

Monday

Did you know?

William Howard Taft was the first president to throw out the ceremonial first pitch at a baseball game.



Journal prompt:

By throwing out the first pitch at a ball game, President Taft was briefly the center of attention. Do you like to be the center of attention? Why or why not?



Discussion question:

Taft did not enjoy his time as president. He enjoyed his law work more. If a president does not enjoy his job, should he continue doing it? Does he have an obligation to fulfill his duties?



Research topic:

During Taft's term in office, Japan gave the United States cherry trees. The trees were planted along the banks of the Potomac River. Find out more about the Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington, DC.



Tuesday

Did you know?

President Woodrow Wilson was the last president to ride to his inauguration in a horse-drawn carriage.



Journal prompt:

Before cars were widely available, people used horse-drawn carriages to travel. Does this sound like a fun way to get from place to place? Why or why not?



Discussion question:

Wilson wanted world peace. He once said, "Friendship is the only cement that will ever hold the world together." What do you think he meant by this? Do you think this statement is true?



Research topic:

America changed in many ways while Wilson was in politics. For example, when he was elected governor of New Jersey in 1910, there were less than 500,000 automobiles on the roads. Ten years later, at the end of his presidency, there were more than 8 million automobiles. Find out what other changes occurred from 1910 to 1920.



Wednesday

Did you know?

Many people were interested in Warren G. Harding's dog, Laddie Boy. To satisfy that curiosity, Harding wrote letters to the press pretending to be Laddie Boy.



Journal prompt:

Called the White House's first celebrity dog, Laddie Boy went to cabinet meetings and White House fundraisers. The *New York Times* ran regular stories about Laddie. Write a series of imaginary newspaper headlines about Laddie and his adventures.



Discussion question:

While working in the newspaper business, Harding avoided printing news stories that were critical of other people. Do you think that was a good idea? Why or why not? How do you think Harding's newspapers were different from today's news sources?



Research topic:

Warren Harding invited many friends to Washington, DC, to help with government jobs. Unfortunately, many of his friends were corrupt. Use a dictionary to learn what *corrupt* means. Then find out how the actions of Harding's friends affected his presidency.



Thursday

Did you know?

Even though the 30th president was a pretty quiet guy, Calvin Coolidge was known for playing jokes on his staff.



Journal prompt:

Calvin Coolidge was a quiet man, but he still liked to have fun. Who do you know that likes to have fun? What are some things you like to do with this person?



Discussion question:

Coolidge, known as Silent Cal, once said, "I have never been hurt by what I have not said." What do you think that means? Do you think a president should watch what he says or should say whatever he thinks or feels?



Research topic:

Jazz was popular during Coolidge's time in office. Find out more about some of the jazz musicians who became stars during the mid-1920s, such as Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and Fletcher Henderson.



Friday

Did you know?

Herbert Hoover worked many jobs—such as weeding onions and delivering newspapers—before and during his time as a student at Stanford University in California.



Journal prompt:

After taking a break from school, Herbert Hoover worked hard to pay for his college education. What is a goal you have? How do you work toward achieving it?



Discussion question:

Hoover had become a multimillionaire before he became president. Do you think people who come from wealthy backgrounds make better leaders than those who come from hardships? Explain.



Research topic:

Hoover was president during the Great Depression. Many people lived in what were called Hoovervilles. Find out what Hoovervilles were like and why people lived there.



Monday

Did you know?

Franklin D. Roosevelt was the first president to fly overseas on official business.



Journal prompt:

Before airplanes, people had to travel long distances by ship and train. What is your favorite way to travel? What do you like about this method of transportation?



Discussion question:

Historians often call Franklin D. Roosevelt one of the greatest US presidents. What makes a good leader? What makes a good president?



Research topic:

Roosevelt did not want the American people to know he was paralyzed by polio. He made sure he was not photographed in his wheelchair. Find out what else Roosevelt did to hide his disability from the public.



Tuesday

Did you know?

A failed business led Harry Truman to seek a career in politics.



Journal prompt:

Harry Truman opened a clothing store, and it failed. He chose a new path for work, and it led him to the White House. Think about a time you were led down a different path than you planned. Write about it.



Discussion question:

Truman spent much of his youth reading. How do you think this may have helped him during his presidency? Are there other skills that might have helped him more? If so, what?



Research topic:

One of the president's duties is to serve as the Commander in Chief of the armed forces. As such, Truman made the decision to use an atomic bomb on Japan in World War II. Learn about some of the president's other responsibilities and duties.



Wednesday

Did you know?

Eisenhower was a big fan of golf. In fact, he added a putting green to the White House and played more than 800 rounds of golf while in office.



Journal prompt:

Golf was one of Dwight D. Eisenhower's hobbies. What is a hobby you enjoy? Tell why you enjoy it.



Discussion question:

The 22nd Amendment limits presidents to two terms in office. Eisenhower was the first president whose term was limited. Do you think this amendment is a good idea? If not, do you think presidents should serve shorter or longer terms?



Research topic:

Alaska and Hawaii became US states while Eisenhower was in office. Learn more about these states. Tell how they are alike and different.



Thursday

Did you know?

While Kennedy was not a great student as a youngster, one of his college papers was published as a book.



Journal prompt:

John F. Kennedy was known for excelling at school subjects he liked but not doing well in subjects that did not interest him. What is a school subject you enjoy? Why do you enjoy it?



Discussion question:

Kennedy encouraged Americans to be active citizens. What do you think this means? Can a country be strong without active citizens? Why or why not?



Research topic:

While in the Navy, John F. Kennedy saved the lives of some fellow sailors. He was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal as well as a Purple Heart. Research one of these awards. List the criteria for receiving it.



Friday

Did you know?

Lyndon B. Johnson hated to waste electricity. He earned the nickname "Light Bulb Lyndon" because he would often storm around the White House, turning off unneeded lights.



Journal prompt:

Saving electricity was important to Lyndon B. Johnson. Think about something that matters to you. How do you show you care about this? What nickname might you get as a result?



Discussion question:

Johnson was one of many vice presidents who became president after a president's death. What are the pros and cons of taking over a presidency like this? Do you think being vice president made it easier for him to transition into the presidency than if he had been elected to the job? Explain.



Research topic:

NASA is a government agency that came from Johnson's work as Senate majority leader. Find out what NASA is and what it does.

