


USA PRESIDENTS

Research Unit

PRINT VERSION

What are some responsibilities that the U.S. president has?



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My U.S. Presidents Research Journal Instructions

What You Will Need:
U.S. Presidents Journal for each student

Directions:
Print out the pages of "My U.S. Presidents Research Journal" to each student on the 4th day of the unit for after all the text feature lessons have been completed. Students will need to cut their papers in half and staple them together in the same order that they appear on the page to keep them in the same order that they appear on the page. You will type your own questions if you'd like. Just type right into the text boxes. If you would like to save your changes, be sure you are using Adobe PDF. Your internet browser, rename the file, and save it. A pair of students choose a state to research by using the map. Cards and drawing one randomly. This will be their assigned state to research. Each student will research the history and duties of U.S. Presidents first. Then have students come together with their partner to share what they learned. Then they can add each other's information from their journals for their report and map. If a student misses a day, they will need to make sure to get caught up with their journal.

Informational Text Features

the text features found in informational text and the information you'll need about your text. The definition for each text feature below.

Andrew Johnson 	Ulysses S. Grant 
Rutherford B. Hayes 	James A. Garfield 
Chester A. Arthur 	Grover Cleveland 
Benjamin Harrison 	William McKinley 


Sample Unit Outline

Here is a sample unit calendar that you can use as a guide during the unit. Your unit may differ depending on your own schedule and which journal version you choose to use. Have students focus on 1-2 questions per day in their journals as you see fit.

M	T	W	Th	F
Use the Table of Contents and a Lesson or Finding Credible & Reliable Sources Online Lesson	Using Title and Headings together Journals Catch/preview text features	How does someone become the president of the U.S.? What are some important components of a Presidential election?	Students put together Journals Catch/preview text features	What do I already know about U.S. presidents?
Write about Presidents (day)	What do I already know about my president?	Where and when was my president born?	What was my president's childhood like?	What are some responsibilities the president has?
Read text in a report	When was he president? What number president was he?	What were some of my president's political stances?	What were some of my president's accomplishments?	
Ask	Report & mask work day	Report & mask work day	Present to class and President Fair	

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What are some privileges that the U.S. president has?



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Lower & Upper Grades



Unit Outline & Lesson Plans for Easy Planning

Sample Unit Outline

Here is a sample unit calendar that you can use as a guide during the unit. Your unit may differ depending on your own schedule and which journal version you choose to use. Have students focus on 1-2 questions per day in their journals as you see fit.

M	T	W	Th	F
Assign partners Draw presidents Send parent letter	Using Table of Contents and Index Lesson or Using the Internet for Research Lesson	Using Table of Contents and Index Lesson Finding Credible & Reliable Sources Online Lesson	Students put together journals Catch up/refresh text features	What do I need to know about U.S. presidents?
Why did the U.S. decide to have presidents instead of kings? How was this decided and by whom?	What are the requirements to be a U.S. President?	How does someone become the president of the U.S.? What are some important components of a presidential election?	What branch of government does the president run and how?	What are some responsibilities the president has?
What are some privileges the president has?	My favorite thing about U.S. presidents Catch up day	What do I already know about U.S. presidents?	Where and how do presidents live?	What was my president's childhood?
Who were my president's important family members?	What job did my president have before he became president?	What is the most interesting fact about my president?	What is the most interesting fact about my president?	What is the most interesting fact about my president?
Finish journals Report work day	Report & mask work day	Report & mask work day	Report & mask work day	Report & mask work day

Unit Preparation

Pages to Copy:

- President Cards:** These will be put in a basket and drawn out by the students to assign each pair of students a state. All past and current presidents are included with a picture of each one.
- Parent Letter:** This letter will be sent home on the first day of the unit. It will inform parents on the unit and ask them to send their student to school with informational texts about U.S. presidents. It will also inform them about the President Fair.
- President Fair Invitation:** This is an invitation that will be sent home with students at the end of the unit to invite their parents to the President Fair.
- Table of Contents & Index Worksheet:** To be used with the Table of Contents & Index Mini Lesson.
- Other Text Features Worksheet:** To be used with the Other Text Features Mini Lesson.
- Using the Internet for Research Worksheet:** To be used with the Using the Internet for Research Mini Lesson.
- Finding Credible & Reliable Sources Worksheet:** To be used with the Finding Credible & Reliable Sources and Citing the Source Mini Lesson.

