

A Person in Time Online

Lesson Plan

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A Person in Time Online

Timing: 3–4 Class Periods

Grade Level: 6–12

Subject: Social Studies, History

Lesson Description

Comprehending the cultural, geographic, personal, social, and historical influences of a historically significant individual can help students build a deeper understanding of that individual and the time in which the individual lived. Students will conduct research on a historical figure and then design a web page based on how this person would want to be represented on the Internet. In conducting research, the students will learn about primary and secondary resources and about the importance of citing all research. Finally, students will think critically about how a person in history would want to be represented online. They will make a case for all elements they include in the web page and support their claims with relevant research. Students who must consider multiple points of view will analyze and interpret information based on that point of view. By using technologies such as multimedia, web pages, and websites, students build high-order thinking skills through the use and integration of information representing points of view.

Students will:

- Build understanding of a historical figure through research
- Understand and use citations
- Design a web page with appropriate content
- Communicate, verbally and in writing, a rationale for their design and content decisions, pointing to research to support these decisions
- Reflect on their learning process

Lesson Materials

- Template for a general website
- Adobe Acrobat 8 Professional
- Adobe Photoshop Elements 5
- Adobe Premiere Elements 3
- Adobe Contribute 4

Background Preparation Resources

- [Technical Skills and Information](#)
- [Content Skill and Information](#)
- [Standards](#)

Lesson Steps

Introduce the project

1. Explain to students that they will select a historical figure from a time period they are studying (for example, Homer from ancient Greece, Marie Antoinette from the French revolution, or Winston Churchill from World War II). They will conduct research on this figure, gather images and/or video clips, and then design and create a simple web page illustrating the figure's point of view and interests.

Note: You might want to discuss copyright and the types of content students can gather and use. Visit the Copyright Information Guide in the Image and Video Gallery.

2. Show students the website and pages where they will each contribute a page for a historical figure. Explain to students that they will be able to customize the design, including changing colors and borders of the layout, and that they will be able to insert their content and selected images and/or video clips.

Note: You might use a web space you already have in your school or work with your technology coordinator to set up a general website, using the templates provided with the lesson. If you plan to use the template provided, use the following guides during your preparation:

Contribute 4 Guide: Adobe Contribute 4 School Setup Guide

Contribute 4 Guide: Adobe Contribute 4 Teacher's Guide

Electronic Assets: General website project templates (general_project_website.zip)

3. Discuss with the class the difference between primary and secondary resources and the difference between biographical and analytical information. Explain to students that they should use a variety of resources in their research. Finally, discuss the importance of citing all the materials used and explain that they will have to include a citation list with their final projects.

Note: You can also do this as a group project, with each student responsible for a different part of the research for a single historical figure. The site to which every student would contribute would focus on the figure, with each page depicting the aspect researched by an individual student. For instance, one student would do the research on the person's lifetime, another on geographical and cultural influences, and so on. On the site, each student's page design and content would represent the aspect the student researched about the figure.

Select a historical figure

4. Have students select a historical figure. Instruct them to research the person they select in the following areas and gather any images or video clips that are relevant:

- **Lifetime:** When was the person born? If no longer living, when did the person die? Describe the person's family, for example, the number of siblings. Who were the person's friends? Enemies? What education did the person have? What kinds of career(s)? What were the person's hobbies? What did this person do to become noteworthy? Did the person receive recognition while still alive? If so, did this impact the person's behavior? Has this person's legend grown? How is this person perceived today? Is it different from how the person was perceived while alive?
- **Political and Social Influences:** What groups and institutions was this person part of, for example, schools, churches, families, government agencies, and the courts? What do these affiliations disclose about the person?
- **Geography and Culture:** Where is the person from? How has the person been affected by where he or she came from geographically, culturally, ethnically, socially, and economically?
- **Historical Events:** What events occurred during the person's lifetime that may have impacted the person? Include local, national, and world events that were of significance.

Note: Some video clips regarding the history of ancient Greece have been included in the Image and Video Gallery of the CD. If students have chosen a figure from this time, they can use these clips as part of their research and also edit and manipulate the clips to create an element for their web pages.

