

Pre-Visit Lesson Plan - Biography

Lesson One: A Biography of President Kennedy

Description:

Students will use online biographies of President John F. Kennedy to complete a Biographical Worksheet on his life.

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- ❖ Appreciate the role of biography in understanding history
- ❖ Learn details about the life of President John F. Kennedy
- ❖ Identify President Kennedy’s most enduring legacies

Resources Needed:

- Biography Worksheet
- Internet Access (or printouts of specific pages from relevant websites)
 - **The White House** <http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/jk35.html>
 - **The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum** <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Historical+Resources/Biographies+and+Profiles/Biographies/John+F.+Kennedy+The+35th+President+of+the+United+States.htm>
 - **The John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site** <http://www.nps.gov/jofi/faqs.htm>
- Glossary
- (Optional: *The Life and Times of John F. Kennedy* DVD (loan copy available from The Sixth Floor Museum by request))



Courtesy, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library

TEKS:

<p>5.5 History Student understands important issues, events, and individuals of the 20th century in the U.S. (B) Identify the accomplishments of notable individual who have made contributions to society in the area of civil rights, women’s rights, military actions, and politics</p>
<p>5.19 Citizenship Student understands the importance of individual participation in the democratic process (C) Identify significant individuals who have modeled active participation in the democratic process</p>
<p>5.20 Citizenship Student understands the importance of effective leadership in a democratic society (A) Identify leaders in the national government, including the president and selected members of Congress and their political parties (B) Identify and compare leadership qualities of national leaders, past and present</p>
<p>113.32 (c)(24) Social Studies Skills Student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources including electronic technology. (A) Locate and use primary and secondary sources such as computer software, databases, media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information about the United States</p>

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Activity:

1. The teacher should lead a class discussion about the definition of biography.
 - a. What is a biography?
 - b. Who writes biographies?
 - c. What kinds of people are usually the subjects of biographies?
 - d. Are biographies primary or secondary sources of information?
 - e. Are biographies useful in understanding history? Why or why not?
2. The teacher should distribute copies of the Biography Worksheet to students, and explain that students will be using it to learn about the life of President John F. Kennedy in preparation for their visit to The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza. (Teachers may want to explain the purpose and mission of The Sixth Floor Museum to prepare students for the field trip.)
3. The teacher should explain that students can visit the assigned websites to complete their worksheets. (Teachers may want to add additional Internet resources to a list of “approved” sites for students to explore.)
4. After students have completed their worksheets, have them do a “pair and share” activity, or the class can share their answers as a group.
 - a. Did the students all have the same answers?
 - b. What questions do the students still have about President Kennedy’s life?
 - c. Where could they go for additional information?
 - d. How might a biographer use such a worksheet like this one?
5. Have students write down any remaining questions they have about President Kennedy’s life. Revisit their lists after the field trip to the Sixth Floor Museum.
 - a. Did their view of President Kennedy change after visiting the Museum? If yes, how?
 - b. Do they think President Kennedy would have accomplished more if he would have finished his term in office? What might have been different?
6. Optional: Borrow a loan copy of *The Life and Times of John F. Kennedy* DVD to show to the class. Contact the Museum’s Curator of Education for details: 214-747-6660, ext. 6672.
7. Optional: Have students write a brief biographical essay of someone they know. Their biographical essay should answer the following questions:
 - a. What is the person’s name?
 - b. Where were they born?
 - c. Who were the person’s parents?
 - d. Did he or she have any siblings? What were their names?
 - e. What are some of the proudest moments in that person’s life?
 - f. Who was the most influential individual in that person’s life?
 - g. What was the most influential event in that person’s life?

JFK Biography Worksheet

1. In what city and state was President Kennedy born? _____
2. When was his birthday? _____
3. What were the names of his parents? _____

4. How many brothers did he have? _____ How many sisters did he have? _____
5. What was his wife's name? _____
6. What were his children's names? _____
7. What jobs did he have before he became President of the United States?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
8. List five important facts about President Kennedy's life before he became President:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____
9. What are three important accomplishments of President John F. Kennedy's administration?
 - a. _____

 - b. _____

 - c. _____

10. When and where did President Kennedy die? _____
11. How many years ago was that? _____
12. What impact has his life had on people around the world? Use the back of this sheet to explain.