

★ The U. S. Presidents★

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to teach students to identify the faces, names, sequence, and influence of the presidents of the United States. Each president has had an impact on American history by the decisions they have made in national and foreign policy. Students participate in activities using a set of president cards provided with this lesson plan. A suggested research activity is also included.

Objective

The student will identify the U. S. presidents and their qualities by reviewing the events that occurred during their presidencies.

Theme-Progress

Progress occurs over time as people take actions to change events. The U. S. Presidents have had a tremendous impact on the progress of the nation as a result of the decisions they have made.

TEKS

SS5 Citizenship. Identify national leaders in the government and qualifications of leaders.
SS3 Culture. Identify heroic deeds and national heroes.

Time

45-60 minutes (varies by activity)

Materials

- ★ President cards
- ★ Art supplies (as needed).
- ★ Research materials/Internet access

Preparation

- ★ Copy president cards (format may vary by activity).
- ★ Gather art supplies (as needed).
- ★ Gather resources for research activity.

Focus

Prior to the lesson, ask students to talk about the U. S. presidents with their parents. In class, ask students to name the presidents of the United States that they know. Make a list of the names on the board. Ask students why presidents are important to the history of our nation. Show the students the president cards and fast facts and ask them to review information about the presidents.

Activity

President Cards (with or without labels)

1. Give students some or all of the president cards. Have them shuffle the cards and then place them in chronological order.
2. Have the students create a timeline of the presidents by drawing the timeline on art paper and then placing the president cards on the timeline. You might have students add other historical people and events to their timelines.
3. Make two sets of some or all of the cards. Have students play a Memory matching game in groups. Cards are placed face down on the table. Each student takes a turn flipping two cards face up. If the pair matches, the student keeps the cards. If the pair does not match, the cards are turned face down again. When all the pairs have been found, the student with the most pairs wins.
4. Make finger puppets out of presidents' pictures. Draw and cut out the puppet pattern on cardboard and glue on pictures. Have a parade!
5. Have students research material about the presidents from their textbook or other resources. Have individual or groups of students draw from the president cards to see which president he/she will research. (Quick access on the Internet to information about the presidents can be found at www.americanheritage.org. From the homepage click "Links." Then click "Presidents" for links to sites including the White House and the Internet Public Library.)

Presidential Fast Facts

Read passages for the various presidents. Develop research questions for individual or group projects. Use as a History Fair stimulus.

Presidential Puzzle

Find as many presidents as you can and list them as you go.

A Real Challenge Puzzle

Locate if you can a list of the U. S. Vice-Presidents and then find them in the word puzzle. List them as you go.

Closure

Repeat the listing activity in the Focus. Point out to students how many more presidents they can now identify.

Assessment

Students will write a paragraph or essay describing what they think are personal qualities important for the president of the United States.





