

BRINGING AMERICAN HEROES TO LIFE

Grade Level: Second Grade

Presented by: Stephanie Brocker, Laurie Mitchell and Kim Spooner, Frontier Academy, Greeley, CO

Length of Unit: Fifteen days spread through one month

I. ABSTRACT

We designed this unit as a way to bring Core Knowledge to life in the classroom. It has been a great way to formally review our American Civilization units at the end of the year. It has also proven to be an excellent way to get parents involved and teach them what Core Knowledge is all about. In this culminating unit, students will apply what they have learned about famous people in American History. These individuals will include the personalities presented in the *Core Knowledge Sequence* from American History, Civil Rights and Science. Each student will research and give an oral presentation on a famous American.

II. OVERVIEW

A. Concept Objectives

1. The students will develop a sense of historical empathy.
2. The students will develop awareness between historical events and the individuals who made them happen.
3. The students will understand the meaning of time and chronology as it applies to our nation's history.

B. Content covered from *Core Knowledge Sequence*

1. Writing – With assistance the student will revise and edit to clarify his/her meaning in writing, and attend to spelling, mechanics, and presentation in final draft.
2. History – Biographical and historical information on: James and Dolley Madison, Francis Scott Key, Andrew Jackson, Robert Fulton, Sequoyah, Harriet Tubman, Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, Clara Barton and Abraham Lincoln.
3. Civil Rights – Biographical and historical information on: Susan B. Anthony, Eleanor Roosevelt, Mary McLeod Bethune, Jackie Robinson, Rosa Parks, Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. and Cesar Chavez.
4. Science – Biographical and historical information on: Elijah McCoy, Florence Nightingale and Daniel Hale Williams.

C. Skill Objectives

1. The students will answer questions given orally by the teacher.
2. The students will take information from outline form and write it in sentence form.
3. The students will write complete sentences using proper mechanics, including indentation, capitals, periods and other needed punctuation.
4. The students will construct a sequential paragraph from each page of the outline, ending with seven paragraphs. Paragraph topics will include: birth information, childhood experiences, education, marriage status, adult experiences, historical achievements and death.
5. The students will work cooperatively with an older peer.
6. The students will proofread their report.
7. The students will correct their reports using standard proofreading marks.
8. The students will recopy their reports.
9. The students will participate in the construction of a timeline charting the events taught and reviewed in the second grade *Core Knowledge Sequence*.

10. The students will understand that effective public speakers are easy to hear and understand, read at an appropriate pace, hold their report at chest level, and stand still and stand up straight.

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- A. For Teachers
 1. Hirsch, E.D. *What Your Second Grader Needs to Know*
 2. Hirsch, E.D. *What Your First Grader Needs to Know*
 3. Core Knowledge Foundation. *Core Knowledge Sequence*. Canada, 1998.
 4. Hirsch, E.D. Jr. & Holden, John. *Books to Build On*
 5. Buckley, Susan Washburn. *15 Easy-to-Read Biography Mini-Books: Famous Americans*
- B. For Students
 1. The students will have a basic understanding of the personalities presented from the First and Second Grade *Core Knowledge Sequence*.

IV. RESOURCES

- A. Adler, David A. *A Picture Book of Abraham Lincoln*
- B. Adler, David A. *A Picture Book of Florence Nightingale*
- C. Adler, David A. *A Picture Book of Martin Luther King Jr.*
- D. Adler, David A. *A Picture Book of Robert E. Lee*
- E. Adler, David A. *A Picture Book of Rosa Parks*
- F. Alcott, Sarah. *Young Clara Barton Battlefield Nurse*
- G. Blumberg, Rhoda. *Bloomers*
- H. Buckley, Susan Washburn. *15 Easy-to-Read Biography Mini-Books: Famous Americans*
- I. Bourgeois, Pauletter. *Franklin's School Play*
- J. Carter, Polly. *Let's Celebrate Harriet Tubman and Black History Month*
- K. Cooney, Barbara. *Eleanor*
- L. Davis, William C. *Commanders of the Civil War*
- M. Farrell, Edward. *Young Jackie Robinson Baseball Hero*
- N. Kroll, Steven. *By the Dawn's Early Light: The Story of the Star Spangled Banner*
- O. Landau, Elaine. *Robert Fulton*
- P. McKissack, Patricia and Fredrick. *Great African Americans Mary McLeod Bethune a Great Teacher*
- Q. Oppenheim, Joanne. *Sequoyah Cherokee Hero*
- R. Quackenbush, Robert. *James Madison and Dolley Madison and Their Times*
- S. Quackenbush, Robert. *Who Let Muddy Boots into the Whitehouse? A Story of Andrew Jackson*
- T. Strazzabosco, J. *Learning About Justice from the Life of Cesar Chavez*
- R. Towle, Wendy. *The Real McCoy: The Life of an African-American Inventor*
- U. Wilhelm, Hans. *The Bremen Town Musicians*

