

#9439

# THE WHITE HOUSE

FILM IDEAS, INC.

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Grade Levels: 3-8

13 minutes



## DESCRIPTION

What is the White House? How did it get its name? What happens there? Points out the important features and rooms, the history, and some ceremonies of the White House--home and office of the President of the United States.

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS

### Subject Area: Civics

- Standard: Understands the importance of Americans sharing and supporting certain values, beliefs, and principles of American constitutional democracy
  - Benchmark: Knows how various symbols are used to depict Americans' shared values, principles, and beliefs and explain their meaning (e.g., the flag, Statue of Liberty, Statue of Justice, Uncle Sam, great seal, national anthem, oaths of office, mottoes such as E Pluribus Unum)

### Subject Area: Historical Understanding

- Standard: Understands the historical perspective
  - Benchmark: Understands that specific individuals had a great impact on history
  - Benchmark: Understands that specific ideas had an impact on history

## INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To define what *symbols* are and what the White House represents.
2. To introduce the history of the White House.
3. To review how the White House received its name.
4. To examine the important people and events involved with the origins and the design of the White House.
5. To observe the many different forms/images associated with the White House and how they are used.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Learn how 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue is much more than the residence for the President of the United States. It is recognized around the world as a symbol which represents American democracy, freedom and self-determination.

Discover this homes' varied and interesting past. Our nation's first President, George Washington, personally chose the site for the White House, but was the only President never to

reside there. During battles with Britain, the home was almost burned to the ground; however, it withstood the ravages of fire and eventually emerged as a prominent symbol for American ideals. Experience the historic significance of such rooms like the Oval Office, Treaty Room, and famous East room. Relive the legendary rose garden ceremonies.

From honoring visiting dignitaries throughout the world to representing the true principles of American democracy, freedom, and self-determination—the White House is an American treasure students will appreciate because of its symbolic value, purpose and message.

## VOCABULARY

1. White House
2. George Washington
3. James Hoban
4. John and Abigail Adams
5. symbol
6. James Madison
7. Oval Office



## AFTER SHOWING

### Discussion Items and Questions

1. Where is the White House located and who lives there?
2. What does the White House represent? Define *democracy*.
3. What United States president never lived in the White House? Why could he not live there?
4. Who chose the site for the White House? Who was the first United States president to live in the White House?
5. How did the White House get its name?
6. Name the room used as the President's daily work place? Name other rooms located in the White House.

### Applications and Activities

1. Many different presidents and their families have lived in the White House. Have students choose a president and then have them write a short historical biography about the president and his family while living in the White House.
2. Tour the school or community and document the symbols the students see. After writing them down on a piece of paper, have them research the symbol using resources to describe what each symbol represents. During their research, perhaps have them write a short historical perspective on the origins of the symbol.
3. Have the students discuss a problem in your school or community. For example, is there confusion in the lunchroom cafeteria as to how the students should line up and be served food and beverages; or is there miscommunication about where certain school supplies should be stored; are certain rooms and schoolyard areas properly marked for student safety; etc. After discussing the problem, evaluate whether the problem may possibly be solved by students creating posters which effectively communicate ideas through symbols.

## RELATED RESOURCES



### Captioned Media Program

- American Bald Eagle #9436
- Images of Liberty #9437
- Uncle Sam #9441
- The U.S. Flag #9438
- Washington, D.C. #7799
- Washington, D.C.: Heart of a Nation #2441



### World Wide Web

The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **THE WHITE HOUSE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION HOMEPAGE**

<http://www.whitehousehistory.org/>

Take a virtual tour on selected rooms of the White House!

- **THE WHITE HOUSE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION: HISTORY**

[http://www.whitehousehistory.org/04\\_history/subs\\_timeline/frame\\_a01.html](http://www.whitehousehistory.org/04_history/subs_timeline/frame_a01.html)

Click on the "Architecture" icon and select a period in time from the 1790s to 1990s to read a brief description of detailed plans of specific areas.

- **THE WHITE HOUSE**

[http://www.time.com/time/campaign2000/whitehouse/photo\\_01.html](http://www.time.com/time/campaign2000/whitehouse/photo_01.html)

View a photo essay, take an aerial view, and take an interactive tour of the White House.