Table of Contents & Index Mini Lesson

You Will Need:

- Table of Contents & Index Worksheet
- An informational text that includes a table of contents and index (any topic will do)
- A presidents book with large text and pictures would be ideal.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Have students come to the floor. Tell the students that you will be showing them how to use two text features that can be found in informational text. These text features will help them find the information they are looking for in the text.
- Open the book to the table of contents and show it to the class. Ask the students if they know what this page is called. (Call on students to answer!) Then tell the students that this page is called the table of contents.
- Show the students that the table of contents is a short, 1-2 page description of the topics found in the book. Show the students how it is sorted by page number in the order that the information is found in. Explain that it shows the broad topics that are covered in the book.
- Ask the students if there is a broad topic they would like to find in this book. Call on several students and choose one that is relevant. Model how to find the topic using the table of contents. Then ask the students to do the same with the table of contents.

Other Text Features Mini Lesson

You Will Need:

- Other Text Features Worksheet
- An informational text for at least every 2 students

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Hand out the Other Text Features worksheet. Have students get out their informational texts for reference.
- Review each of the following text features as a class. For each word, tell the students the definition and write it on the board. The students will write the definition on their worksheet. Then students will need to find that text feature in their books before the class moves on to the next word. The definitions are as follows:
 - Table of Contents:** Defines the broad topics discussed in the book in the order they are found. Tells you the page number.
 - Index:** Alphabetical list of specific topics in the book. Tells you the page number.
 - Glossary:** A tool to define words used in the book. The book or chapter is called at the next section will be defined.

Using the Internet for Research Mini Lesson

You Will Need:

- Using the Internet for Research Worksheet
- A computer or tablet that can be projected (on a screen or TV) for the whole class to view

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Have students come to the floor. Tell the students that you will be showing them how to use the internet for research.
- Open a kid friendly search engine, such as kiddle.com. Tell students that they will be using a kid friendly search engine for their president research. Explain that using a search engine that is made for kids rather than Google will help them search for information safely.
- Ask students if they know how to use a search engine. (Call on students to answer!)
- Ask students if they think they should type in an entire question into the search box. (Students raise hands if they agree.) Tell students that typing an entire question is not usually the best way to use a search engine. They should use specific keywords when searching.
- Practice coming up with keywords for searching the following question:
 - Model in search: Who was Abraham Lincoln? (135,600,000 search results on Kiddle!)
 - This is too broad of a question for internet research. Sample keywords could be Abraham Lincoln biography (4,500,000 results), Abraham Lincoln presidency (4,500,000 results), Abraham Lincoln freed slaves (250,000 results), Abraham Lincoln birth date (916,000 results), etc.
- Tell students that when researching, they should always use more than one source to ensure the information is accurate. If they find conflicting information between sources, they should continue to research until a common fact is found and determined to be accurate. This takes patience, but is an important part of researching!
 - Model in search: China population
 - The World Factbook states that China's population is 1,379,302,771 (as of July 2017). Worldometers states that China's population is 1,414,903,277 and increasing as this is a live counter. World Population Review states that China's population is 1,418,899,661 (as of October 31, 2018).
 - Use this case to discuss the best of asking the question, the number of results, and indicating that the number is as of the date found.
- Hand out the Using the Internet for Research worksheet. Walk around and assist students as answer the questions. Check for their understanding as they work. If they need additional assistance you can review the information again as a class.