V. LESSONS

Note: This unit is spread out over a month; in order to keep lessons and activities on schedule, please follow Teacher Timeline, Appendix A.

Lesson One: Around the World with Famous Americans

- A. *Daily Objectives*
 1. Concept Objective
 - a. The students will develop a sense of historical empathy.
 - b. The students will develop awareness between historical events and the individuals who made them happen.

- c. The students will understand the meaning of time and chronology as it applies to our nation's history.
 - 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Biographical and Historical information on selected Americans in the second grade *Core Knowledge Sequence*
 - 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. The student will answer questions given orally by the teacher.
- B. *Materials*
 - 1. Appendix B
 - 2. Write the name of each Famous American on a single strip of paper
 - 3. Appendix C: Note and biography outline home to the parents (fill in due date and presentation date prior to copying)
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
 - 1. Biography - the story of a person's life
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
 - 1. Before beginning, tape a Famous American paper strip to the bottom of each student's chair without them knowing.
 - 2. In an "Around the World" format, read questions to two students at a time. The first student to answer the question moves onto the next challenger. Whoever wins the challenge, moves to the next desk. Continue until students have had several chances to move to a different desk.
 - 3. After game is finished, ask the students look under the chair where they are currently sitting. This will be their Famous American to research.
 - 4. Give each student a copy of Appendix C. Read through and explain to the students. Have students fill in the name of their Famous American. Instruct them to take home and return to school on or before the given date.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
 - None

Lesson Two: A Biography is Born

- A. *Daily Objectives*
 - 1. Concept Objectives
 - a. The students will develop a sense of historical empathy.
 - b. The students will develop awareness between historical events and the individuals who made them happen.
 - c. The students will understand the meaning of time and chronology as it applies to our nation's history.
 - 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Information will be compiled from various sources (i.e. Internet, encyclopedia, books, magazines, computer programs) by each individual student about their Famous American.
 - b. With assistance, produce written work and organize material in paragraphs.
 - 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. Students will take information from outline form and write it in sentence form.
 - b. Students will write complete sentences using proper mechanics, including indentation, capitals, periods and other needed punctuation.
 - c. The students will construct a sequential paragraph from each page of the outline, ending with seven paragraphs. Paragraph topics will include: birth information, childhood experiences, education, marriage status, adult experiences, historical achievements and death.

- B. *Materials*
1. Overhead Projector
 2. Lined Paper
 3. Pencil
 4. Completed Outline
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Paragraph – a part of a piece of writing that is made up of several sentences and deals with the same topic
 2. Indent – to set in from the margin
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
- DAY ONE – Paragraph 1: Personal Information
1. Teacher should choose a student who may struggle putting the outline into paragraph form.
 2. Before lesson, make an overhead of student’s entire outline.
 3. Review key vocabulary and point out to students that the report we are writing will be in paragraph form.
 4. Show students that each page will be one paragraph of their report.
 5. Using example outline, model putting the information from the outline into sentence form using proper grammar and mechanics. Paragraph must be written in first person point of view (example: My name is..... I was born on.....).
 6. Pass out lined paper and direct students to use their outline to write their first paragraph.
 7. While students are working, move around the room to monitor and assist.
 8. Follow same procedure for DAYS TWO through SEVEN.
- DAY TWO – Paragraph 2: Childhood Experiences
- DAY THREE – Paragraph 3: Education
- DAY FOUR – Paragraph 4: Marriage
- DAY FIVE – Paragraph 5: Adult Experiences
- DAY SIX – Paragraph 6: Famous Achievements
- DAY SEVEN – Paragraph 7: Death
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Students are assessed on the completion of their seven paragraphs written in first person with correct grammar and mechanics. See Appendix D.