Create an Online Presence

5. Now that the students have completed their research, explain that they will use what they have learned to design and create a web page for their historical person. Explain that a website or several websites may already exist about this person, but they are to create a web page as the person would have created it – taking their point of view. Students might create a personal page about the figure, a page that promotes a cause the figure worked on, and so on. If the person is in politics, the page might be about an upcoming election or about an initiative the person is undertaking. Encourage students to be creative in the focus they choose.
6. Have students determine the image content for the page. First, students should decide what photos or images they want to include or create to include on their pages. Some possible image elements might be:
 - A photo slideshow of images representing an aspect or topic of importance to the figure they are researching
 - An image of the historical figure in the context of a present-day background that would be consistent with what they have learned about the figure

Encourage students to be creative in their visual representations.

7. Explain that students can modify or create these images by using Photoshop Elements 5. You might want to demonstrate some basic image editing techniques and then allow students time to work on their images.

Photoshop Elements 5 Guide: How to Create Shapes

Photoshop Elements 5 Guide: How to Make Selections

Photoshop Elements 5 Guide: How to Use Layers

Photoshop Elements 5 Guide: How to Rotate, Level, Crop, and Size Images

Photoshop Elements 5 Guide: How to Quickly Enhance a Photo

Photoshop Elements 5 Guide: How to Retouch a Photo

Photoshop Elements 5 Guide: How to Create and Share a Slideshow

Photoshop Elements 5 Guide: How to Add Music and Narration to a Slide Show

8. If students have gathered any video clips, have them determine how they will use the clips to create a video element on the page. Some possible video elements might be:
 - Integrated clips showing segments of the social, religious, and political climate during the figure's time period, with a narration succinctly describing the situation
 - A video advertisement that supports an issue or topic important to the figure

Encourage students to be creative in integrating different types of video clips to reinforce the purpose of the web page.

9. Explain that students can modify or create these videos by using Premiere Elements 3. You might want to demonstrate some basic video editing techniques and then allow students time to work on their videos.

Premiere Elements 3 Guide: How to Import Video

Premiere Elements 3 Guide: How to Edit Clips

Premiere Elements 3 Guide: How to Add Transitions

Premiere Elements 3 Guide: How to Add Titles

Premiere Elements 3 Guide: How to Record Voice Narration

Premiere Elements 3 Guide: How to Add a Soundtrack

10. After students have decided on content elements, have them decide on the overall look and feel of the page, including colors, fonts, and layout. Students will need to think about the type of content they plan to include, such as images, text, and videos, when they consider the space they have for the layout. Have students sketch the page on paper to determine the layout and color choices, making sure they substantiate their design decisions. Remind them that they will be working with a web page template so they will be able to place their content and selected images and/or video in the template and select the background colors and font.

Note: You might cover some basics of design principles and guidelines to help students understand colors that will work best together and layouts that enable usability and accessibility. You might use some of the websites listed in the background preparation resources for this discussion.

11. Have students use Contribute 4 to browse to their assigned pages, edit the pages to add their content, and then publish their pages.

Contribute 4 Guide: Interface

Contribute 4 Guide: How to Edit Pages

Contribute 4 Guide: How to Add Images

Contribute 4 Guide: How to Create Links

Contribute 4 Guide: How to Publish Pages

Contribute 4 Guide: How to Create Pages

Contribute 4 Guide: How to Use Tables

Contribute 4 Guide: How to Add Documents

12. Explain to students that they will add two additional elements: a list of citations and a reflection in PDF format. At the bottom of their main page, ask students to create links to a PDF document for citations of sources and to a PDF document of the written reflection about what they learned. This reflection should include the rationale for the design and content decisions the students made regarding the web page. They should include a summary of the approach they took, why they decided on this representation of the historical figure, and how the content, images, videos, and overall look and feel of the web page are appropriate for the person they selected. They should conclude with three things they learned in completing this project.

Acrobat 8 Professional Guide: How to Create a PDF

Class Presentation

13. Once their projects are completed, have each student sign up for a presentation slot (recommend 10 minutes for each presentation). During the presentation, students should display their web pages, explain their design and content decisions, and point to the research used to make these decisions.

Extension Activities

You can extend the content of the lesson in the following ways:

- Conduct this activity for other subjects, such as Art, Science, or Math. Within any of these subjects, students can represent online an influential figure who has advanced the field. You might consider figures such as Isaac Newton or Johannes Kepler, for whom there are video segments included in the Image and Video Gallery of the Teacher Resource CD.