Finding Credible & Reliable Sources Online and Citing the Source Mini Lesson

You Will Need:

- Finding Credible & Reliable Sources Online Worksheet
- A computer or tablet that can be projected (on a screen or TV) for the whole class to view

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Hand out the Finding Credible & Reliable Sources Online worksheet.
- Discuss the contents of the worksheet with students. Each tip included on the worksheet will help students with their online research.
- Tell students that including what sources they use for their research is important to give credit to the author. (Depending on the grade level of your class, you may choose how you'd like student to credit sources differently.)
- Students are not expected to credit sources with bibliographic information until 6th grade (according to CCSS). Students in 4th and 5th grade can easily include the name of the website they used as a way to credit sources.
 - For example, with this website: <http://www.kidzone.ws/dinosaurs/> students may use KidZone as the way to credit the source.
- Practice searching for websites and how to credit them.

President Paper Plate Mask & Presidential Speech Report

You Will Need:

- Sturdy paper plates
- Acrylic paints
- Colored paper
- Popsicle sticks or yarn

Paper Plate Mask Directions:

- Give each student their own paper plate. Take out acrylic paints, colored paper, and any other materials you would like students to use.
- Each student will decorate their plate to look like the face of their assigned president. Students should make this their BEST artwork and take their time with their painting.
- Students should carefully cut out holes for the eyes.
- Finally, the students will attach a popsicle stick to the side of their mask so they can hold it up to their face. Alternatively, you could use yarn to tie the mask around their face.

Presidential 'Speech' Report:

- Students will use the information they found while researching to write a short report about their president, which will be their "presidential speech". They should include all the information from the assigned president section of their research journal.
- Students will write their rough draft on regular lined paper. Students will peer edit their papers (or you may edit them). Then they will write their final draft on the My Presidential Speech page from this document.

The unit sample outline gives you an idea of how you could implement the unit into your schedule. (However, feel free to implement the activities however you see fit!) We have included lesson plans to prep your students for their research projects.

Parent Letter and Invitation to Keep Parents Involved




Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are starting a new unit about U.S. presidents. Students will begin researching what the president's duties are as well as an assigned president using informational text. Your child's president is _____. If possible, please send your student with a book about this president and/or a book about U.S. presidents. These books could be from the public library, the school library, or from home. We will begin using the texts on _____. If you are unable to help them find a book, we will make sure there are still texts available for your student to use.

After students have finished their research, they will create a paper plate mask of their president and write a "presidential speech" report about their president. This will be presented to the class. Students may dress up in a costume from home if they'd like, but it is NOT required. After the presentations, we will have a President Fair in which parents and other classes will be invited to see the student's work.

Please let me know if you have any questions!



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YOU'RE INVITED!

You are invited to our President Fair!
Students will be showcasing their own president masks created using their research.
Information is below!

Date: _____

Location: _____

Time: _____

Details: _____



We Hope to See You There!

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We have included a letter to parents and a President Fair invitation to help keep your students' parents and guardians involved and informed. You can type the dates and your name right into the letter.

Differentiated Student Worksheets to Teach Each Element of the Research Project

Name: _____

Using the Table of Contents and Index

Fill in the information about the Table of Contents and the Index in the boxes below.

The table of Contents is found at the _____ of the book.
It is used to _____.

The Index is found at the _____ of the book.
It is used to _____.

Name: _____

Examine the Table of Contents

It is important to understand the text features in order to understand the information within the text. Examine the Table of Contents and answer the questions below.

All About Bats

Bat Food	2
Bat Babies	4
Bat Homes	5
Predators	8
Index	12

_____ page will you find information about _____?
_____ information will you find on page _____?
_____ can you find the index on page _____?
_____ the index used for?

Name: _____

Using the Table of Contents and Index

Fill in the information about the Table of Contents and the Index in the boxes below.

The Table of Contents is found at the _____ of the book.
The Table of Contents is _____ long.
It is used to _____.

_____ ex is found at the _____ of the book.
_____ ex is _____ long.
_____ d to _____.

Using the Table of Contents & Index

The table of contents and index are both tools that you will find in informational text. Write each criteria below where it belongs in the Venn Diagram.

