

## **Let's Meet the Presidents**

Each school year children will read books on presidents, but they usually are on the more famous ones like Washington and Lincoln. When asked who is Andrew Jackson? Or Rutherford B. Hayes? Children will have no idea of who you are talking about. The Internet comes in handy when books are not available and you want the children to learn about a topic.

This project allows the children to conduct research, exercise their writing skills through both a book report and a script. It also allows them to exercise their creativity through the making of puppets and then performing with them in a puppet show. The puppet show is then filmed into a movie.

A puppet show is a great medium to allow children who do not communicate easily in front of people. This program was written taking into account those children who have emotional and physical challenges. When the children see that the attention is put on the puppet and not on them they are able to let their hair down and shine in their performance.

**Objectives:** Students will

1. gather and organize information about the accomplishments of individuals significant to American History.
2. draft, edit, revise and publish both a book report and a script for a movie.
3. create art works through a variety of mediums including sculpture and puppet making.
4. use language, voice, and movement to express their written work in a puppet show.

**Materials:** computer with Internet access  
Printer

**Websites:**

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/kids/presidents/>

Official Whitehouse website for kids

<http://www.2lhric.org/pocantico/presidents/presidents.htm>

Website made by 5<sup>th</sup> graders of the Pocantico School in Sleepy Hollow, N.Y. on U.S.

Presidents

<http://www.npg.si.edu/exh/hall2/>A Website that has portraits of the U.S. Presidents.

<http://socialstudiesforkids.com/subjects/uspresidents.htm>

A website with a variety of links on presidents.

## **Day One Title: President Who?**

**Objectives:** Students will

1. explore those internet sites to see what president they would be interested in learning more about.
2. surf and print out materials on their president.
3. take notes after reading their material.
4. use the checklist to check off the information needed for their report.
5. write their report.
6. revise their report.
7. edit their report.
8. publish their report.

### **Procedure:**

1. Discuss with the children what presidents they know. Give them the websites and let them in pairs explore them.

2. Encourage them to find out more about a president they are interested in or encourage them to look up one they know nothing about.
3. The children have been given a checklist to help them check off the information they will need for their report and movie script.

**Evaluation:** Have the students read their reports to their class. Let them get feedback from their classmates. Encourage the class to make positive remarks.

**Homework:** Give out the words to the Star Spangled Banner for the children to learn.

## **Day 2 Title: Writing the Script**

**Objectives:** The students will

1. will make a timeline of the presidents that they researched.
2. will write a simple storyline using the storyboard paper.

3. will formulate 3 questions that they would what asked to their president if it were possible.
4. will work cooperatively in small groups and then pull it together.

### **Procedure:**

1. First the children are told that their storyboards will be put in the order of their presidency. Have the children construct a timeline across the front of the room. The children are told that the movie storyline will be where a reporter for a school newspaper finds a time machine. The reporter goes back in time to visit each president. The reporter can ask three questions. The children are told that they will be making puppets of the reporter and each of the presidents. The child who will work the reporter puppet must work with each of the students to go over what questions will be asked. It will be the reporter's job to see that duplicate

questions are not asked. The children practice reading their questions and answers out loud.

**Evaluation:** The final cut of the imovie will show the success of their work.

### **Day 3      Title: The making of the Puppets**

**Objectives:** The student will

1. be sculpting their president's head out of celluclay.
2. making a costume for their puppet.

**Materials:** celluclay (papier mache), Styrofoam 6x4 eggs, 12x18 (stiffened) felt in assorted colors, package of wiggle eyes, clay modeling kit, paint brushes, acrylic paints, yarn, craft glue, assorted buttons, construction paper.

**Procedure:**

1. If you have extra adult assistance this part of the project can be done in one day.

Everything must be organized and set up before the children arrive.

2. Remember to model each step of puppet making so the children will know what to do.

First mix the celluclay. The children will mold it over the Styrofoam balls. They will look at pictures of their presidents to get an idea of how they want their puppet to look. (1hour to dry)

3. While they are drying the children can work on the costumes. The body of the puppet will be made from a bent metal coat hanger. Take the metal coat hanger and straighten out the top. Next hold the hanger from each side and bend it in half until both sides meet. It should resemble a tong. The head will sit on top and the two arms the hanger will allow you to hold on and maneuver your puppet.

4. Cut a shirt template no wider then the bent coat hanger. Remember there will be a

front and back to the shirt. The felt can be sewn or glued together. They can make hats or glasses. Let them look at distinguishing clothes or accessories that the president might have used.

5. The heads should be dry. Take and paint them with acrylic paint. Wiggle eyes can be used. Yarn can be used for hair or the children can mold hair with the celluclay.

**Evaluation:** Use a checklist so they can check off the steps needed to make a costume.

#### **Day 4 Title: Let's make a movie**

**Objectives:** The students will

1. perform a puppet show with the script that they wrote in Day 2.
2. will assist in filming the movie.
3. will assist in the editing of the film.