You can extend the technical aspects of the lesson in the following ways:

- Have students convert their page sketches to PDF and share this document with peers and the teacher for feedback prior to the final production of the web page.
- Have students convert their web pages to PDF and partner with other students to provide comments and feedback, using Adobe Acrobat 8 Professional, for how well their partners met their initial goals.
- Challenge older students to create a website rather than a web page. In the website project, students will need to consider their navigation choices and overall website structure in addition to their content.

Assessment

- [Lesson Plan Rubric](#)

Background Preparation Resources

Technical Skills and Information:

- If this is the first time you and your students are editing digital images, you may want to go over the [Digital Workflow Information](#).
- View the Contribute School Setup Guide and Contribute Teacher Guide to assist you in creating your class website, using the general website template for student contributions in Contribute 4.
- [Jesse James Garrett: A Visual Vocabulary for Describing Information Architecture and Interaction design](#)
- Examples and instructions for visualizing information and using flowcharts
- [Adobe Website Production Management Techniques](#) - Resources about information architecture, design, and prototyping. (click the topic Screen View for specific information about creating a storyboard or schematic and determining navigation)
- [IBM Web Design Guidelines](#)
- Preparation tips for using this lesson plan:
 - Research your Acceptable Use Policy both for Internet Access and for what is allowable content to post to your school's website.
 - If necessary, work with your school's technology coordinator to help you prepare for the lesson.
 - Install any necessary software on all workstations used for the projects.
 - Prior to teaching this lesson become comfortable with the basics of the software program(s) used in this lesson; use the help section, tutorials, and review the step-by-step technical guides.
 - Find out if your computer setups satisfy all the software system requirements.
 - Prior to teaching this lesson, bookmark all the websites used in the lesson on each computer in your classroom or upload the links to an online bookmarking utility program. Preview all the websites used in the lesson to make certain they are appropriate for your students.

Content Information and Skills:

- Review the concepts of evaluating online resources with your students:
 - Who is the author of the site? Is the information reliable?
 - Who is the site for? Who is the audience?
 - Who sponsors and maintains the site? Has the site won any awards?
 - When was the site created and last updated (check copyright dates)?
 - Is the site well designed?
 - What is the quality of the links?(i.e. Do they link to appropriate content? Do they work?)
 - To learn how to create a website evaluation rubric, visit some of the following resources:
 - [Discovery School's Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators](#) – Critical Evaluation Information
 - [Blue Web'n Site Evaluation Rubric](#)
 - UC Berkeley Library - [Evaluating Web Pages: Techniques to Apply & Questions to Ask](#)

Standards

This lesson is aligned to the ISTE NETS*S Technology Standards. Depending on the subject and content area the student selects you may research your own state content standards to see how this lesson aligns to your state requirements.

[ISTE NETS*S: Curriculum and Content Area Standards – NETS for Students](#)

- Benchmark 1: Basic operations and concepts
 - Students are proficient in the use of technology.
- Benchmark 2: Social, ethical, and human issues
 - Students practice responsible use of technology systems, information, and software.
 - Students develop positive attitudes toward technology uses that support lifelong learning, collaboration, personal pursuits, and productivity.
- Benchmark 3: Technology productivity tools
 - Students use technology tools to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity.
 - Students use productivity tools to collaborate in constructing technology-enhanced models, prepare publications, and produce other creative works.
- Benchmark 4: Technology communications tools
 - Students use a variety of media and formats to communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences.

Assessment

	Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
Citation of Research Resources	Absent or incomplete citation list	Provides a citation list noting his/her research.	N/A
Web Page	Absent or incomplete three-page website	Creates a web page with appropriate design, content, and links.	Creates a web page that looks professionally designed and contains well-written content and links that work properly.
Reflection	Absent, incomplete, or unfocused reflection paper detailing his/her learning process	Provides a reflection paper that details his/her learning process. Includes rationale for web page design and content decisions both in writing and during the presentation.	Provides a clear and precise reflection paper detailing his/her learning process. Includes a clear and coherent rationale for his/her web page design and content decisions. Makes specific connections between specific primary or secondary resources and the images, links, and content on his/her website.