Lesson Three: Proofreading and Final Draft: It’s a Group Effort!

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objectives
 - a. The students will develop a sense of historical empathy.
 - b. The students will develop awareness between historical events and the individuals who made them happen.
 - c. The students will understand the meaning of time and chronology as it applies to our nation’s history.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. With assistance, revise and edit to clarify and refine his or her meaning in writing, use Proofreading Checklist, see Appendix E.
 - b. Write legibly on final draft paper.
 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. The students will work cooperatively with an older peer.
 - b. The students will proofread their report.
 - c. The students will correct their reports using standard proofreading marks.
 - d. The students will recopy their reports.

- B. *Materials*
1. Completed reports
 2. One marking pen per pair of students
 3. One pencil per child
 4. Appendix E, one copy per pair of students
 5. A supply of final draft paper, approximately three per child
 6. The book, *The Bremen Town Musicians*
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Proofreading – to read over and fix mistakes in your paper
 2. Cooperate – to act or work together, so as to get something done
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Prior to beginning lesson, find a class of sixth graders that would be willing to help your students proofread and edit. Work with teacher to pair the students up with suitable partners. Also ask teacher to discuss and review proofreading skills with his or her class.
 2. Read the story, *The Bremen Town Musicians* to your class and discuss how the characters cooperate. Relate to your students about how they will be working with an older partner. Their goal will be to find all spelling and grammatical mistakes and correct them.
 3. Pair each second grader up with a sixth grader. Hand out Proofreading Checklist, Appendix E.
 4. Instruct second graders to read their report to their partner. Sixth grade partner will follow Appendix E as a guide while he or she proofreads and edits the second grader's report.
 5. When proofreading is complete, students are ready to begin the final copy. Sixth grade partner can monitor and assist the second grader while he or she re-copies their report.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Students will complete Proofreading Checklist and correct their report.
 2. Students will turn in final draft of their report.

Lesson Four: Heroes Throughout History

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objectives
 - a. The students will develop a sense of historical empathy.
 - b. The students will develop awareness between historical events and the individuals who made them happen.
 - c. The students will understand the meaning of time and chronology as it applies to our nation's history.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Biographical and Historical information on selected Americans in the second grade *Core Knowledge Sequence*
 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. The students will participate in the construction of a timeline charting the events taught and reviewed in the second grade *Core Knowledge Sequence*.
- B. *Materials*
1. Roll of white butcher paper; teacher should draw a line towards the top of the paper and label the line in ten-year increments beginning with 1700; Each ten-year increment can be spaced one foot apart (Note: The timeline will end up being 30-40 feet long)
 2. Appendix F, one per student
 3. Pencils, crayons, colored pencils, etc.
 4. Students' research outlines

- C. *Key Vocabulary*
 - 1. Chronological – arranged in or according to the order of time.
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
 - 1. Show students the timeline and have them guess its purpose. After several guesses, discuss what a timeline is with your students. Introduce the word chronological. Tell students that we will be making a timeline of our Famous Americans.
 - 2. Hand out each student’s research outline and instruct them to look for the birth year of their Famous American.
 - 3. Give each student Appendix F and have them fill out the information and draw a picture.
 - 4. When finished, assist students in lining up in chronological order.
 - 5. Teacher can then attach the completed pages to the timeline.
 - 6. Display on a long wall in classroom or hallway.
- E. *Assessment /Evaluation*
 - 1. Ask questions to check for understanding (i.e. Who was born first? When were most of our Famous Americans born?)

Lesson Five: Practice Makes Perfect, A Dress Rehearsal

Note: See teacher timeline, you need to have the final typed reports back from the parent volunteers before DAY ONE of this lesson. Also observe that costumes and visual aides need to be at school before DAY TWO.

