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# Power of the People

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## Grades 2 and 3



### OBJECTIVES

Students will define the term “democracy.” Students will identify important accomplishments in the lives of the presidents of the United States.



### CLASS TIME

Five 30- to 45-minute sessions



### NATIONAL STANDARDS

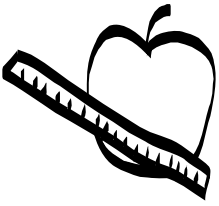
This lesson plan reflects some of the national standards of learning as defined by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), the National Center for History in the Schools (NCHS), Center for Civic Education (CCE), the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE), and the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). These standards are listed below:

- Social Studies: Values and Principles of Democracy (Civics)
- Social Studies: Roles of the Citizen (Civics)
- Social Studies: The History of the United States (U.S. History)
- Language Arts: Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
- Language Arts: Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).
- Technology: Technology Research Tools



### MATERIALS

- Copies of the worksheets attached to this lesson plan (see “Preparations”)
- From the Presidential \$1 Coin Lesson Plan Resource Center at [www.usmint.gov/kids/pres\\$1coin/LP/resources](http://www.usmint.gov/kids/pres$1coin/LP/resources):
  - Program overview
  - Images of coins for four presidents
  - Information for the same four presidents from the links provided
- 1 overhead projector
- Chart paper
- Markers



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- 1 copy of an age-appropriate text that provides basic information about democracy. For example:
  - *D is for Democracy: A Citizen’s Alphabet* by Elissa Grodin
  - *Power to the People* by Kevin Cunningham
  - *The Voice of the People: American Democracy in Action (The American Story)* by Betsy Maestro and Giulio Maestro
- Copies of texts that provide basic historical information about American presidents. For example:
  - *Encyclopedia of the Presidents and Their Times* by David Rubel
  - *Lives of the Presidents: Fame, Shame (and What the Neighbors Thought)* by Kathleen Krull
  - *The Presidents of the United States* by Simon Adams
- Computers with Internet access (optional)
- Poster board (1 per group)



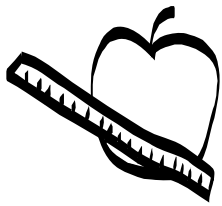
## PREPARATIONS

- Make copies of the following:
  - “Power of the People” worksheet (1 per student)
  - “Presidential Facts” worksheet (1 per group)
  - “Presidential Presentations—Roles” worksheet (1 per student)
  - “Presidential Presentations—Rubric” (1 per student)
- Make overhead transparencies of four presidential \$1 coin obverses from the Presidential \$1 Coin Lesson Plan Resource Center.
- Locate an appropriate text that provides basic historical information about democracy (see examples under “Materials”).
- Locate appropriate texts that provide basic historical information about American presidents (see examples under “Materials”).
- Arrange to use the school computer lab for one session.
- Bookmark appropriate Internet sites that contain biographical information about American presidents.



## GROUPINGS

- Whole group
- Small groups
- Independent work



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# Power of the People

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## TERMS AND CONCEPTS

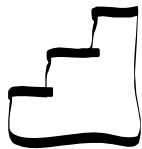
- Obverse (front)
- Dollar
- Democracy
- Vote
- Accomplishments



## BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Students should have a basic knowledge of:

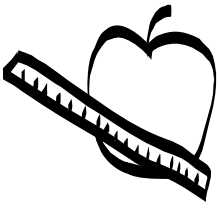
- President of the United States
- The term “king”
- Government
- Jobs and responsibilities
- Circulating coins



## STEPS

### Session 1

1. Display a transparency of any presidential \$1 coin obverse. Ask the students to examine it and tell you what they know about it. The students should be able to identify this as the front of a coin and that it depicts a particular president. Tell the students that the Presidential \$1 Coin Program began in 2007 to commemorate each of our nation’s presidents. The program calls for four new coin designs to be released per year in the order the presidents served the country. Point out to the students that each obverse in the series depicts a different president and shows the years the president served in office and the number of that presidency.
2. Display a two-column chart with one column labeled “President.” Ask the students to brainstorm some of the jobs and responsibilities of the president. List the student responses under the “President” heading. Write the heading “King” at the top of the second column. Ask the students to identify some of the jobs and responsibilities of a king and record student responses in the column.
3. Explain to the students that they will be learning about one type of government called a democracy. Distribute the “Power of the People” worksheet. Introduce the students to the selected text about democracy in America. As a group, preview the text. Explain to the students that they will write notes about democracy on the worksheet as the text is read aloud.