George Washington

First President
1789-1797



John Adams

Second President
1797-1801



Thomas Jefferson

Third President
1801-1809



James Madison

Fourth President
1809-1817



James Monroe

Fifth President
1817-1825



John Quincy Adams

Sixth President
1825-1829



Andrew Jackson

Seventh President
1829-1837



Martin Van Buren

Eighth President
1837-1841



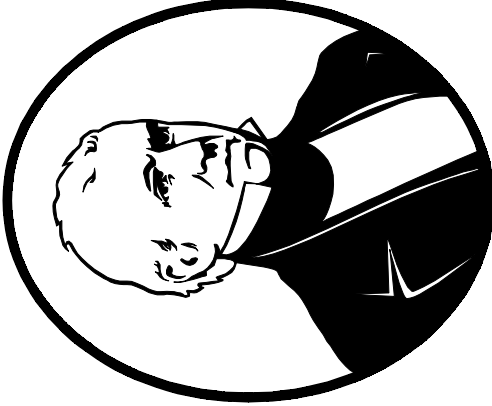
William Henry Harrison

Ninth President
1841



John Tyler

Tenth President
1841-1845



James K. Polk

Eleventh President
1845-1849



Zachary Taylor

Twelfth President
1849-1850



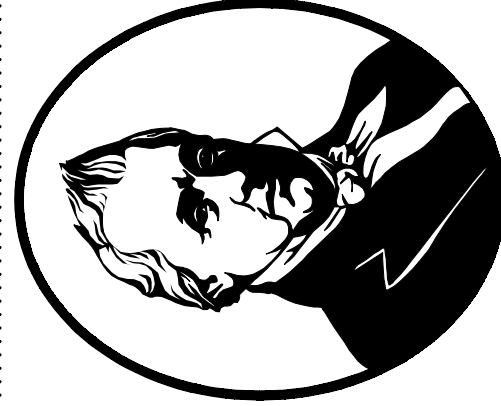
Millard Fillmore

Thirteenth President
1850-1853



Franklin Pierce

Fourteenth President
1853-1857



James Buchanan

Fifteenth President
1857-1861

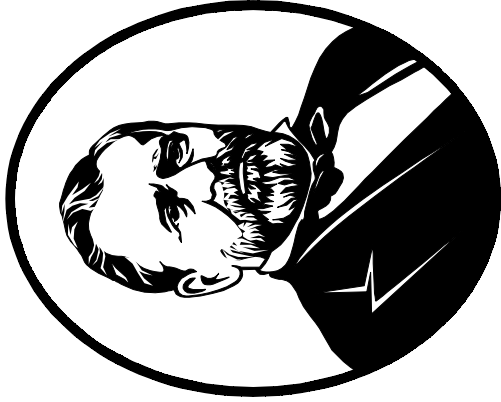


Abraham Lincoln

Sixteenth President
1861-1865



Andrew Johnson
Seventeenth President
1865-1869



Ulysses S. Grant
Eighteenth President
1869-1877



Rutherford B. Hayes
Nineteenth President
1877-1881



James A. Garfield
Twentieth President
1881



Chester A. Arthur
Twenty-First President
1881-1885



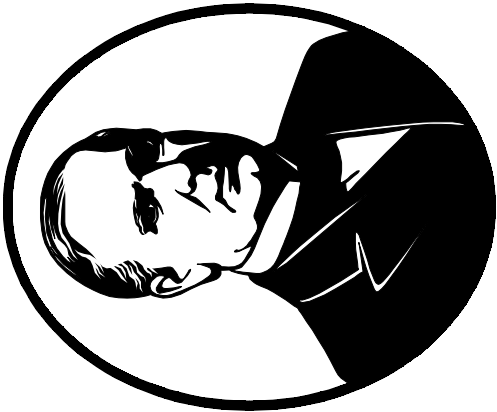
Grover Cleveland
Twenty-Second President
1885-1889