- A. *Daily Objectives*
 - 1. Concept Objectives
 - a. The students will develop a sense of historical empathy.
 - b. The students will develop awareness between historical events and the individuals who made them happen.
 - c. The students will understand the meaning of time and chronology as it applies to our nation’s history.
 - 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Orally recall incidents, facts and details of characters.
 - 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. The students will understand that effective public speakers are easy to hear and understand, read at an appropriate pace, hold their report at chest level, and stand still and stand up straight.
- B. *Materials*
 - 1. Three copies of each student’s typed report, one for student, one for teacher and one for home practice
 - 2. The book, *Franklin’s School Play*
 - 3. Audience, preferably first graders
 - 4. Easel to set visual aide on
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
 - 1. Audience – a group that listens or watches
- D. *Procedures/Activities*

DAY ONE

 - 1. Read the story, *Franklin’s School Play*. Discuss with the students how important it is for speakers to practice before they present to an audience.
 - 2. Model for the students the correct and incorrect ways to give an oral speech.
 - 3. Have students practice their report the first time with a partner.
 - 4. Have students practice the second time in front of the whole class. Give students feedback as needed.
 - 5. Give students a copy of their report to take home. Instruct them to practice in front of family members at home.

DAY TWO

1. While students are changing into their costumes, seat guest class.
 2. Begin reports, help students pronounce difficult words if needed and set up visual aides.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Students will present their report following guidelines for good speakers.

VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITIES

- A. This activity will be a presentation by the students for friends and family. Invitations will have been sent five days prior to the presentation day. We try to make this a school wide celebration of what we have learned and accomplished in second grade. Invites go out parents, principals and selected staff.
- B. Things to prepare for prior to the presentation:
1. Student made of decorations (ex: red, white and blue paper chains, flags, other patriotic symbols.)
 2. Refreshments. Ask parents to bring cookies, punch, cake, napkins, cups.
 3. Set up plenty of chairs for guests.
 4. Set up easel in front of the room for visual aides.
 5. Have a copy of each child's report in case you need to assist during the presentation.
 6. Display student made timeline. See Lesson 2, A Biography is Born.
- C. Program Schedule
1. Have students put on costumes outside of room while parents are arriving.
 2. Bring students in as a group and seat them on the floor.
 3. Welcome the parents to the Famous American Presentations and give them a quick synopsis of all the work their children have put into preparing for today. Thank them as well for all of their assistance and support.
 4. Presentation time. Introduce each student by name and biography character name.
 5. Closure given by teacher. Give parents the opportunity to get whole group pictures of students in costumes. Invite guests to enjoy the refreshments.

VII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

Appendices A – F

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A. Core Knowledge Foundation. *Core Knowledge Sequence*. Canada, 1998.
- B. Hirsch, E.D. Jr. & Holden, John. *Books to Build On*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1996. ISBN 0-385-31640-2
- C. Buckley, Susan Washburn. *15 Easy-to-Read Biography Mini-Books: Famous Americans*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2000. ISBN 0-590-96718-5
- D. Bourgeois, Pauletter. *Franklin's School Play*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 1989. ISBN 0-155-74289-2
- E. Wilhelm, Hans. *The Bremen Town Musicians*: New York: Scholastic Inc., 1992. ISBN 0-590-44796-3

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix B, continued

Appendix B, continued

Appendix B, continued

Appendix B, continued

Appendix C

Dear Families,

Your child has chosen _____ for the Famous American biography study. The following information will guide you in the research process with your child.

Attached to this letter you will find an outline. This is the outline we will be using to form our reports. This is a rough draft outline, so full sentences are not a requirement. Phrases and single answers will do, although details should be included so a report can be composed straight from the outline. The *fully completed* outline is **due on** _____, so we can immediately begin writing the reports here at school.

Guide and assist your child in looking or listening for context clues to answer the questions. Please help your child in finding the answers, but do not “feed” him/her the information. One of the main points of this paper is for the students to learn research skills.

Preferably, the majority of the answers should be clearly written by the child. Some assistance may be needed and given due to the length of the project and limited writing skills of the students. I will also accept outlines that are typed or word-processed.

Please make use of your local public libraries, encyclopedias, books, magazines, the Internet, computer programs, etc. in order to locate information. If you cannot find the answers to a question in any of your materials, write “unknown” in the space.

Now would also be a good time for your child to decide what type of visual presentation he/she prefers. If your child chooses to “dress” as their Famous American, please make it as authentic as possible, but there is no need for expensive elaboration. Old things from your closets, attic and basement will be just fine. If your child chooses to use a visual aid, please include pictures and a heading along with any other type of details that you wish to include.

Your child will be presenting his/her report on _____. Formal invitations will be sent, but please mark your calendars for this exciting event!

