

Focusing on the First Ladies

Lesson Plan #5: A Report Card

Subject: U.S. History or Government

Grade level: 8-12

Rationale or Purpose: After completing all of the activities in the curriculum unit, the students will use the knowledge they have gained about the individual First Ladies and the roles and responsibilities that come with the job to determine who they think has been the most important First Lady in modern times.

Materials:

- The Fact Sheets for the First Ladies
- The Life Grids completed in the first lesson plan.
- Other appropriate resource material such as news articles, biographies, etc.

Objectives:

- U.S. History 21. A - how individual people from various groups contribute to our national identity
- U.S. History 21.D – identify the political, social, and economic contributions of women to American society
- U.S. History 24 – applying critical thinking skills to organize and use information from a variety of sources including electronic technology
- U.S. History 25 – communication in written, oral, and visual forms
- Government 3 – the roles played by individuals in the U.S. political system past and present
- Government 21 – applying critical thinking skills to organize and use information from a variety of sources including electronic technology.

Activity:

Step 1. The student will develop five categories that he or she thinks are essential qualities or characteristics that could be used to evaluate a First Lady's job performance. (NOTE: students may want to refer to Life Grids 1 and 2)

Step 2. The student will design a report card that explains each of the five important characteristics and the scale that is used to evaluate each characteristic.

Step 3. The student will choose a First Lady and complete the report card developed to evaluate the First Lady's job performance.

Modification: The student will create a grid with the five evaluation categories listed in the columns and the names of the First Ladies listed on the rows. Then each First Lady is evaluated in each category. The student will then compare the various job performances of all of the First Ladies at one time.

Student Product:

1. A report card that evaluates the job performance of one First Lady.
2. A grid or chart that evaluates the job performance of all of the First Ladies.

Closure: Ask the students to compare their individual report cards and discuss why they chose to rank the First Lady as they did.

Assessment or evaluation: The student will be evaluated on the completeness of the report card developed.

Extension: Have the students research one of the First Ladies from the past and use the report card he or she developed to evaluate the job performance of the former First Lady. Have the students discuss how the job of the First Lady has changed over more than two hundred years. Is it possible to evaluate a First Lady of the past by the same standards that are used to evaluate a modern First Lady?