

Who was Thomas Jefferson? Exploring the Many Facets of Thomas Jefferson

Title: Who was Thomas Jefferson? Exploring the Many Facets of Thomas Jefferson

Descriptive Subtitle: Thomas Jefferson, Examining the Nation- Building Role of the Man

Author Information:

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Duration: at least 6 sessions (60 min in length)

Overview: As an introduction to Thomas Jefferson, students will discover the many facets of his life beyond being the author of The Declaration of Independence. Using primary sources, internet research, and the Thomas Jefferson Encyclopedia, students will choose one facet of Jefferson to research and present. Students will make connections between past and present ideas and develop a more well-rounded idea of who Thomas Jefferson was as a person and identify his contributions to America.

This will be a group project. (4 students per group) Each group will choose a category to research that will explore major aspects of Thomas Jefferson's life.

If teacher does not have time to do full research project, they can choose one facet listed and conduct research as a class.

Prior knowledge: As a research project, students do not need any knowledge about Thomas Jefferson. Students need a knowledge of and access to basic computer technology.

Standards:

ALCOS Technology

10. Collect information from a variety of digital sources
11. Use digital environments to collaborate and communicate.

- Sharing presentations, contributing to online discussions, communicating with experts
- Producing digital works collaboratively

ISTE Standard(s) –[21st Century Learner](#):

4. Innovative Designer

- Students use a variety of technologies within a design process to identify and solve problems by creating new, useful or imaginative solutions.

Students:

- Know and use a deliberate design process for generating ideas, testing theories, creating innovative artifacts or solving authentic problems.
- Select and use digital tools to plan and manage a design process that considers design constraints and calculated risks.

6. Creative Communicator

Students communicate clearly and express themselves creatively for a variety of purposes using the platforms, tools, styles, formats and digital media appropriate to their goals.

Students: create original works or responsibly repurpose or remix digital resources into new creations.

Social Studies:

5.) Explain the early colonization of North America and reasons for settlement in the Northern, Middle, and Southern colonies, including geographic features, landforms, and differences in climate among the colonies.

- Identifying influential leaders in colonial society
- Describing emerging colonial government

6.) Describe colonial economic life and labor systems in the Americas

ALCOS Social Studies

5.8. Identify major events of the American Revolution, including explaining contributions of Thomas Jefferson.

5.10. Describe political, social, and economic events between 1803 and 1860 that led to the expansion of the territory of the United States

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7

Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

Reading:

- Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. [RI.5.1]
- Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text. [RI.5.2]
- Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a Grade 5 topic or subject area. [RI.5.4]
- Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent. [RI.5.6]
- Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently. [RI.5.7]

Writing:

- Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic. [W.5.7]

Objectives:

Through group inquiry and research, students will gain an overview of Thomas Jefferson and his many accomplishments and innovations.

Students will research one area to become an expert and create a digital presentation to present to the class.

This activity will act as an overview. Teacher can choose topics for follow-up teaching.

Steps:

Day 1: (30 minutes) Overview and Introduction to Thomas Jefferson

Introduce students to Jefferson by using the book “Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Everything” by Maira Kalman. This will help students get an overview of Thomas Jefferson.

Have students complete a KWL chart before and after the literature is read aloud to see what students learned.

Day 2: (60 Minutes) Exploring digital resources

First, use “Exploring Monticello” PDF as an introduction to the Unit.

[Exploring Monticello for Kids.](#)

Discuss and chart with teachers and students the different aspects of TJ’s life.

Next, introduce students to the Monticello Explorer website and virtual tours and allow students to explore the many facets of Jefferson’s life. <http://explorer.monticello.org/>

By participating in virtual tours, students could find items in the house that correspond with particular

roles Jefferson played. Items such as Lewis and Clark artifacts, pictures of people and places, books, busts of important individuals, and the grounds of Monticello could be used to help students dig deeper and understand who Jefferson was as an ambassador, writer, president and plantation owner.

Teacher can use book "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Everything" to further the discussion with students over the next few days.

Day 3- Choose topic and begin research

Now that students have had time to explore the sites and learn about Thomas Jefferson allow the students to pick which topic they would like to work on by interviewing them and having them state their reasons for choosing that particular topic.

Have students choose from Plantation Owner, Innovator, Secretary of State, and President.

Explain to students that a question set will be provided to guide their research as a minimum requirement.

Question set for students with suggested links for each topic

[Question set visual](#)

Allow students time to begin research and locate the best resources to use for their topic.

Days 4-6 (60 minutes each)

Students will research their topic, using primary sources where possible to gain an understanding. They will use the questions set for their topic to guide them.

Students will produce a digital presentation using PowerPoint, Video or Prezi to present to the class.

Students will take notes on topics that were different from their assigned topic in order to produce a commercial about what they have learned about Thomas Jefferson.

Materials: Suggested Links for Research, Computer with Internet Access

General links

<http://explorer.monticello.org/>

<https://www.monticello.org/site/research-and-collections/tje>

TJ Biography

<https://www.biography.com/video/thomas-jefferson-mini-biography-46706755839>

TJ as Plantation Owner

<https://www.monticello.org/slavery-at-monticello/jsam-main-nav-0>

TJ as Innovator

<https://www.monticello.org/site/blog-and-community/tags/innovation>

TJ as Secretary of State

<https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/people/jefferson-thomas>

TJ as President

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/1600/presidents/thomasjefferson>

<https://classroom.monticello.org/view/elem/74475/>

Assessment(s):

Students will be assessed through their oral presentation to class about their topic using the rubric attached.

Assessment Criteria: [Thomas Jefferson Project Rubric](#)

Accommodations:

Students with Special Needs

Students with special academic needs can work in pairs in initial brainstorming. Requirements for presentation can be set according to abilities.

Assistance can also be given to ensure an appropriate chosen.

Advanced Learners

Gifted students can extend this lesson by doing more in-depth research. They also can choose more than one topic.

Notes: Teachers can adapt the essential questions as needed.

For example: Slavery will be mentioned during Plantation Owner research but can be researched and covered in more depth as a single topic during another lesson.