Benjamin Harrison
Twenty-Third President
1889-1893



Grover Cleveland
Twenty-Fourth President
1885-1889



William McKinley

Twenty-Fifth President
1897-1901



Theodore Roosevelt

Twenty-Sixth President
1901-1909



William Howard Taft

Twenty-Seventh President
1909-1913



Woodrow Wilson

Twenty-Eighth President
1913-1921



Warren G. Harding

Twenty-Ninth President
1921-1923



Calvin Coolidge

Thirtieth President
1923-1929



Herbert Hoover

Thirty-First President
1929-1933

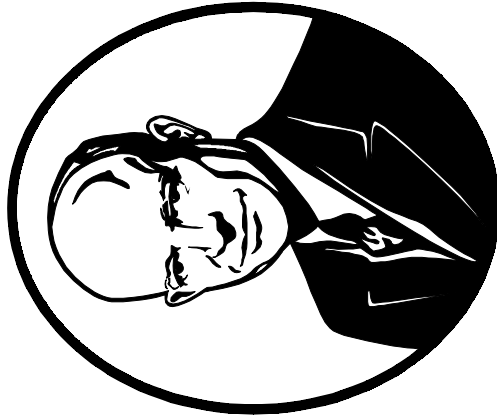


Franklin D. Roosevelt

Thirty-Second President
1933-1945



Harry S. Truman
Thirty-Third President
1945-1953



Dwight D. Eisenhower
Thirty-Fourth President
1953-1961



John F. Kennedy
Thirty-Fifth President
1961-1963



Lyndon B. Johnson
Thirty-Sixth President
1963-1969



Richard M. Nixon
Thirty-Seventh President
1969-1974



Gerald R. Ford
Thirty-Eighth President
1974-1977



James Earl Carter
Thirty-Ninth President
1977-1981



Ronald Reagan
Fortieth President
1981-1989



George Bush

Forty-First President
1989-1993



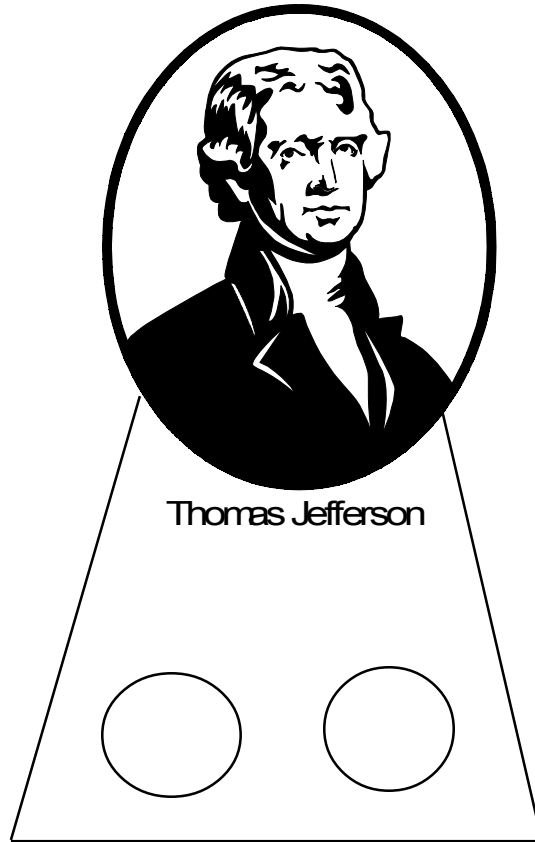
William Jefferson Clinton

Forty-Second President
1993-2001

George W. Bush
Forty-Third President
2001-

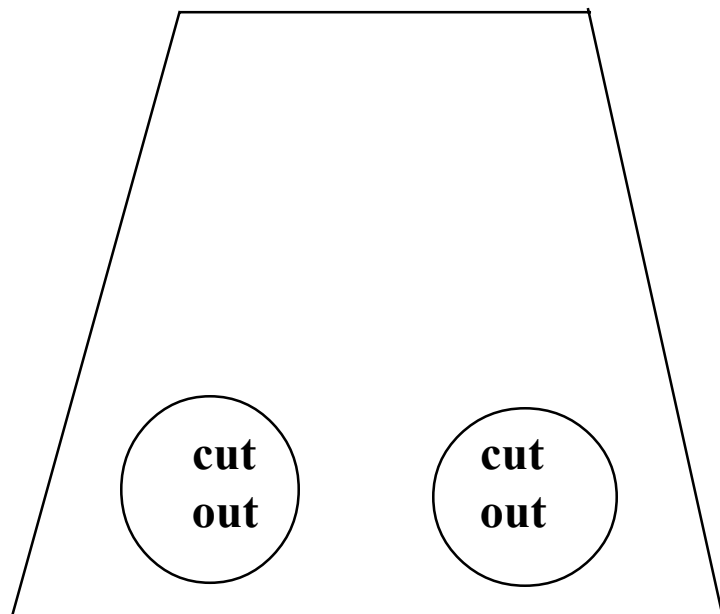
President Finger Puppets

Example:



PATTERN:

Draw and cut out on stiff paper or cardboard. Glue president picture cut-out to the top.



Presidential Fast Facts

Suggestions for use of Fast Facts: Most of the facts were obtained on-line from the White House.gov database and give students some insights into the background of each President. The questions following the Fast Facts for each President are based on that Presidency and can be used for research projects, debate stimulus, etc.

George Washington

First President

1789-1797

Fast Facts: born in Virginia; fought in French and Indian War; was member of Second Continental Congress; Commander in Chief of the Continental Army; prime mover of Constitutional Convention; elected by Electoral College as first President; set pattern for all other Presidents to follow; died of a throat infection.

Why/how did he set a pattern for all other Presidents?

