

## Presidents' Day 8-Step Project-Based Lesson Plan (Grades 7-12)

**Objective:** To explore the leadership, decision-making, and historical impact of U.S. Presidents through an interdisciplinary STEAMS (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics, and Social Studies) approach, inspiring students to connect leadership lessons to modern challenges.

### Round Table

- ❖ **Opening Question:** What makes a great leader, and how have U.S. Presidents shaped the country's history and future?
- ❖ **Purpose:** Introduce the significance of Presidents' Day and highlight key leaders in U.S. history.
- ❖ **Materials:** Articles, videos, and speeches from notable presidents, such as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and modern presidents.

### Reflection Point

- ❖ **Discussion Questions:**
  - What qualities define a great president?
  - How did the decisions of past presidents impact their time and ours?
- ❖ **Materials:** Excerpts from famous speeches (e.g., Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt's Fireside Chats, Kennedy's Inaugural Address).

## Knowledge Setting

<b>Science (S): Presidential Health and Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ <b>Objective:</b> Study how medical and technological advancements during a president's term impacted their leadership (e.g., FDR's use of radio, modern health diagnostics for presidents).</li><li>❖ <b>Activity:</b> Research how health challenges influenced decisions and public perception of presidents.</li></ul>
<b>Technology (T): Campaign Strategies Over Time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ <b>Objective:</b> Investigate the role of technology in presidential campaigns, from newspapers to social media.</li><li>❖ <b>Activity:</b> Create a presentation comparing campaign strategies across different eras.</li></ul>
<b>Engineering (E): Innovations During Presidential Terms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ <b>Objective:</b> Explore major engineering projects initiated by presidents, such as the Hoover Dam or the Interstate Highway System.</li><li>❖ <b>Activity:</b> Design a model or blueprint for a modern infrastructure project inspired by past presidential initiatives.</li></ul>
<b>Arts (A): Portraits of Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ <b>Objective:</b> Examine how presidential portraits and propaganda art conveyed power and leadership.</li><li>❖ <b>Activity:</b> Create a modern presidential portrait or campaign poster using mixed media or digital tools.</li></ul>

<p><b>Mathematics (M): Problem Solving Through Numbers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Objective:</b> Analyze historical budgets from presidential terms to understand economic priorities.</li> <li>❖ <b>Activity:</b> Create a pie chart showing the allocation of resources during a key president's term and compare it to today's budgets.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social Studies (SS): The Legacy of Leadership</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Objective:</b> Investigate the historical context and legacy of key presidential decisions (e.g., Emancipation Proclamation, New Deal, Civil Rights Act).</li> <li>❖ <b>Activity:</b> Develop a timeline or infographic highlighting how these decisions influenced the nation.</li> </ul>

## Project

### Progress Map for Project Delivery

- ❖ **Week 1: Project Proposal**
  - Students create a written proposal outlining the focus of their project and community benefit.
- ❖ **Week 2: Project Approval and Community Engagement Plan**
  - Students submit their proposals and outline how their work will positively impact the community, ensuring alignment with the project's learning objectives and addressing real-world needs.
- ❖ **Week 3: Research Progress Update**
  - Students conduct research and gather data related to their chosen focus area.
- ❖ **Week 4: Draft of Final Project**
  - Students compile their findings into a draft report or presentation.
- ❖ **Week 5: Final Project Refinement and Approval for Implementation**
  - Final feedback is provided, and the projects are presented at a community event involving local leaders and stakeholders.

### Science (S): Presidential Health and Medical Advances

- ❖ **Project Example:** Research the medical conditions and treatments of past U.S. presidents (e.g., Franklin D. Roosevelt's polio, John F. Kennedy's Addison's disease). Create a public health awareness campaign comparing historical treatments to modern

	<p>medicine. Partner with a local health center or library to display findings.</p>
<p><b>Technology (T): The Role of Media in Presidential Elections</b></p>	<p>❖ <b>Project Example:</b> Analyze how presidential campaigns evolved from radio and TV ads to social media. Design an interactive <b>mock election campaign</b> using digital tools like Canva or Adobe Spark, showcasing modern communication strategies. Host a <b>community voting simulation event</b> to engage local students.</p>
<p><b>Engineering (E): Presidential Infrastructure Projects</b></p>	<p>❖ <b>Project Example:</b> Study major infrastructure projects initiated by U.S. presidents (e.g., Eisenhower’s Interstate Highway System, Roosevelt’s New Deal). Develop a <b>proposal for a modern infrastructure project</b> that could improve local transportation or sustainability. Present the proposal to a city planning board or community group.</p>
<p><b>Arts (A): Presidential Portraits and Symbolism</b></p>	<p>❖ <b>Project Example:</b> Examine the artistic style and symbolism of official presidential portraits. Create a modern presidential portrait or campaign poster using digital or traditional media, reflecting leadership values and public service. Partner with a local museum or library for a Presidents’ Day art showcase.</p>

<b>Mathematics (M): Presidential Budget and Economic Policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Project Example:</b> Analyze a past president's economic policy and budget allocation. Create a visual breakdown of spending priorities (e.g., defense, education, healthcare) and compare it to today's federal budget. Develop community discussion materials for a local debate or presentation.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Studies (SS): Mapping Presidential Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Project Example:</b> Develop an interactive map tracing the key decisions, policies, and travels of a U.S. president. Highlight historical events such as the signing of major laws, diplomatic visits, or campaign trails. Partner with a local historical society or museum to display and discuss findings.</li> </ul>

### Community Involvement

- ❖ **Objective:** Partner with local historical societies, museums, or civic organizations to host a Presidents' Day showcase where students present their projects.
- ❖ **Activity:** Invite local leaders or historians to provide feedback and discuss the relevance of presidential leadership in modern times.

### Assessment

- ❖ **Objective:** Evaluate projects based on creativity, research quality, and interdisciplinary connections.
- ❖ **Methods:** Peer, community and teacher evaluations, including a community showcase of completed projects.

## Feedback Loop

- ❖ **Activity:** Reflect on what leadership lessons from U.S. Presidents can teach us about solving modern challenges.
- ❖ **Journal Prompt:** "What qualities of past U.S. Presidents resonate with me, and how can I apply those qualities to make a positive impact in my community?"

## Resume Integration

- ❖ Students can list their project experience under research, teamwork, public speaking, and creative problem-solving, emphasizing their understanding of civic engagement and other relative skill sets.

For more 8-Step Project-Based Lesson Plans check out our website at [www.steamsinitiative.org](http://www.steamsinitiative.org)

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