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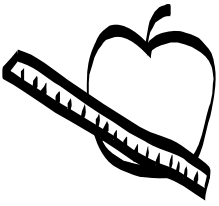
# Power of the People

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4. After each section of the text, ask the students to tell important facts learned about democracy and model completing the worksheet. Give students time to fill in the web on the worksheet after each section. During the reading, attend to unfamiliar vocabulary and concepts.
5. After concluding your selected text, review the facts about democracy from the worksheet. Create a class definition of democracy and write this definition on chart paper to be displayed. The definition should include the two key components of “government by the people” and “people voting to make choices about leaders and laws.” Review with the students the idea that America is a democratic government led by the President.
6. Collect the worksheets.
7. Throughout the school day, give the students the opportunity to practice voting about normal classroom activities (for example, recess activity, lunch choice) to reinforce the concept of democracy.

## Sessions 2 and 3

1. Display a transparency of a presidential \$1 coin obverse. Review with the students the material covered in the first session, including the class definition of democracy.
2. Review the name of the president pictured on the coin. Ask the students to recall any other information they may know about this president. Follow this same procedure for three additional presidential \$1 coin obverses.
3. Tell the students that they will be acting out a key feature of democracy: voting. Explain to the students that they will be researching American presidents in groups, presenting information to their peers, and then voting for the most important accomplishments of the presidents based on what they learn.
4. Divide the class into groups of four. Allow each group to vote on which president they will research.
5. Distribute the “Presidential Facts” worksheet to each student. Each group will work to find out basic information about its designated president and complete the “Presidential Facts” worksheet. Remind the students that they are looking for the facts that make their president important to America.
6. Take the students to the computer lab.
7. Give the students time to conduct research and complete their research worksheets. This research can be conducted using the Internet or available texts.
8. Collect the worksheets.



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# Power of the People

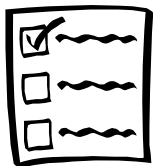
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## Session 4

1. Distribute the “Presidential Facts” worksheets to each group from the previous session.
2. Tell the students that they will be preparing a presentation for classmates about the president they researched. Using the “Presidential Presentation Roles” worksheet, explain each of the roles to the students and assign the roles. Each group member will have a designated role and serve as a Researcher as well.
3. Review all of the expectations and responsibilities for the presentations listed on the “Presidential Presentation Roles” worksheet.
4. Give the students time to work in their groups to prepare and practice their presentations. Provide as much guidance and modeling as needed.
5. Make an overhead transparency of each of the “Presidential Facts” worksheets for use in Session 5.

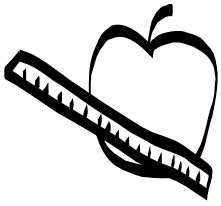
## Session 5

1. Review the definition of democracy created in Session 1, and other facts learned about democracy.
2. Allow one group to give its presentation. Encourage the other students to write positive comments about the presentation.
3. Display the group’s “Presidential Facts” overhead transparency. Ask the students to discuss which of the presidential accomplishments they think are the most important and why.
4. Take a vote by hand count of the president’s most important accomplishment.
5. Have the other students share their positive comments about the presentation.
6. Repeat steps 2 through 5 for each of the groups.
7. Review the importance of each of the accomplishments chosen by vote.
8. Tell the students that instead of accepting their votes, the most important accomplishment will be selected by the king (teacher) and that their votes do not count. Discuss with the students how they feel about having their power of voting taken away.
9. Announce the students’ voted choice. Discuss with students the differences between a president and king, what they learned through this experience, and why voting is so important to democracy.



## ASSESSMENT

- Take anecdotal notes about whether the students have met the lesson objectives.
- Use the Presentation Checklist on the “Presidential Presentation Roles” worksheet to evaluate whether the students have met the lesson objectives.