John Adams

Second President

1797-1801

Fast Facts: born in Massachusetts Bay Colony; lawyer; delegate to First and Second Continental Congresses; helped negotiate peace treaty after Revolutionary War; Washington's Vice-President; first to take up residence in the White House; famous quote: "...I pray Heaven to bestow the best of Blessings on the House and all that shall hereafter inhabit it. May none but honest and wise Men ever rule under this roof."

What House is he Blessing and why?

Thomas Jefferson

Third President

1801-1809

Fast Facts: born in Virginia; lawyer but no public speaker; a writer who drafted the Declaration of Independence; believed in states rights over a strong centralized federal government; Vice-President under John Adams; acquired the Louisiana Territory from Napoleon; and died on July 4, 1826.

Jefferson was multi-talented. What other careers did he pursue?

James Madison

Fourth President

1809-1817

Fast Facts: born in Virginia; co-authored Federalist essays; considered "Father of

the Constitution;” helped frame the Bill of Rights; asked Congress to declare war on England (War of 1812); British captured the city of Washington and burnt the White House.

For what reasons did he ask Congress to declare war on England, which led to the War of 1812?

James Monroe
Fifth President
1817-1825

Fast Facts: born in Virginia; fought in Continental Army; lawyer; helped negotiate the Louisiana Purchase; Missouri Compromise; Monroe Doctrine.

- 1. The Monroe Doctrine is about encroachment on the American continents. What does encroachment mean and who specifically was not to be encroached upon?**
- 2. The Missouri Compromise basically determined which states could and could not allow slavery. about slavery. Where was slavery barred and where was it okay?**

John Quincy Adams
Sixth President
1825-1826

Fast Facts: born in Massachusetts; accomplished linguist and diarist; lawyer; Secretary of State for President Monroe; pushed for a network of highways and canals (our first infrastructures); after Presidency elected to House of Representatives; collapsed on the floor of the House and died two days later.

Adams was touted as one of the best Secretaries of State ever. What programs was he involved in that helped in the United States?

Andrew Jackson
Seventh President
1829-1837

Fast Facts: born in the Carolinas; sporadic education; lawyer; during War of 1812 he was the commander who defeated the British at the Battle of New Orleans; nicknamed “Old Hickory;” also called King Andrew I.

Why was he called “Old Hickory?”

Martin Van Buren
Eighth President
1837-1841

Fast Facts: born in New York; lawyer; Secretary of State under Andrew Jackson; nicknamed “Little Magician.”

Why was he called “Little Magician?”

William Henry Harrison

Ninth President

1841

Fast Facts: born in Virginia; studied classics, history and medicine; joined the Regular Army; frontier Indian fighter; Governor of the Indian Territory; won laurels in War of 1812; caught a cold one month after taking office and died; first President to die in office.

William Henry Harrison’s job as a Governor in the Indian Territory was to obtain Indian lands for pioneer settlement. In the light of today’s situations on various Indian Reservations was this the right thing to do? Why or why not?

John Tyler

Tenth President

1841-1845

Fast Facts: born in Virginia; lawyer; nicknamed by his detractors “His Accidency;” first Vice-President to be elevated to the office of President; had first impeachment resolution introduced in U. S. House of Representatives because he was accused of misusing veto power; “Log Cabin” bill, Texas annexed; helped create the Confederacy and was a Confederate Representative when he died.

Was John Tyler impeached and removed from the United States Presidency? Why or why not?

James K. Polk

Eleventh President

1845-1849

Fast Facts: born in North Carolina; lawyer; extended Canadian boundary along 49th parallel; Mexico ceded New Mexico and California for \$15,000,000; considered the first “dark horse” Presidential candidate; died as a result of too much hard work immediately after leaving office.

What is meant by a “dark horse” Presidential candidate?

Zachary Taylor

Twelfth President

1849-1850

Fast Facts: born in Virginia; first career soldier to attain the Presidency; a strong nationalist even though he had a home in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and a plantation in Mississippi; nicknamed “Old Rough and Ready;” told Southerners that if they tried to secede from the Union he would personally lead the Army against them; got sick during a ceremony at the Washington Monument and died five days later; second President to die in office; his only son Richard served as a general in the Confederate

Army.

