

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

Science (S): Presidential Health and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Objective: 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).❖ Activity: Research how health challenges influenced decisions and public perception of presidents.
Technology (T): Campaign Strategies Over Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Objective: Investigate the role of technology in presidential campaigns, from newspapers to social media.❖ Activity: Create a presentation comparing campaign strategies across different eras.
Engineering (E): Innovations During Presidential Terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Objective: Explore major engineering projects initiated by presidents, such as the Hoover Dam or the Interstate Highway System.❖ Activity: Design a model or blueprint for a modern infrastructure project inspired by past presidential initiatives.
Arts (A): Portraits of Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Objective: Examine how presidential portraits and propaganda art conveyed power and leadership.❖ Activity: Create a modern presidential portrait or campaign poster using mixed media or digital tools.

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

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>Technology (T): The Role of Media in Presidential Elections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Project Example: Analyze how presidential campaigns evolved from radio and TV ads to social media. Design an interactive mock election campaign using digital tools like Canva or Adobe Spark, showcasing modern communication strategies. Host a community voting simulation event to engage local students.
<p>Engineering (E): Presidential Infrastructure Projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Project Example: Study major infrastructure projects initiated by U.S. presidents (e.g., Eisenhower’s Interstate Highway System, Roosevelt’s New Deal). Develop a proposal for a modern infrastructure project that could improve local transportation or sustainability. Present the proposal to a city planning board or community group.
<p>Arts (A): Presidential Portraits and Symbolism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Project Example: 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>Mathematics (M): Presidential Budget and Economic Policies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Project Example: 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.
<p>Social Studies (SS): Mapping Presidential Impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Project Example: 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.

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

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