

## Presidents 1840-1912 Assignment

### Presidents: Successful or Not? You be the judge! American History Semester Project:

As William Shakespeare said, "some are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them." Some of our presidents came from humble means, some from somewhat aristocratic backgrounds; but they were our presidents, our leaders and we celebrated them and taught their greatness, however, they achieved it.

-Taken from *Presidential Leadership*, a Wall Street Journal Book

In our quest, we ask: were the presidents of the time period from 1840 to 1912 really successful as leaders? Some were so great, some were average and some were below average in their performance as president. We want to give each of the presidents a report card based on their ability to be successful in the following area:

➤ Leadership	➤ Decision-Making
➤ Strengthening the Economy	➤ Working with Congress ➤
➤ Making successful Foreign Policy	➤ Persuading the Public and Congress
➤ Setting a Vision for the Nation	➤ Popularity
➤ Communication Skills	➤ Empathy and Compassion
➤ Military Leadership Skills	➤ Crisis Management
➤ Moral Authority	➤ Choosing Advisor

**YOUR** job is to decide in which category your president belongs: the great, the average, and the unsuccessful. We have certain criteria upon which to base your evaluations. You will produce a report card, a research paper and a presentation on your president.

- ❖ All papers are due on the same day: to be announced.
- ❖ Presentations (either poster or power point, including report card) will be given as we get to the presidents in our curriculum which will take us all the way through the first semester.

#### You have to read about your president.

- ❖ You will write an evaluation of your president showing how you arrive at grade.
- ❖ This will be typed and be three to four pages long.

**Required:** cite sources within the paper using parenthetical form; i.e. (Smith, p.492) or internet: ("title of article, website, p. of website")

## THE TASK:

- ❖ Look at and understand the characteristics used to rate and evaluate.
- ❖ After you read your research: required 2 books, 3 legitimate internet sources.

**Required:** at least one primary source used and cited within your paper (newspaper article, letter, speech, editorial from the time period).

Take time to reflect and think and then

## ESSENTIAL QUESTION TO ANSWER:

Was this president a successful president based on the qualities needed for leadership? (Note: you probably will not address each characteristic, but do choose at least 4 to consider.)

1. All your evidence must come from your research.
2. The first paragraph must discuss the leadership qualities you are using to make your decision. It must have a thesis statement that expresses the main idea of the paper: in the first paragraph, probably toward the end of it, you should have a sentence that says:
3. (Name of president) was successful (or not) because.....
4. In the first paragraph, you should also include a small amount of information about when he was president, his background, his wife's name, what experiences may have influenced him, what he did prior to becoming president that may have qualified him for the office, etc. But this is not the main part of the paper. The main part argues for or against his success as president on what he did while president.
5. The second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, maybe even seventh, paragraphs will explain why you made your decision based on what he did while he was president using the characteristics of quality leadership you chose.
6. The last paragraph sums up your main points about why he was successful or not. Use the leadership characteristics you chose to reinforce your researched decision.
7. Make your point of view clear in the introduction and the conclusion. Support your decision with facts, historians' opinions, primary source quotes, etc. that are cited correctly.
8. Fill out the presidential chart on "your" president then present that information to the class so we can learn about that president.
9. Create a poster or power point presentation that Persuades us that your president was successful or not.
10. The poster or power point will include: photos or pictures of:
  - ❖ The president
  - ❖ the First Lady
  - ❖ the president's home (before and/or after he was president)
  - ❖ his gravesite
  - ❖ pictures that highlight events of his presidency.
  - ❖ Cite where you obtained the photos.

The essay will be evaluated on how strongly you make your argument, how well you support your conclusions with factual information, how organized your essay is and that you include evidence of the primary source and different sources.

**PRESIDENTIAL REPORT CARD: CHOOSE 4 CATEGORIES**

As you do your research keep this chart with you. Let it help you determine the successes and/or weaknesses of your president. Use this chart to make a decision about the "greatness" of your president.

PRESIDENT: \_\_\_\_\_ DATES IN OFFICE: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating system: 1-failed    2-poor    3-satisfactory    4-good    5- excellent

Choose at least 4 criteria upon which to evaluate your president. When you are done filling out your chart add up your score to get the total divide to get the average. This may help you in gauging the success of your president.

	FAILED 1	POOR 2	SATISFACTORY 3	VERY GOOD 4	EXCELLENT 5
Inspirational Leadership					
Crisis Management					
Economic Management					
Character/Moral Integrity					
Relations with Congress					
International Relations					
Vision-Setting An Agenda					
Pursued Equal Justice for All					
Public Popularity					

Decisiveness					
Communication Skills					
Skilled Compromiser					
Empathy and Compassion					
Military Leadership Skills					

TOTAL SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_

AVERAGE SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

President's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**PAPER REQUIREMENTS:**

Cover Page: title, name, date, teacher's name, class period	5 Points _____
Typed: double space, 12 font, one inch margins, Times New Roman, 3-5 pages in length	5 Points _____
Editing: Proofread, spelling and grammar checked and corrected for final draft	15 Points _____
Parenthetical citations of quoted or paraphrased material with citations immediately following the information	15 Points _____
Rating scale included in paper	5 Points _____
Answers essential questions with supporting facts and used presidential report card categories to support position.	20 Points _____
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Makes a persuasive argument about whether or not president is successful based on variables discussed in class.</li> </ul>	
Writing is organized, logical and contains a clear conclusion.	20 Points _____
Bibliography is the last page, formatted correctly and handed in the same day the paper is due.	15 Points _____
(Each day paper is late= 1/2 grade off)	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 Points</b>

**POSTER/POWERPOINT REQUIREMENTS:**

- Presentation should be between 5 and 8 minutes
- Poster should be full of half size and must represent the President with pictures, quotes, etc. **OR**
- PowerPoint show should also include slides about the president's life with pictures, quotes, graphics etc.
- Handouts for the class are not necessary, but encouraged (give the hand out to me the day before the presentation and I will Xerox them for class)

Presentation should evidence creativity and effort and should be neat and on time. Words should be spelled correctly, dates should be accurate, captions should accompany all pictures.

TOTAL: 50 Points

**EVALUATION OF PRESENTATION (50 POINTS)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

President: \_\_\_\_\_

Knowledge of Subject:

Organization of Material:

Presentation Style:

Visual, Poster, Audio:

Held Interest of Audience:

Introduction and Conclusion:

Effort:

Comments:

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_