Zachary Taylor had strong national feelings. What are national feelings?

Millard Fillmore

Thirteenth President

1850-1853

Fast Facts: born in New York; worked on father's farm and at 15 was apprenticed to a cloth dresser; attended a one-room school; married one of his teachers; lawyer; was Vice- President but when President Taylor died, became President; his legislative compromises postponed the Civil War; never supported President Lincoln during the war but did support President Johnson during Reconstruction.

The Fugitive Slave Act was part of Fillmore's Compromises which were pro-South. What provisions did that act contain?

Franklin Pierce

Fourteenth President

1853-1857

Fast Facts: born in New Hampshire; lawyer; served in Mexican War; his 11-year-old son was killed in a train wreck two months after he took office; Kansas-Nebraska Act repealed Missouri Compromise which caused "bleeding Kansas" and Pierce to not be elected again; purchased southern Arizona and part of southern New Mexico for \$10,000,000.

How could a President use \$10,000,000 of our tax money and purchase land on behalf of the United States?

James Buchanan

Fifteenth President

1857-1861

Fast Facts: born in Pennsylvania; lawyer; hoped for a compromise between the North and the South but developed a policy of inactivity because of earlier conflicts.

During his Presidency the Dred Scott decision was made in the Supreme Court which led directly to the Civil War. What was that decision?

Abraham Lincoln

Sixteenth President

1861-1865

Fast Facts: born in Kentucky to frontier folks; self-taught; store keeper in Illinois; captain in the Black Hawk War; lawyer; had four sons, only one of which lived to maturity; great debator which won him the chance to run for Presidency; Emancipation Proclamation; he is the most often quoted President; Civil War; assassinated at Ford's Theatre in Washington on Good Friday.

Lincoln was a self-taught man, yet quotes by him such as "...and that govern-

ment of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth” are often being used on monuments and in political speeches today in the United States and foreign countries. Why?

Andrew Johnson
Seventeenth President
1865-1869

Fast Facts: born in North Carolina, apprenticed to a tailor as a boy but ran away; opened his own tailor shop in Tennessee; Lincoln’s Vice-President; led Reconstruction efforts; impeached for supposedly violating the Tenure of Office Act by firing his Secretary of War; acquitted on terms of impeachment by one vote; after leaving office, Tennessee returned him to U.S Senate but he died only a few months later.
What were some of the procedures President Johnson put into effect to reconstruct the South after its surrender?

Ulysses S. Grant
Eighteenth President
1869-1877

Fast Facts: born in Ohio; educated at the Military Academy at West Point; fought in Mexican War; was working in his father’s leather store when Civil War began; appointed by Governor of Illinois to command an army of volunteers; very successful with volunteer army; his winning came to the attention of Lincoln who made him General-in-Chief of the Union Army; oversaw the South’s Reconstruction with military force; bankrupt when he died of throat cancer.

As General-in-Chief of the Union Army, Grant wrote out the terms of surrender. He did not allow for treason trials. What could have happened if he had allowed treason trials?

Rutherford B. Hayes
Nineteenth President
1877-1881

Fast Facts: born in Ohio; lawyer; fought and wounded in Civil War; Mark Twain campaigned for him; his election decided by Electoral Commission; won election by one vote; announced in advance he would only serve one term; retired and died 12 years later.

Why do we have the Electoral College election right after the popular vote election for our Presidency?

James A. Garfield
Twentieth President
1881

Fast Facts: born in Ohio; last of log cabin Presidents; drove canal boat teams to earn

education money; classics professor; University President; Civil War soldier; shot by embittered lawyer who had tried for a job with Garfield's administration; lay in White House for many weeks dying from infection and internal hemorrhage.

How did Alexander Graham Bell get involved in the President's shooting?

Chester A. Arthur

Twenty-First President

1881-1885

Fast Facts: born in Vermont to a Baptist preacher father; Union College; taught school; lawyer; Vice-President; enacted first general Federal immigration law.

Whom did this immigration law exclude from coming to the United States?

Why?

