

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program



Abraham Lincoln and Presidential Leadership



- Student Activity: Eloquence and Empathy
- Student Activity: May I Have His Address?
- Student Activity: Two Presidents, Four Years and Six Traits
- Student Activity: Presidential Legacy, Leadership and Precedents
- Post Reprint: “‘No one talks about that. No, no no!’ At a reunion of presidential descendants, don’t ask about Trump.”

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The Post's Newspaper In Education (NIE) program and Digital Department present this special issue of the online curriculum guides that provide teachers with suggested activities, reprints and other resources to use Washington Post-created coverage in print, digital, visual and podcast formats.

Presidential is a series of 44 podcasts, one for each president, hosted by Post reporter Lillian Cunningham. She interviewed historians, biographers, reporters and other experts for the podcasts that were posted one per week. They include our knowledge of the presidents and their time periods, influences on their personalities and skills, and contributions each made to presidential leadership.

Some of the suggested activities indicate time markers; others do not. We have provided approximate times to begin and end listening to certain segments. The exact time can vary depending on the device used or the length of ads served on different streaming sites. Transcripts for all podcasts are also available at wapo.st/presidential.

Some teachers have 45-minute class periods, others much longer blocks. Some of you will use the podcasts with KidsPost readers, others with high school or college students. We have tried to vary the questions, activities and reprints to give you flexibility for in-class and homework assignments and discussion. They will serve as springboards as you use the 44 Presidential podcasts to meet your educational goals.



Eloquence and Empathy



Abraham Lincoln, self-educated and encouraged by his stepmother to read books, is noted for his eloquence — in written and oral expression. He wrote and read poems from a young age. He would borrow books to read classic literature as well as the Bible. The plays of Shakespeare were among the works that he read more than once — or twice. He cared about what he said and how he said it.

1. Listen to the first 13 minutes of Presidential 16: Abraham Lincoln. His hand and his pen. Lillian Cunningham, host of the Presidential podcasts, interviews Michelle Krowl, Civil War and Reconstruction specialist at the Library of Congress, and Lincoln biographer Doris Kearns Goodwin.
 - a. What is the emphasis of this episode on Lincoln?
 - b. What influence did his stepmother have on him?
 - c. What influence did his father have on him?
 - d. What does the poem he wrote when he was very young reveal about him?
2. Lincoln grew up in the American frontier. Through books he taught himself. What does this balance between frontier living and his love of literature reveal about the young Abe Lincoln?
3. What is “empathy”?
4. Historian and biographer Doris Kearns Goodwin found President Lincoln to be the embodiment of empathy. (Listen approx. 44- to 48-minutes time markers.) Give two examples of Lincoln exhibiting empathy.
5. Kearns states:

“I think what I saw in Lincoln that becomes almost a trademark attribute that I look for in my other presidents is that sense of empathy and humanity — that, somehow, he had this internal — from the time he was a child. I think — ability to feel other people’s feelings. ... But it comes from that fundamental empathy, which I now mark, I think as one of the most important traits I’m looking for in any leader that I study.”

Why might the ability to empathize be a valuable leadership trait?
6. Have recent presidents exhibited empathy? Give an example of one. Support with articles from the newspaper or online news sources. (Why do you consider these to be reliable sources?)
7. Has a recent president failed to exhibit empathy? Support with articles, video news clips, White House press releases or other documentation.
8. Explain why you do/do not consider empathy to be an important trait for a president to exhibit.

9. There is no diary to draw insights into Lincoln's person. There are his choices in reading, his letters and speeches that provide glimpses into his thinking and approaches to leadership. Listen approx. from 16- to 39-minute time code.

What do each of these tell us about Lincoln?

Blind memo
Conkling letter
Emancipation Proclamation
First Inaugural Address
Gettysburg Address
Second Inaugural Address
War letters

10. Answer one of the following questions in a short essay. Support your response with examples from the podcast and Lincoln's writings.
- Which of Lincoln's writings do you think is most applicable to today's society?
 - Does Lincoln's blend of humor and elegant expression show his understanding of the American people?
 - Do you think Lincoln's eloquent language is for past generations? That today's Americans prefer/require plain speaking?
 - In what ways does the body of a president's writing (inaugural address, required messages to Congress, speeches, letters, tweets) reveal character, political positions, philosophy and leadership?
 - Washington Post* journalist and presidential author Bob Woodward noted in the Presidential initial podcast that presidents need to use different leadership traits in different situations. Sometimes, for example, they need to be tough. Other times, they need to understand how to cajole and compromise. Having listened to one or more Presidential episodes, what are two other important leadership qualities that you think presidents should possess?