**Materials:** digital movie camera, tripod, props, LCD projector, and computer

**Procedure:**

1. Photos of the presidents that the children have found on different websites can be copied into the computer and used as a backdrop for the film through the use of the LCD projector.
2. The children will run through the script twice before it is finally filmed.
3. Have each child involved in some capacity of the filmmaking. Assign jobs the day before.
4. In the last scene the children can sing “The Star Spangled Banner” while they hold their puppets.

**Evaluation:** Have the students watch the imovie and then critique it. Make up a quiz based on the questions they used in the script.

## Checklist for President Report

Number of terms as president \_\_\_\_\_  
(term is 4 years)

Birthplace \_\_\_\_\_

Childhood \_\_\_\_\_

Education \_\_\_\_\_

Jobs before president \_\_\_\_\_

Accomplishments as president \_\_\_\_\_

Death \_\_\_\_\_

Interesting facts that will make someone say I  
didn't know that about \_\_\_\_\_

## Check list for costume making:

- \_\_\_\_\_ cut out template
- \_\_\_\_\_ decorated costume
- \_\_\_\_\_ made any accessories
- \_\_\_\_\_ glued both sides together
- \_\_\_\_\_ bent coat hanger
- \_\_\_\_\_ fit costume over coat hanger
- \_\_\_\_\_ placed head on top.

## Quiz on the “ Lets Meet the Presidents”

Material is all found on  
[whitehouse.gov/kids/presidents](http://whitehouse.gov/kids/presidents)

1. I was a colonel in the Black Hawk war Who am I?

- A. Zachary Taylor
- B. Abraham Lincoln
- C. John F. Kennedy

2. My favorite food was New England Clam chowder? Who am I?

- A. Woodrow Wilson
- B. John F. Kennedy
- C. George Washington

3. I did not go to college. I learned to read and write at home? Who Am I?

- A. Thomas Jefferson
- B. Rutherford B. Hayes
- C. Abraham Lincoln

4. My favorite sports were horseback riding, Croquet and shooting. I was the 19<sup>th</sup> president of the United States.

- A. Abraham Lincoln
- B. Rutherford B .Hayes
- C. George Washington

5. Which president had a horse named Nelson?

- A. Zachary Taylor
- B. George Washington
- C. Thomas Jefferson

6. I helped write the “ Bill of Rights”  
Who am I?

- A . James Madison
- B. Woodrow Wilson
- C. George Washington

7. I was the President of Princeton University before I became President of the United states. Who am I?

- A. John F.Kennedy
- B. Woodrow Wilson
- C. Abraham Lincoln

8. I liked eating pancakes My nickname was Old Hickory. Who am I?

- A. Andrew Jackson
- B. George Washington
- C. Thomas Jefferson

9. I was the third president of the United States. I had a mockingbird as a pet.

- A. Thomas Jefferson
- B. James Madison
- C. Zachary Taylor

## Answer sheet for quiz

1. Zachary Taylor
2. John F. Kennedy
3. Abraham Lincoln
4. Rutherford B. Hayes
5. George Washington
6. James Madison
7. Woodrow Wilson
8. Andrew Jackson
9. Thomas Jefferson