Grover Cleveland

Twenty-Second President

1885-1889

Twenty-Fourth President

1893-1897

Fast Facts: born in New Jersey; lawyer; only President married in the White House; first to have a child born in the White House; Interstate Commerce Act which regulated railroads.

When railroad workers in Chicago carried out a strike, Cleveland sent in Federal troops. Why would a President interfere with private businesses and their workers?

Benjamin Harrison

Twenty-Third President

1889-1893

Fast Facts: born in Ohio; lawyer; soldier; first Pan American Congress; tried to annex Hawaii; first time Congress appropriated a billion dollars for internal improvements, not war; Sherman Anti-Trust Act; was grandson of a President.

He probably was the only President to be in office when a surplus of money existed in the National Treasury. He had to get rid of it. Today, we could find many ways to reduce a surplus. How did he reduce the surplus?

William McKinley

Twenty-Fifth President

1897-1901

Fast Facts: born in Ohio, taught in a country school; soldier in Civil War; in Spanish American War gained United States' first overseas possessions (Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico); shot by an anarchist and died 8 days later.

We have owned Puerto Rico since 1898, but it has never become a state although

its citizens have all the rights of Americans. What should be done about this situation? What do the majority of Puerto Rican citizens want?

Theodore Roosevelt
Twenty-Sixth President
1901-1909

Fast Facts: born in New York City; when McKinley died became youngest President in the nation's history; his first wife and mother died on the same day; soldier in Spanish American War; began construction of the Panama Canal; established huge amounts of public use forests and lands; shot in the chest but recovered.

The stuffed "teddy bear" was named after Theodore Roosevelt. What in his character or history made that recognition appropriate?

William Howard Taft
Twenty-Seventh President
1909-1913

Fast Facts: born in Ohio; lawyer who became a Federal circuit judge; gave first cars to White House stables; weighed over 300 lbs.; Federal income tax amendment sent to the states; postal system established; Interstate Commerce Commission; only President to become Chief Justice of the United States.

What are the qualifications for Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court? Who has to approve the nominee?

Woodrow Wilson
Twenty-Eighth President
1913-1921

Fast Facts: born in Virginia; lawyer; Professor of Political Science; University President; WWI (against Germany); graduated Federal income tax; Federal Reserve Act; kept sheep on White House lawn to raise money for Red Cross during the war; tried in vain for League of Nations (United Nations Org.).

Wilson thought that international leadership by a League of Nations would keep peace in the world. What is the job of the United Nations today?

Warren G. Harding
Twenty-Ninth President
1921-1923

Fast Facts: born in Ohio; publisher of a newspaper; first to carry 60% of the **popular** vote; his friends caused scandals from enriching their pockets; died in office of a heart attack.

President Harding once said, "My...friends...they're the ones that keep me walking the floors nights!" He had appointed some of his friends to high government offices. Now, those friends were lining their pockets with riches while in

office. How could he have stopped these events?

Calvin Coolidge

Thirtieth President

1923-1929

Fast Facts: born in Vermont; lawyer; a man of very few words; his father administered oath of office by kerosene lamp in Vermont; believed in frugality in government; very inactive President; Great Depression hit at the end of his term.

What is frugality?

Herbert Hoover

Thirty-First President

1929-1933

Fast Facts: born in Iowa; son of a Quaker blacksmith; mining engineer; humanitarian; worked in China; vigorously worked to stop the Great Depression but was thought of as callous and cruel; Truman and Eisenhower used his economic knowledge in their administration.

Hoover said that caring for hungry and homeless people during the Depression was a local and voluntary responsibility. Is that callous and cruel? Why or why not?

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Thirty-Second President

1933-1945

Fast Facts: born in New York; lawyer; crippled with polio; fifth cousin to Theodore Roosevelt; led the nation through the Great Depression and World War II; his program was called the “New Deal” which included Social Security, heavier taxes on the wealthy, new controls over banks and public utilities and relief programs; spent four terms in office; died of cerebral hemorrhage near the close of the war.

Why could FDR stay President for 12 years?

