

Lesson Plan TIMELINES, WEBS AND BIRTHDAY CAKES

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Grades: 5, 6-8
Subject: Social Studies
Time Required: 2 to 3 consecutive class periods of
45-50 minutes each

PRIMARY SOURCES & MATERIALS USED

- [Archive](#) page on [Today In History](#) from the Library of Congress Web site
- Computer lab with internet access for one class period
- High quality printer
- LCD projector
- [Example Timeline Poster](#)
- [Sample Timeline Poster](#)

The screenshot shows the 'Today in History' page for November 22. It includes a navigation bar with 'HOME', 'BROWSE', 'ABOUT', 'HELP', and 'CONTACT'. Below the navigation bar, there is a search box and a breadcrumb trail: 'The Library of Congress > American Memory Home > Today in History'. The main heading is 'Today in History: November 22'. There are tabs for 'sources', 'archives', 'yesterday', and 'tomorrow'. The main content area is titled 'John F. Kennedy Assassinated' and features a portrait of John F. Kennedy. Below the portrait, there is a caption: 'President John F. Kennedy, 1961. By Popular Demand: Portraits of the Presidents and First Ladies, 1789-Present'. A quote follows: 'America's leadership must be guided by the lights of learning and reason or else those who confuse rhetoric with reality and the plausible with the possible will gain the popular ascendancy with their seemingly swift and simple solutions to every world problem.' Below the quote, there is another caption: 'President John F. Kennedy, Remarks Prepared for Delivery at the Trade Mart in Dallas, November 22, 1963 (Never Delivered)'. At the bottom, there is a paragraph: 'On Friday, November 22, 1963, President John F. Kennedy was shot as he rode in a motorcade through the streets of Dallas, Texas; he died shortly thereafter. The thirty-fifth president was forty-six years old and had served less than three years in office. During that short time, Kennedy and his wife, Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy, became immensely popular both at home and abroad.'

OVERVIEW

This lesson can be used to teach or review skills and concepts related to how historians organize information into timelines or other graphic organizers.

UNDERSTANDING GOAL

Students will be able to correctly organize events into timelines, webs and other types of graphic organizers.

OBJECTIVES

The learner will work with his or her classmates to construct accurate timelines and webs.

The learner will express his or her thinking process to justify the organization of the timeline and webs.

INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION

How do the events that happened on my birthday fit into the big picture of American history?

TN CURRICULUM STANDARDS:

Social Studies

Content Standard: 5.0
(History)

History involves people, events, and issues. Students will evaluate evidence to develop comparative and casual analyses, and to interpret primary sources. They will construct sound historical arguments and perspectives on which informed decisions in contemporary life can be based.

- 5.02 (Grades 6, 8)
Understand the place of historical events in the context of past, present and future.

PROCEDURE

- Step 1 Connect** Ask students if they know what events took place on their birthdays. Listen to and discuss their responses.
- Step 2** Explain that the students will be using the “Today in History” feature of the Library of Congress Web site to research what happened on their birthdays. Students will use their knowledge to create one-page posters about that event.
- Step 3** Show students the Example Timeline Poster and describe the requirements. Post the Example in the room for future reference.* You may choose to show the Sample as well.
**You may adjust the requirements of the poster for your class. Simply edit the Sample and Example poster or create your own.*
- Step 4 Investigate** Using the LCD projector, show students how to access “Today in History.” The current day's events will be displayed. Show the students the following steps:
- Click on “archives”
 - Go to search option 2: “Jump to a specific **day** in the archive.”
 - Select your birthday from the month and day drop-down menus
 - Click “Go”
- Depending on grade level and reading ability, students may need additional time to read and comprehend the material presented.
Many days have more than one event listed. Instruct students to choose only one event for their posters.
- Step 5 Express** Students will open a word processing program and create their posters based on their research.*
Students will print posters when they are finished.
** This lesson plan assumes that the students know how to use a word processing program and basic features such as Copy and Paste. If your students do not, you will need to allot an additional class period for teaching these skills.*
- Step 6 Express** Class Period 2
Allow students to briefly share their posters with their classmates.
- Step 7 Construct** Instruct students to organize themselves into a timeline based on the year that their events occurred.
- Step 8 Reflect** Review the days of the timeline with the students and help them correct any errors. Ask one or two students to describe the processes they used to find their place in line. Discuss their responses with the class.
Discuss the concept of spacing along a timeline to express the passage of time.
Work with the group to apply spacing to their timeline using a hallway or outdoor space if possible.
- Step 9 Construct** Explain to students that timelines are only one way that historians organize information. Instruct students to create a living web by finding other students whose events share some characteristic with theirs.
- Step 10 Reflect** Have students identify the common characteristic their events share and how they came to group themselves based on this concept.
Discuss their thinking processes and alternate groupings within the class.

EVALUATION

The students will be evaluated on their participation and their posters. The following rubrics may be used.

Poster:

Visual Appeal and Neatness: 25 points

Accuracy: 25 points

Date, Year, Event, Graphic, Summary: 10 points each

Class Discussion/ Participation:

Adequate Participation: 85 points, with additional points awarded for extraordinary participation.

EXTENSIONS

Challenge each student to find a concept that links his or her event to at least one other student's. Instruct them to hold hands to represent the link. The goal is that all the students are connected. Allow the students to explain the connection(s) between their events. Discuss their thinking processes and describe alternatives.

Use the posters from multiple classes to create a "This Day in History" calendar for the classroom. Allow students to read their posters on their birthdays. Make accommodations for days that occur outside the school schedule so every student has an equal opportunity.