

# Impact of a President Report— Study Guidelines

Hand out these guidelines to give students a head start with research projects on U.S. presidents.

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## Impact of a President Report – Student Guidelines

Since the time of George Washington, our presidents have impacted U.S. and world history in many ways, including passing legislation, making speeches, issuing executive orders, and directing foreign relations.

### As you work through the steps below, remember the following helpful hints:

- Keep careful notes as you work. If necessary, ask for help from your teacher or media specialist
- Document all reference sources as you use them—this helps with fact checking and proper source citation later
- Use timelines, the 5 Ws, Know/Don't Know tables, or other types of graphic organizers to help you organize your research and answer questions
- Broaden your research by asking open ended questions, such as:
  - o What happened to...?
  - o What else happened because of ...?
  - o Who would have benefited from ...? Why?
  - o Who would have opposed ...? Why?
  - o Where else could I find information on...?

### The following steps will help you focus your thinking and research:

1. Select a president and pick an impact topic associated with him. (Hint: Check with your teacher or media specialist to be certain that you have made a good selection).
  - Read a brief biography of your president and look for clues that can help you identify a strong impact topic. Look for events or issues that caused major changes, such as decisions to go to war (Woodrow Wilson and World War I), civil rights legislation (Lyndon Johnson and the 1965 Voting Rights Act), domestic economic policy decisions (Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal), and foreign policy decisions (Harry Truman and Israel).
2. Ask yourself what you want to learn about your topic and focus your research on answering that question. (Hint: This is a good place to construct a “What I know/What do I want to learn” table included with this handout).
3. Research background information to understand the historical context for your topic; note the names of people, places, events, historical documents, and other facts that might help you in your research. (Hint: This is a good place to use the 5 Ws).
  - Read original speeches, policies, or legislation that exemplify your president's stance on the issue and how he took action on your topic.
4. Investigate and describe controversies caused by the decision that your president made. Remember that decisions often have lingering effects and can generate controversy over a long period of time (e.g. Truman and the atomic bomb).
5. Review the information that you found and ask yourself, "Does my research provide enough information for someone else to fully understand my topic?" If it does, complete your research assignment as directed. If it does not, ask your media specialist or teacher for help

**Impact of a President Report Worksheet**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

President \_\_\_\_\_

Impact \_\_\_\_\_

What do I know	What do I want to learn