Harry S. Truman

Thirty-Third President

1945-1953

Fast Facts: born in Missouri; Army Captain WWI; owned and ran a haberdashery; had very little knowledge of our war plans, but when FDR died suddenly Truman had to make crucial decisions; United Nations chartered; Fair Deal programs; Truman Doctrine; Marshall Plan; NATO; Korean Conflict.

What decisions did Truman make to end the war with Japan? Did he have any choices?

Dwight D. Eisenhower
Thirty-Fourth President
1953-1961

Fast Facts: born in Texas; graduated from West Point; career Army officer; Supreme Allied Commander in Europe; Commander of NATO; persuaded to run for President; slogan “I like Ike.”; signed truce with Korea; Cold War with Russia; sent troops to Little Rock for desegregation compliance.

Ike said we needed to maintain an adequate military strength, and if we didn’t, we would be in danger for our way of life. What does this statement mean? Is it true?

John F. Kennedy
Thirty-Fifth President
1961-1963

Fast Facts: born in Massachusetts; lawyer; ensign on PT Boat in WWII; won Pulitzer Prize in history; youngest man elected President; Peace Corps; Cuban Missile Crisis; shot and killed 1000 days into his administration.

“Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country.” This is often quoted from Kennedy’s Inaugural Address. What do you think it means to you as a citizen of the United States?

Lyndon B. Johnson
Thirty-Sixth President
1963-1969

Fast Facts: born in Texas; teacher; youngest Minority Leader in Senate history; also Majority Leader; Vice-President under Kennedy; when he became President, obtained passage of the most extensive legislative programs in the nation’s history – civil rights bill, Medicare, urban renewal beautification, and removal of obstacles to the right to vote; champion of the space race; fighting in Vietnam increased.

Johnson told the astronauts that orbited the moon, “You’ve taken...all of us, all over the world, into a new era...” What is contained in this “new era?”

Richard M. Nixon
Thirty-Seventh President
1969-1974

Fast Facts: born in California; lawyer; in the Navy during WWII; Vice-President under Eisenhower; ended Americans fighting in Vietnam; improved relations with Russia and China; ended the draft; American astronauts landed on the moon; Watergate scandal led to his resignation instead of being impeached; appointed his successor as a result of his resignation.

What was the military draft?

Gerald R. Ford
Thirty-Eighth President
1974-1977

Fast Facts: born in Nebraska; lawyer; male model; football coach; served in Navy in WWII; first Vice-President chosen to become President under the terms of the 25th Amendment; pardoned Nixon; appointed his Vice-President.

What does the 25th Amendment to the Constitution allow a President to do?

Jimmy Carter
Thirty-Ninth President
1977-1981

Fast Facts: born in Georgia, real name is James Earl Carter, Jr.; Naval officer designing submarines; conservationist; created Department of Education; Camp David agreement between Egypt and Israel; SALT II nuclear limitation treaty with Russia.

President Carter was not re-elected due to several national issues. What were three of them?

Ronald Reagan
Fortieth President
1981-1989

Fast Facts: born in Illinois; radio sports announcer; Hollywood movie actor; President of Screen Actors Guild; Governor of California; 69 days after taking office was shot by a lunatic, but he recovered; very popular due to his curbing of inflation and overhauling of income tax.

His motto was “peace through strength.” How does one increase our strength?

George H. W. Bush
Forty-First President
1989-1993

Fast Facts: born in Massachusetts; youngest pilot in the Navy in WWII; shot down several times in the Pacific; after war graduated from Yale; oil business in West Texas; Vice-President under Reagan; end of Cold War; Berlin Wall fell; Soviet Union fell; overthrew government of Panama; Desert Storm.

Bush called for American citizens to develop “a thousand points of light” to recognize charitable efforts/contributions of individuals and organizations. Why?

William J. Clinton
Forty-Second President
1993-2001

Fast Facts: born in Arkansas; lawyer; signed the Brady Bill; Family and Medical

Leave Act; revitalized the economy; impeached on influence peddling by the House of Representatives but not supported by the Senate; military involvement in many NATO actions.

What is the name he was given at birth and why was it changed?

George W. Bush

Forty-Third President

2001-

Fast Facts: born in Texas; son of former President George H. W. Bush; oil business; recently created office to support faith-based and community groups; believes that government should be involved but not overbearing.