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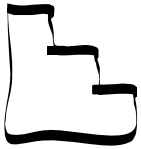
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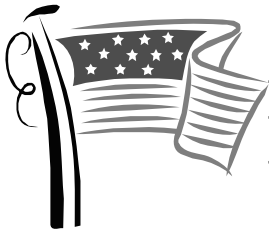
## ENRICHMENT/EXTENSIONS

- Expand the activity to include other American presidents and/or other influential Americans.
- Allow students to participate in a debate about the accomplishments of different presidents.
- Research other types of governments.
- Graph the results of the presidential accomplishments vote.



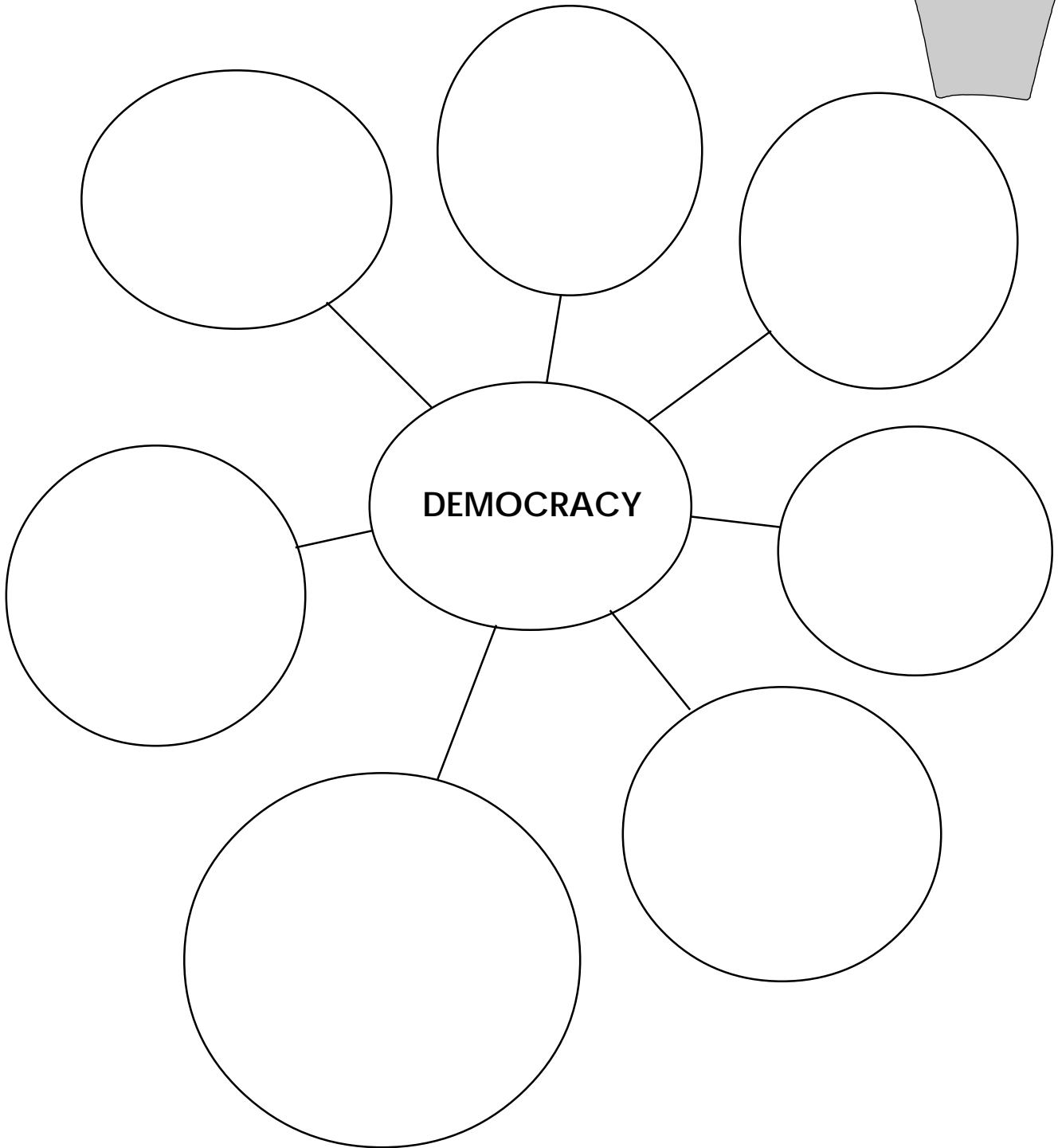
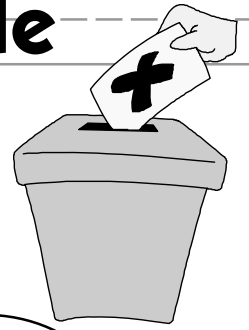
## DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING OPTIONS