Table of Contents

- found at the beginning of the book
- found at the end of the book
- helps you find information
- 1-2 pages long
- lots of pages
- lists topics and where they can be found
- sorted in the order found in the book
- sorted in alphabetical order
- broad topics
- specific topics

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Using the Internet for Research

Practice coming up with keywords for the following research questions. Remember: be specific! Think about what it is you'd want to know if you were researching.

1. What is the state of Florida like?

2. What are tornados?

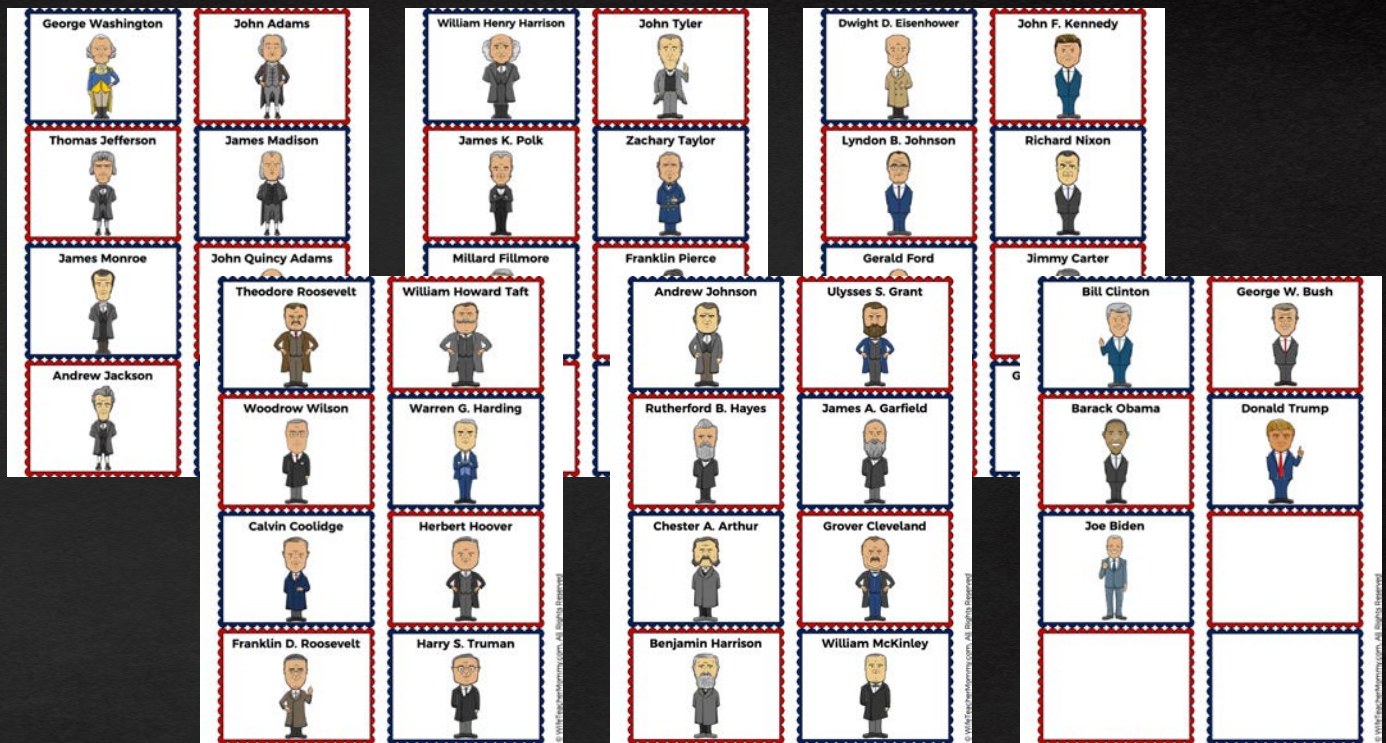
3. What are the planets in the solar system like?