May I Have His Address?

Yes you may. They are all public records. The inaugural ceremony with the oath of office being given at noon, is an acknowledgement and celebration of the peaceful transfer of power. Some presidents are remembered for the length of their address, others for the new direction they will take the country, and others for the eloquence of ideological expression.

1. Read the text provided from the inaugural address or read the inaugural address online and answer the questions.

George Washington

First Inaugural Address | April 30, 1789

Read this address in which he states personal reflections on this calling to serve, “supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the universe,” and his confidence in the provisions of the constitution.

- Summarize the ideas presented in the six paragraphs.
- Which of these concepts should still apply to the presidency?

George Washington

Second Inaugural Address | March 4, 1793

The shortest inaugural address given.

“Fellow Citizens:

I AM again called upon by the voice of my country to execute the functions of its Chief Magistrate. When the occasion proper for it shall arrive, I shall endeavor to express the high sense I entertain of this distinguished honor, and of the confidence which has been reposed in me by the people of united America.

Previous to the execution of any official act of the President the Constitution requires an oath of office. This oath I am now about to take, and in your presence: That if it shall be found during my administration of the Government I have in any instance violated willingly or knowingly the injunctions thereof, I may (besides incurring constitutional punishment) be subject to the upbraidings of all who are now witnesses of the present solemn ceremony.”

- Why do you think he chose to make such a short statement?
- What is his main idea?
- What is the public’s responsibility in this relationship?

2. Select one of the following presidents and read the inaugural address given.

- a. What themes for his presidency are established?
- b. Identify and list literary devices used to communicate ideas.
- c. These are known to be memorable speeches for their elegant use of language. What part of the address do you find effective? Why?

Abraham Lincoln

Second Inaugural Address | Saturday, March 4, 1865

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Second Inaugural Address | Wednesday, January 20, 1937

Third Inaugural Address | Monday, January 20, 1941

John F. Kennedy

First Inaugural Address | Friday, January 20, 1961

Barack Obama

First Inaugural Address | Tuesday, January 20, 2009

3. How do a president's aspirations presented in an inaugural address match his time in office and the leadership exhibited?
- Select any American president.
 - Read the first inaugural address of that president. What are the main ideas presented by this president and his goals?
 - Select and listen to the Presidential episode about your selected president in the Post series. What were the high lights and disappointments of this presidency? What leadership was provided to meet the issues facing the country?
 - What impact do unexpected events make on presidential goals and leadership?

Two Presidents, Four Years and Six Traits

The Washington Post’s Presidential podcast series presents presidents from George Washington to Donald Trump. Select any two presidents. Listen to the full Presidential podcast about both men.

1. For both presidents, list three leadership skills or personality traits he displayed early in his life.

President’s Name

President’s Name

①

①

②

②

③

③

2. Pick one of the traits from those listed above. What childhood circumstances led him to develop this trait? Or what family expectations influenced this trait?

President’s Name

President’s Name

3. How did both presidents exhibit the identified trait during his term of office?

President’s Name

President’s Name

4. Did the trait help or hurt his ability to respond to challenges and to be an effective leader of the country?

President's Name

President's Name

5. What is the main reason this presidency and person should be remembered?

President's Name

President's Name

Presidential Legacy, Leadership and Precedents

It is your turn to examine the presidents. Each of The Washington Post's Presidential podcasts focuses on leadership, life influences and precedents set. Presidents may have followed their party's platform, a personal agenda or been forced into unexpected actions due to social and economic conditions or conflicts.

