

# Be an Inspector Gadget!

## General

### Grade Level

Elementary School

### Author Info

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### Type of Lesson

Cooperative Learning

### Duration

1 Class Period

### Interdisciplinary Connections

This lesson incorporates science, history and writing skills to investigate and write about different gadgets.

## Objectives

### Overview

Students will investigate different gadgets and designs of Thomas Jefferson and brainstorm what the function of the designs are through a graphic organizer. Students will then write a internet review about their favorite gadget and how the gadget could be improved or adapted for present day life.

## Prior Knowledge

Students should have some background of Thomas Jefferson such as:

1. Lived from 1743-1826
2. 3rd president of the United States
3. Author of the Declaration of Independence
4. Additional background information can be found on:

<http://www.monticello.org/site/jefferson/brief-biography-thomas-jefferson>

## State Standards

VA Standards of Learning:

Science:

4.1 The student will demonstrate an understanding of scientific reasoning, logic, and the nature of science by planning and conducting investigations in which

a) distinctions are made among observations, conclusions, inferences, and predictions;

VA History:

VS.5 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the role of Virginia in the American Revolution by

b) identifying the various roles played by whites, enslaved African Americans, free African Americans, and American Indians in the Revolutionary War era, including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, and James Lafayette;

Reading:

4.1 The student will use effective oral communication skills in a variety of settings.

Common Core:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.1](#)

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

## Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to use a graphic organizer to take notes and organize information.

Students will be able to compare and contrast gadgets from past and present.

Students will be able to apply knowledge learned during lesson to write their own internet review of one of Jefferson's gadgets.

## Essential Questions

- 1.What is a gadget?
- 2.What are different names for the word, "gadget"
- 3.How are Jefferson's gadgets similar or different from today's technology?
- 4.What are some other examples of gadgets that help you at home, at school or in the community?

## Procedures

### 1. 10-15 minutes

Introduction:

1. Have students share their baseline/background knowledge of Thomas Jefferson
2. Briefly go over handout:<http://www.monticello.org/site/jefferson/brief-biography-thomas-jefferson>
3. Discuss the following as a whole group:
  - a.What is a gadget?
  - b.What are different names for the word, "gadget"
4. Talk about as a whole group how technology has always existed but has changed over time.

### 2. 20-25 minutes

- 1.Hand out graphic organizer and explain that students will be writing down their initial thoughts of what they think each gadget is. Also be clear that students will be writing a short phrase or sentence for what they think the gadget is
2. Show slideshow from [classroom.monticello.org](http://classroom.monticello.org)
3. Give students 1-2 minutes per slide to write down their observations of what they think the

gadget is.

4. Once slideshow is completed, begin whole group discussion and have students share and answer the following question: What is your favorite gadget at the moment and what do you think it does?

5. Ask students if they are ready to find out if they are right about their predictions!

6. Go over all images using Image/Video PDF and explain their uses by using pictures/videos of what the images do at Monticello.

7. Pass around cipher and have students get a feel for this gadget and how it works.

8. Come together as a whole group and have a discussion about students' predictions and how close/far they were to the real use of the gadget.

9. Ask the following questions:

a. How are some of these gadgets similar to today's technology?

b. What are examples of gadgets that help you at home, at school and in the community?

### 3. *20 minutes*

Activity:

1. Using the "Be an Inspector Gadget" Handout, have students choose their favorite gadget from the slideshow or video and write an internet review of the item, such as on Amazon or yelp.

2. Students will answer the following questions in their review:

a. What are the good and bad aspects of the gadget?

b. How was this useful during Jefferson's time?

c. Is this gadget still useful today?

d. What would you change to improve the gadget?

e. What is the modern day version of this gadget?

## Related Assets

### Handouts and Downloads

- [Gadget Organizer](#)

- [Jefferson's Gadgets](#)
- [Be an Inspector Gadget just like Thomas Jefferson](#)

## Homework

Extension activity options:

- 1.If Jefferson had a gadget or technology pinterest page, what would be on it? Create a "board" either by using magazine clippings, or by using images off the internet and explain.
- 2.Make your own secret message using Jefferson's online cipher:  
<http://classroom.monticello.org/extra/wheelcipher/wheelcipher.html>
- 3.Explore Jefferson's house to find his gadgets at: <http://explorer.monticello.org/>

## Accommodations

### Accommodations – Students with Special Needs

This lesson is specifically designed for all learners and ability levels. This lesson encourages ideas of all students and there are no right or wrong answers in both brainstorming uses of Jefferson's gadgets and in writing a review.