4. Where are the world's ecosystems?

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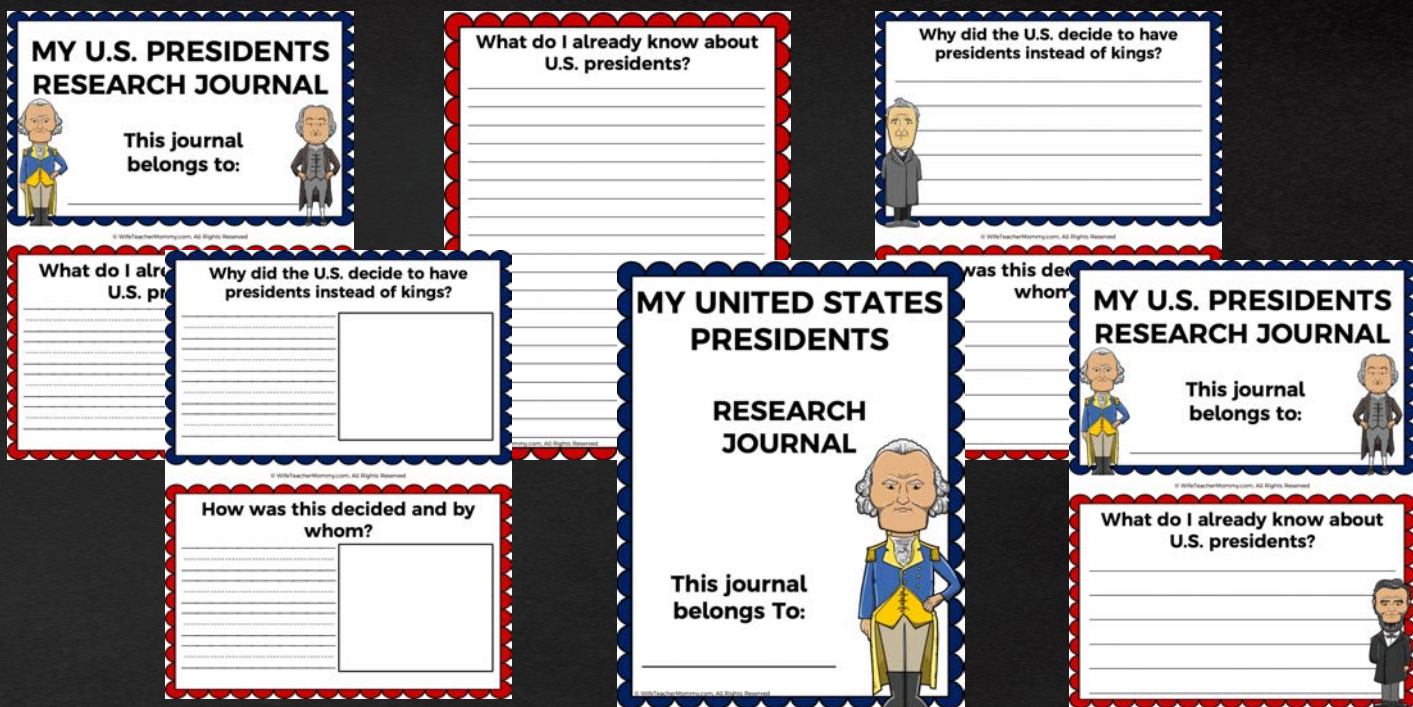
Differentiated student worksheets are included for each mini lesson. We have created these worksheets to help your students of all ages learn each element of a research project in a simple easy to understand way.

United States President Cards to Randomly Assign a President to Each Student



We have created cards representing the 45 presidents and have included them for you to print, cut, and mix in a basket. Students will randomly choose which president they will research.

Multiple ½ Page and Full Sheet Student Research Journal Pages to Reach all Levels of Learners



The student research journal pages include differentiated pages of research prompts for students covering each president. We have also included blank pages to create your own prompts.