1. Select two presidents to compare and contrast their narratives, their personal aspirations and administration policies, and their leadership styles. How did these individuals influence the presidency and the country? Did they set precedents for the office or create yardsticks against which other presidents would be measured?
2. You choose the criteria and the presidents
 - They may be presidents from different eras.
 - They may have been president when concerns of the economy or business were at the forefront. Or when the country's economy was based in agriculture, industry or technology.
 - They may be men from the same or different political parties.
 - They may be men who became president as war threatened or was in full force.
 - They may be lesser known presidents who have stirred your curiosity.

For example, as Lincoln's bicentennial year was celebrated Barack Obama was elected president. Both were lawyers and politicians from Illinois (neither was born there). Lincoln inspired Obama and both sought the rights of citizens. Think of the actions, ideals and values of Lincoln that form his legacy and how they are similar to or different from Obama's. List the ways Lincoln and Obama followed similar paths.

3. Once you have selected the two individuals, listen to the Presidential podcasts that feature each one. What do the experts highlight about each person before becoming president, while campaigning and in office?
4. What childhood experience(s) or circumstance(s) led each person to develop the distinct personality, attitudes and leadership approaches exhibited in adulthood?
5. List the questions you want answered about each one so you can form columns in which you will list their similarities and differences.
6. What is the key similarity between the two presidents? Do you think it is important for all presidents to have that in common?
7. What are key differences between the presidents? Were these differences important to how they lead the country at the time of their presidency?

8. Given what the Post Presidential podcast episodes revealed to you about these presidents' leadership styles and their time in the White House, which one do you think was a better leader?
9. After listening to the podcasts and reviewing your notes, form a thesis statement. Decide on which format you will use. After your essay/podcast/speech is written, share it with a classmate or reading-writing group.
- Are your ideas clear?
 - What questions do they have?
 - What do they think is the strength of your essay, podcast or speech?
 - What section do they think might be stronger?
10. Revise. And enjoy the product you have created to help others understand the presidents.

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SPECIAL EDITION: U.S. PRESIDENTS



Post Reprint

“No one talks about that. No, no no!” At a reunion of presidential descendants, don’t ask about Trump.”

BY ELLEN MCCARTHY

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The nation’s first families are knit together in a small co-ed fraternity filled with fun, inoffensive facts and a reverence for the White House.

Fun fact about John Tyler, 10th president of the United States: He was born in 1790, married twice and was 63 years old when the last of his 15 children was born.

Another fun fact about President Tyler: He has two grandsons who are still alive, and one of them spent part of this week in Washington.

Ninety-three-year-old Lyon Gardiner Tyler Jr. joined nearly 50 other descendants of presidents and more than 400 scholars, librarians and preservationists at the four-day summit, hosted by the White House Historical Association.

The presidential relatives shared their personal recollections and old family yarns. They stayed as far away

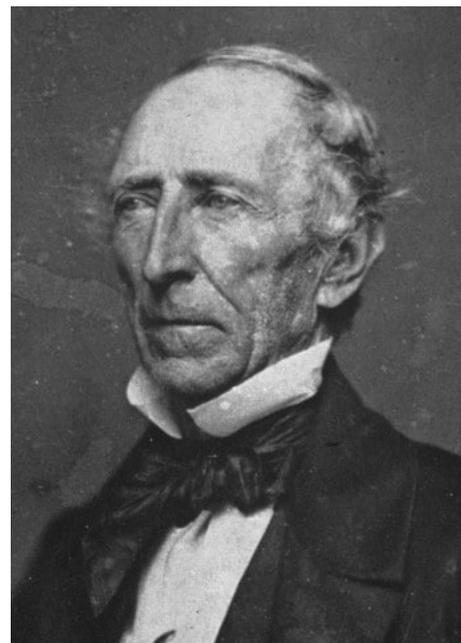


BILL O’LEARY/THE WASHINGTON POST

Lyon Gardiner Tyler Jr. signs his name on the inside of a desk drawer with other descendants of past Presidents gathered for a panel discussion at the Kennedy Center.

as they could from the modern-day politics that swirled around the rest of the city.

What did they think of President Trump’s claim this week that Google has been unfair to him? Or the Trump-Russia controversy? Or



ANONYMOUS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

An undated portrait-daguerreotype of John Tyler, the 10th president of the United States, 1841-1845.

Ivanka Trump’s official role in the West Wing of the White House? Any opinions at all on the White House’s current residents?

“No one talks about that,” insists Susan Ford Bales, daughter of President Gerald Ford. “No! No no

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no no no.”

It is sooooo not a topic of conversation that the conference managed to pull off two hours of panel discussions at the Kennedy Center on the subject of the White House and no one onstage so much as breathed the word “Trump.”

Besides, this is a strange sort of family reunion and everybody knows better than to discuss politics at a family reunion. Even if your dad was president. Especially if your dad was president.

“Since you’ve lived there, you have a respect for the office, whether you like the family or not,” explains Ford Bales, who was a teenager when her father was in office. “I remember being criticized for wearing blue jeans at the White House. And the criticisms that you get are very felt. So you never want to criticize.”

“It’s just about respect and dignity,” says Jason Van Buren, a descendant of Martin Van Buren, as he stood in front of a Kennedy Center stage made to look like the Oval Office. “So you want to keep anything that could be political out of it.”

So what did they talk about? Well, Lynda Johnson Robb, daughter of President Lyndon Johnson, boasted that the marriage resulting from her White House wedding lasted longer than that of any other couple married there. She and former senator Chuck Robb celebrated their 50th anniversary last December.

Ford Bales recalled what it was like to date while living at the White House. “The poor boys would show up dripping wet. It wasn’t just that



BILL O'LEARY/THE WASHINGTON POST

Descendants of past Presidents gathered in Washington for a family reunion of sorts. From left are Susan Ford Bales, Tweed Roosevelt, moderator David Rubenstein, Lynda Johnson Robb, Masee McKinley and Clifton Truman Daniel.

they were going on a date — it was meeting the commander in chief,” she said. And having a Secret Service tail never helped her romantic life. “I’ve never been parking in my entire life,” she bemoaned. (She did, however get to host her high school’s senior prom in the East Room of the White House.)

Tweed Roosevelt explained that every time he uses a credit card, he has to explain that he’s the great-grandson of Theodore Roosevelt, not Franklin.

Clifton Truman Daniel offered anecdotes about what it was like to be the grandson of Harry S. Truman. Once the former president came to visit Daniel’s childhood home in New York. Daniel remembers his grandfather waking early and

positioning himself in a sitting room with a stack of newspapers.

When Daniel and his little brother tried to sneak past to watch TV their grandfather sternly called them back. By the time his mother, Margaret Truman, woke up, she found her two sons perched on either side of their grandfather’s chair.

“Neither of us was moving while he read to us from a book that didn’t have any pictures in it,” Daniel recalled. “And she said, ‘What in God’s name are you reading to those children?’ And he showed her. It was Thucydides. *The History of the Peloponnesian War*. At 6 o’clock in the morning. To a 4-year-old and a 2-year old.” Even offstage, there were more reminiscences on the past than reflections on the present.

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When the presidential descendants were sitting at the bar of the Willard Hotel, where the summit was held, they talked about the rooms they slept in at the White House, the staff members they got to know.

“It’s the staff at the White House that make it such a special place to live,” Ford Bales says.

At a tree-planting ceremony on the South Lawn hosted this week by first lady Melania Trump, Ford Bales recognized a groundskeeper who’d been around since her father’s administration. She gave him a hug.

But it was when she first entered the White House grounds that she

was faced with a reminder that every first family is just renting: “I have a pacemaker. They wanted to wand me. He said, ‘This is really safe,’” recalls an unconvinced Ford Bales. “Well, you can call my cardiologist if you set this thing off,” she told the Secret Service guard, before adding, “You know, I used to live here.”

“He was very unaffected. Very unaffected. He just looked at me like, ‘I really don’t care,’” says Ford Bales. “I was like, ‘Okay!’ I got the message.”

All of the presidential descendants had one other opportunity to visit the White House when they were

invited to a private reception by the Trumps on Wednesday night. There they gathered in the East Room to hear the president call them each out by name. Then, Trump surprised the crowd by announcing that the guests, including all of the White House Historical Association summit attendees, would be welcome to tour the Oval Office that evening.

Lyon Gardiner Tyler was there, accompanied by his daughter, Susan. He bears an uncanny resemblance to his grandfather and smiled for photo after photo with those who wanted to capture a connection to the past.