but we can’t get married until next fall, and I can’t tell you why.” As she soon learned, he had decided to run for the United States Congress. They were married at Grace Episcopal Church in Grand Rapids on October 15, 1948, just weeks before Ford was elected to Congress.

The young couple moved to Washington, D.C. in January 1949, a place where they would spend most of the next three decades. During the 1950s and 1960s, Betty Ford's activities focused on family and home, the Episcopal Church, and the Republican Party. In addition to being the mother of four young children, she did volunteer work with the Congressional Wives Club, taught Sunday school, attended political functions, and escorted constituents around Washington. In an interview many years ago, Mike Ford, the eldest of the four Ford children, described his mother as "the anchor of the whole family."

As parents, Betty and I tried to give our four children both roots and wings: the roots of family, heritage and values so they'd know who they were and in what they believed; and wings, the courage to seek personal challenges and the capacity to make it on their own.

Gerald R. Ford



Significant sites in Grand Rapids
(Clockwise beginning top left)

Ford Paint and Varnish Co.
649 Union Ave.
Houseman Field
Trinity Methodist Church
630 Rosewood Ave.
East Elementary School
Ramona Park
2163 Lake Dr.
1011 Santa Cruz Dr.

Grace Episcopal Church
South High Football Field
1960 Terrace Ave.
South High School
Madison Elementary School
716 Madison Ave.
YMCA
Grand Rapids Wood Finishing Co.
Majestic Theatre
St. Mark's Episcopal Church

For Additional Information

Gerald Ford

Web Sites:

www.archives.gov

www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov

www.millercenter.org

www.navy.mil

www.whitehouse.gov

Books:

Booraem, Hendrik V. *Young Jerry Ford: Athlete and Citizen*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013.

Cannon, James. *Time and Chance: Gerald Ford's Appointment with History*. New York: HarperCollins, 1993.

Cannon, James and Scott Cannon. *Gerald R. Ford: An Honorable Life*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2013.

Ford, Gerald R. *A Time to Heal: The Autobiography of Gerald R. Ford*. New York: Harper & Row, 1979.

Betty Ford

Web Sites:

www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov

www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/presidents.html

www.whitehouse.gov/about/first-ladies

www.memory.loc.gov/ammem/odmdhtml/preshome

www.firstladies.org

www.nps.gov/fila/

www.americanhistory.si.edu/exhibitions/exhibition.cfm?key=38&exkey=1239

www.bettyfordalpinegardens.org/

www.bettyfordcenter.org/index.php

Books:

Ford, Betty. *Times of My Life*, Harpercollins, 1987

Ford, Betty. *Betty Ford: A Glad Awakening*, Doubleday, 1988

Betty Boyd Caroli. *First Ladies, From Martha Washington to Michelle Obama*, Oxford University Press, 2010

Carl Sferrazza Anthony. *First Ladies Volume I*, Quill William Morrow, 1992

Carl Sferrazza Anthony. *First Ladies Volume II*, Harper Perennial, 1993

Carl Sferrazza Anthony. *America's First Families*, Touchstone, 2000

Scheduling a Visit

- To schedule your classroom visit to the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum, please contact Desiree' Ruhland at 616.254.0367 / desiree.ruhland@nara.gov or Barbara McGregor at 616.254.0373 / barbara.mcgregor@nara.gov .
- Please schedule your visit at least two weeks in advance.
- **All guided tours and programs must be scheduled a minimum of two weeks in advance.**

Admission Fees:

- Students, kindergarten through 12th grade, visiting as part of an organized classroom visit are admitted free of charge. We require one adult chaperone for every ten students. Those required adults are also admitted free of charge.
- \$8.00 for adults, \$7.00 for senior citizens and military service members, \$6.00 for college students with ID, \$5.00 for youth ages 6-18, and free for children under the age of 5.

Hours:

- Open Monday - Saturday from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm and Sunday 12:00 – 5:00 pm. (Closed New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.)

Advanced Preparation

- Because the most successful museum visits are those where students and adults are well prepared, we offer you the following guidelines for your Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum class trip.
- If at all possible, visit the Museum before bringing your students. Teachers preparing for classroom visits are admitted free of charge.
- Prepare your students for their visit with pre-visit activities and discussions. There are a variety of activities included in this packet, or you may develop your own.
- Divide your students into small groups and plan to have one chaperone with each group. By doing this you will be free to move from group to group, checking on progress, answering questions, and assisting with behavioral issues, if necessary.
- Make a copy of the Museum Etiquette and Rules and Chaperone Guidelines for each of your chaperones. In addition, it is helpful if you provide them with information on your specific assignments and instructions, and a name tag prior to your visit.

Museum Etiquette and Rules

- As you know, museums have a variety of rules designed both for the safe-keeping of artifacts and documents on display, and to ensure a safe, enjoyable visit for all guests. We appreciate your help in seeing that your students follow these basic rules during your visit. Our goal is to do everything possible to see that your students, and our other guests, enjoy their Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum experience.
- Please have your students remain with their chaperones at all times while at the Museum.
- Please make sure your students do not bring food or beverages into the Museum. This includes all candy and gum.
- Please remind students that they need to use care and not touch or lean on the displays. In this way, they can help us take good care of everything on display.
- While we love to see enthusiastic students at the Museum, please remind your students that they must use indoor voices and refrain from running. Students are representing their teachers and schools while using community resources.
- Please take as many photographs as you would like - - without using a flash. There may be restrictions on photography in our special changing exhibits. Check with Museum staff for details.

Chaperone Guidelines

- We require one adult chaperone for every ten students. Each student must be assigned to a small group and be accompanied by a chaperone. Chaperones must remain with their group at all times while at the Museum and on the Museum grounds.
- Chaperones are responsible for working with you, the teacher, to keep students organized and focused on their visit. Please give each chaperone specific information about your students' Museum assignments and goals prior to arriving at the Museum.
- We also ask that chaperones help students abide by the Museum's rules, outlined above. Museum staff expects teachers and chaperones to maintain control and discipline of their groups at all times. Museum staff and security are available for assistance, if necessary.

Logistics

Directions:

- From the North: US 131 south to Pearl Street exit. East on Pearl to Museum entrance.
- From the South: US 131 north to Pearl Street exit. East on Pearl to Museum entrance.
- From the East: I-196 west to Ottawa Avenue exit. South on Ottawa to Pearl Street. West on Pearl to Museum entrance.
- From the West: I-196 east to US 131 south / Pearl Street exit. East on Pearl to Museum entrance. (Bear to the right as you exit I-196 and the Pearl Street exit. You won't actually merge onto US 131.)

Parking:

- Free bus parking is available on Scribner Street, directly to the west of the Museum, and in the Museum's south parking lot.

Check-In Procedures:

- When you arrive at the Museum, one person should come in to our Admissions Desk to handle check-in. Please be prepared to give an exact count of students and adults – both teachers and chaperones. At this time you will be asked to pay our \$8.00 per person admission fee for any adults over the required number of one per ten students. We accept cash, checks, and major credit cards. Please let our admissions staff know if you need a receipt.

Museum Store:

- The Museum has a gift shop on site. Many items in the Museum Store are priced for children. We ask that only one group of ten students be allowed in the store at a time.

Restrooms, Drinking Fountains, and Coat Room:

- Restrooms, drinking fountains, and the coat room are all conveniently located near the Museum Store. There are additional restrooms on the second floor, both across from the Cabinet Room and in the learning center.

Clipboards:

- A limited number of clipboards are available for students to use. They are located at the top of the main staircase. Please return them to the boxes before leaving the Museum.