Thank you for all of your time and hard work. Both you and your child will reap the rewards of working on this project together. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Your child’s teacher

Appendix C

Name: _____

Biography Outline

due back to school _____

1. Full name of person: _____

Birth date: _____

Place of birth: _____

Parents: _____

2. Three childhood experiences: (1.) _____

(2.) _____

(3.) _____

3. Education: _____

4. Married? Yes _____ No _____

Who? _____

Where? _____

When? _____

5. Three adult experiences: (1.) _____

(2.) _____

(3.) _____

6. What is this person most famous for? _____

7. Death:

When? _____

Where? _____

How? _____

Appendix D

Famous American Project
Evaluation / Assessment

	<u>Possible pts.</u>	<u>Points</u>
Student Outline – Complete Accurate On time	<u>25</u>	_____
Biography Rough Draft Each paragraph should be : - Written in 1 st person - Composed with complete sentences - 5 points per paragraph	<u>35</u>	_____
Completed Proofreading Checklist	<u>5</u>	_____
Biography Final Draft Paragraphs indented Correct mechanics Neatness	<u>15</u>	_____
Costume / Visual Aid	<u>20</u>	_____
Total possible	<u>100</u>	earned _____

Teacher Comments:

Appendix E

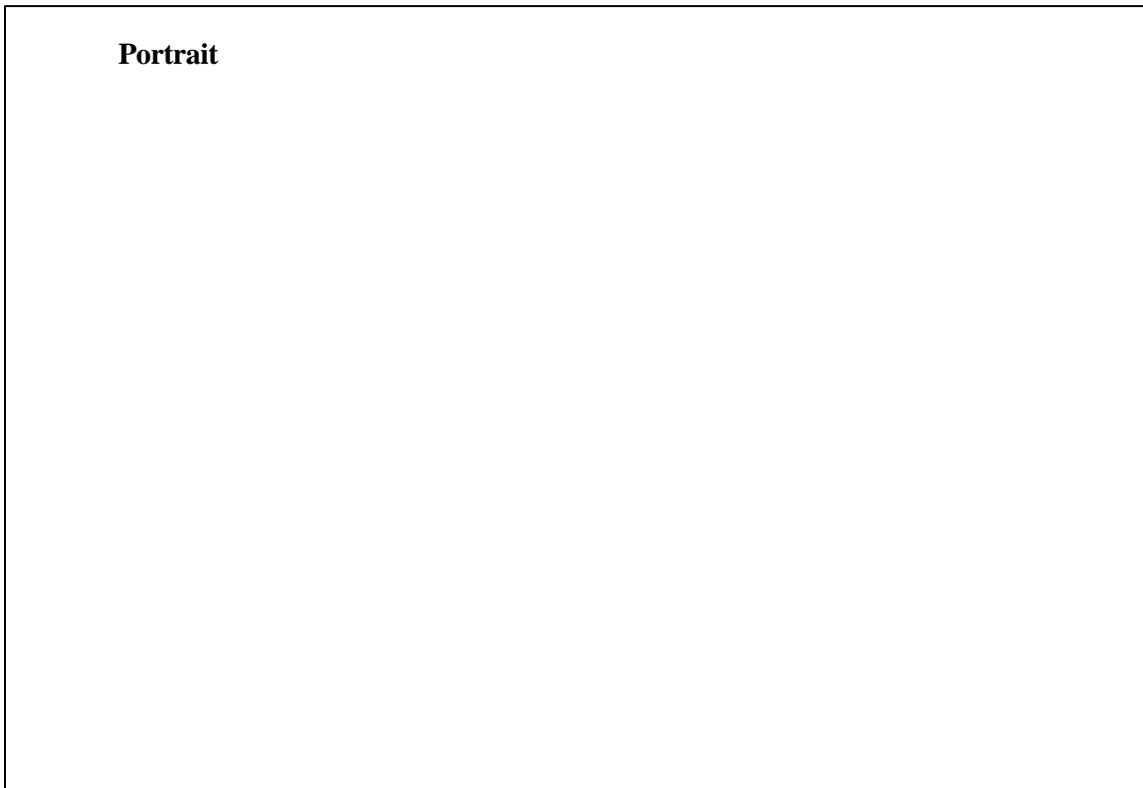
Appendix F

Timeline Portrait

Name: _____

Year born: _____

Portrait



Famous Achievements:
