

PRESIDENT'S DAY

Learning Objectives: Students will:

1. Actively listen to better comprehend the duties and responsibilities of a U.S. President.
2. Use a variety of sources to find information.
3. Draw inferences and conclusions from different texts.
4. Examine a primary document, the US Constitution, to learn about the office of the Presidency.
5. Analyze information in order to compare and contrast the different aspects of the President's responsibilities
6. Write to reflect on their own analysis of information.

TEKS: SS 3.10A, 17A&C, 4.15C, 21A&B, 5.16A, 24A&B; LA 3.13B, Figure 19 D&E, 4.11B, Figure 19D&E, 5.11B, Figure 19 D&E

Materials: *If I Were President* by Catherine Stier (Albert Whitman and Co. 2004, ISBN 0807535427), internet access to Ben's Guide to the US Government (<http://bensguide.gpo.gov>), excerpts from the US Constitution (attached), *If I Were President* graphic (attached)

Vocabulary: presidency, responsibility, duties, Congress, head of state, commander-in-chief

Teaching Strategies:

1. Remind students that during this month we celebrate Presidents' Day, in honor of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, whose birthdays are in February. But all of our Presidents have worked hard at being the best President they could be, even though there are many responsibilities.
2. Read *If I Were President* by Catherine Stier to the class. Discuss what the book reveals about the office of the Presidency. Other possible books include *So You Want to be President?* by Judith St. George, *If the Walls Could Talk: Family Life at the White House* by Jane O'Connor, *What Presidents are Made Of* by Hanoch Piven, *My Teacher for President* by Kay Winters, *Smart About the Presidents* by John Buller, or *Presidents' Day* by Anne Rockwell.
3. Ask students to articulate their perceptions about the office of the President they learned from listening to the book. Record factual information about the Presidency on white board or chart tablet.

4. Visit “Ben’s Guide to the US Government” at <http://bensguide.gpo.gov> to discover information about the Presidency, including duties, qualifications, and term of office. Add any facts to the list already begun.
5. Assign a group of students (or explore with the entire class) to investigate excerpts from the US Constitution (attached) describing the duties of the President. This group will report their findings to the class.
6. Brainstorm what the major areas of responsibility of the Presidency are, such as defense (military), head of state (making agreements with other countries), and approving bills passed by Congress so that they become laws. Others include budget/finance, the environment, and keeping citizens safe. Ask students to categorize tasks into major headings.
7. Students will respond to the following questions:
 - In your opinion, which of these areas are the most important and why?
 - If you were President, what would you concentrate on?
 - Name one thing in each category that you would try to accomplish.
 - What would be the best thing about being President?
 - What would be the worst thing about being President?
 - “I would/would not like to be President because _-
_____”

Extension for G/T

Students may compare the three Presidents from Texas (Lyndon Johnson, George H.W. Bush, and George W. Bush) to discover when they served, their political party, and what their main accomplishments/interests were.

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Excerpts from the Constitution of the United States

Article 2 Section 1

The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years.

No person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any Person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty-five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.

Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Article 2 Section 2

The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States.

He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present [concur](#); and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law.

Article 2 Section 3

He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary Occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in Case of Disagreement between them, with Respect to the Time of [Adjournment](#), he may [adjourn](#) them to such Time as he shall think proper; he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

Article 2 Section 4

The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on [Impeachment](#) for, and Conviction of, [Treason](#), Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.

If I Were President



The most important
job the President has
is ...

If I were President
I would
concentrate on

The best thing about being President would
be . . .

The worst thing
about being
President would be

I would/would not
want to be President
because . . .