- Allow students to perform the “presidential presentation roles” in pairs.
- Provide research texts and Internet sites at various instructional reading levels.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Power of the People





Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Presidential Facts

Name of President: \_\_\_\_\_

Years President: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Presidency: \_\_\_\_\_

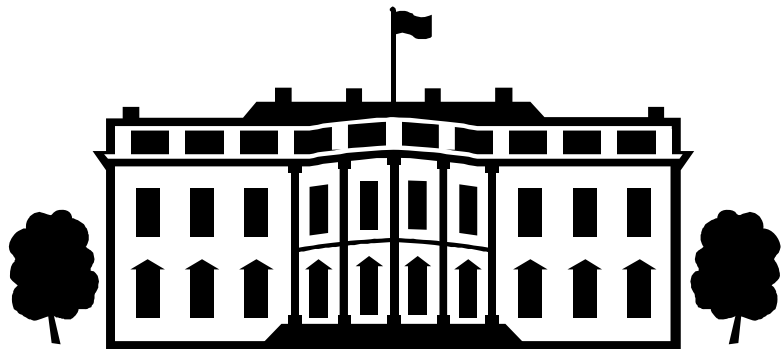
Home State: \_\_\_\_\_

Events in America during this president's term(s):

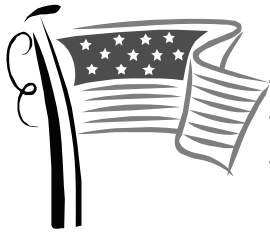
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Accomplishments this president was known for:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_







Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Presidential Presentations

## Roles

### PRESENTATION ROLES



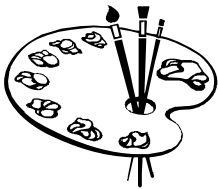
**Researchers:** All group members will help gather and prepare information for the presentations.



**President:** You will act as the president during the presentation. You will introduce yourself and share basic information about your background.



**Press Secretary:** You will present the key accomplishments of your president, explain why he was the best American president, and answer questions from the reporter during the presentation.



**Designer:** You will design and create a poster illustrating the president and highlighting key facts. Your peers may refer to this poster as they decide on their vote.



**Reporter:** You will prepare and ask questions of the press secretary during the presentation.



### PRESENTATION CHECKLIST

Be sure your group's presentation:

- Lists several accomplishments
- Includes a neat poster
- Includes questions from the reporter and answers from the press secretary



Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Presidential Presentations

## Rubric

| CATEGORY           | 4  | 3  | 2  | 1   | TOTALS |
|--------------------|--|--|--|---|--------|
| <b>INFORMATION</b> | All important information given. All correct.  | All important information given. Mostly correct.                       | Most important information given. Some errors.                         | Little important information given. Errors.                   |        |
| <b>POSTER</b>      | All important information given. All correct. Neat and organized.                    | All important information given. Mostly correct. Neat and organized.   | Most important information given. Some errors. Needed more time spent. | Little information given. Errors. Rushed or messy appearance. |        |
| <b>QUESTIONS</b>   | Very well prepared. Correct information. Based on other presidents' accomplishments. | Well prepared. Correct information. Based mainly on group's president. | Simple questions. Same questions for each president.                   | Not prepared. Questions not related to president.             |        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>       |  |  |  |   |        |

**COMMENTS**