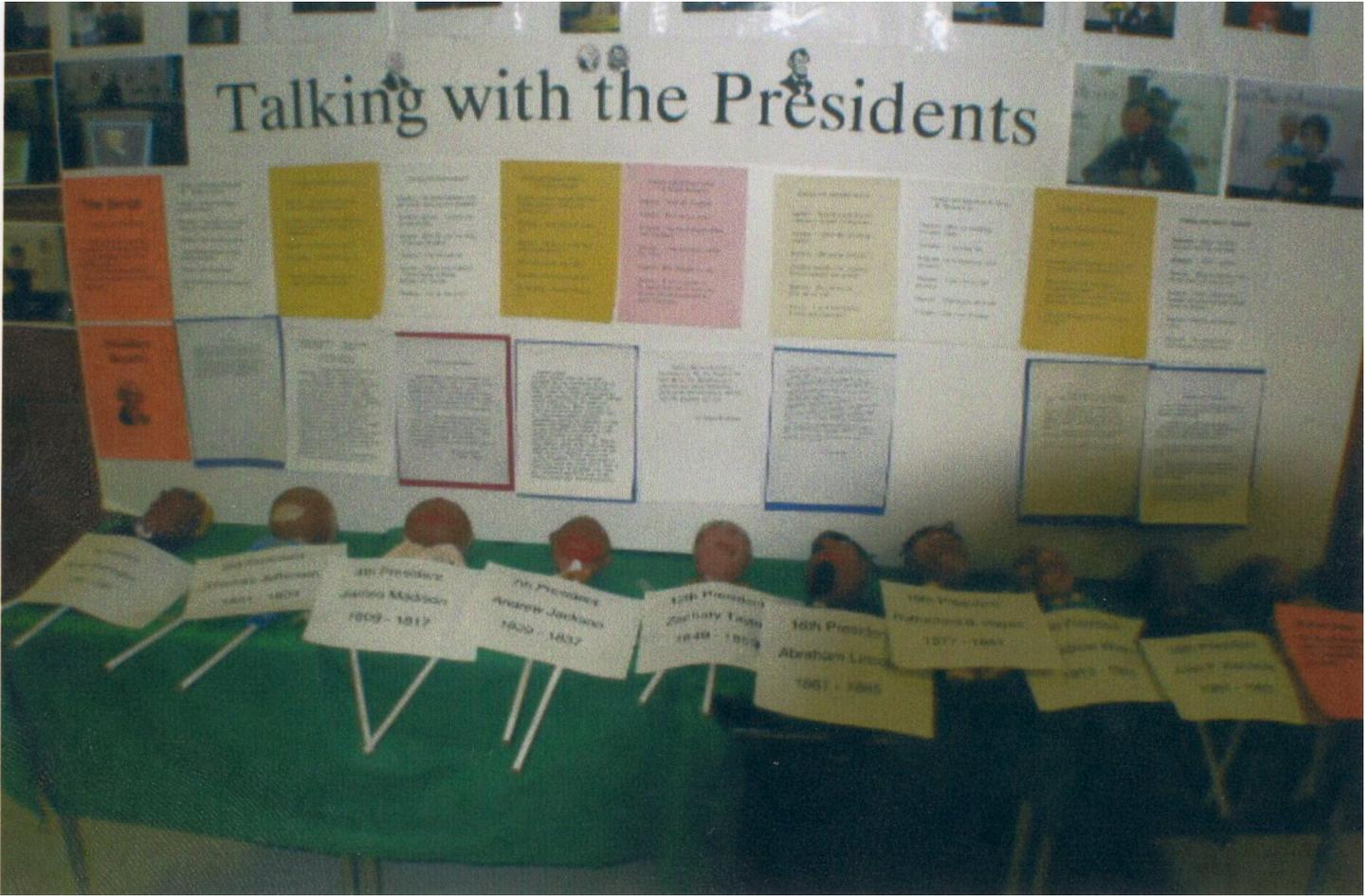




alking with



# Talking with the Presidents



**The Great Seal**  
The Great Seal of the United States is a symbol of the nation's unity and independence. It features an eagle with a shield, holding an olive branch and arrows, with a constellation of stars above its head.

**George Washington**  
George Washington was the first President of the United States, serving from 1789 to 1797. He is known for his leadership during the American Revolutionary War and for establishing the precedent of a two-term limit for the presidency.

**John Adams**  
John Adams was the second President of the United States, serving from 1797 to 1801. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**Thomas Jefferson**  
Thomas Jefferson was the third President of the United States, serving from 1801 to 1809. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**James Madison**  
James Madison was the fourth President of the United States, serving from 1809 to 1817. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**James Monroe**  
James Monroe was the fifth President of the United States, serving from 1817 to 1825. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**John Quincy Adams**  
John Quincy Adams was the sixth President of the United States, serving from 1825 to 1829. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**Andrew Jackson**  
Andrew Jackson was the seventh President of the United States, serving from 1829 to 1837. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**Martin Van Buren**  
Martin Van Buren was the eighth President of the United States, serving from 1837 to 1841. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**William Henry Harrison**  
William Henry Harrison was the ninth President of the United States, serving from 1841 to 1842. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**John Tyler**  
John Tyler was the tenth President of the United States, serving from 1841 to 1845. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**James K. Polk**  
James K. Polk was the eleventh President of the United States, serving from 1845 to 1849. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**Zachary Taylor**  
Zachary Taylor was the twelfth President of the United States, serving from 1849 to 1850. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**Franklin Pierce**  
Franklin Pierce was the thirteenth President of the United States, serving from 1853 to 1857. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**James Buchanan**  
James Buchanan was the fifteenth President of the United States, serving from 1857 to 1861. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**Abraham Lincoln**  
Abraham Lincoln was the sixteenth President of the United States, serving from 1861 to 1865. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**Andrew Johnson**  
Andrew Johnson was the seventeenth President of the United States, serving from 1865 to 1869. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**Ulysses S. Grant**  
Ulysses S. Grant was the eighteenth President of the United States, serving from 1869 to 1877. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**Rutherford B. Hayes**  
Rutherford B. Hayes was the nineteenth President of the United States, serving from 1877 to 1881. He is known for his role in the American Revolution and for his efforts to establish a strong federal government.

**18th President**  
Ulysses S. Grant  
1869 - 1877

**19th President**  
Rutherford B. Hayes  
1877 - 1881

**20th President**  
James A. Garfield  
1881 - 1881

**21st President**  
Chester A. Arthur  
1881 - 1881

**22nd President**  
Levi P. Morgan  
1881 - 1881

**23rd President**  
Benjamin Harrison  
1889 - 1893

**24th President**  
Grover Cleveland  
1895 - 1899

**25th President**  
William McKinley  
1897 - 1901

**26th President**  
Theodore Roosevelt  
1901 - 1909