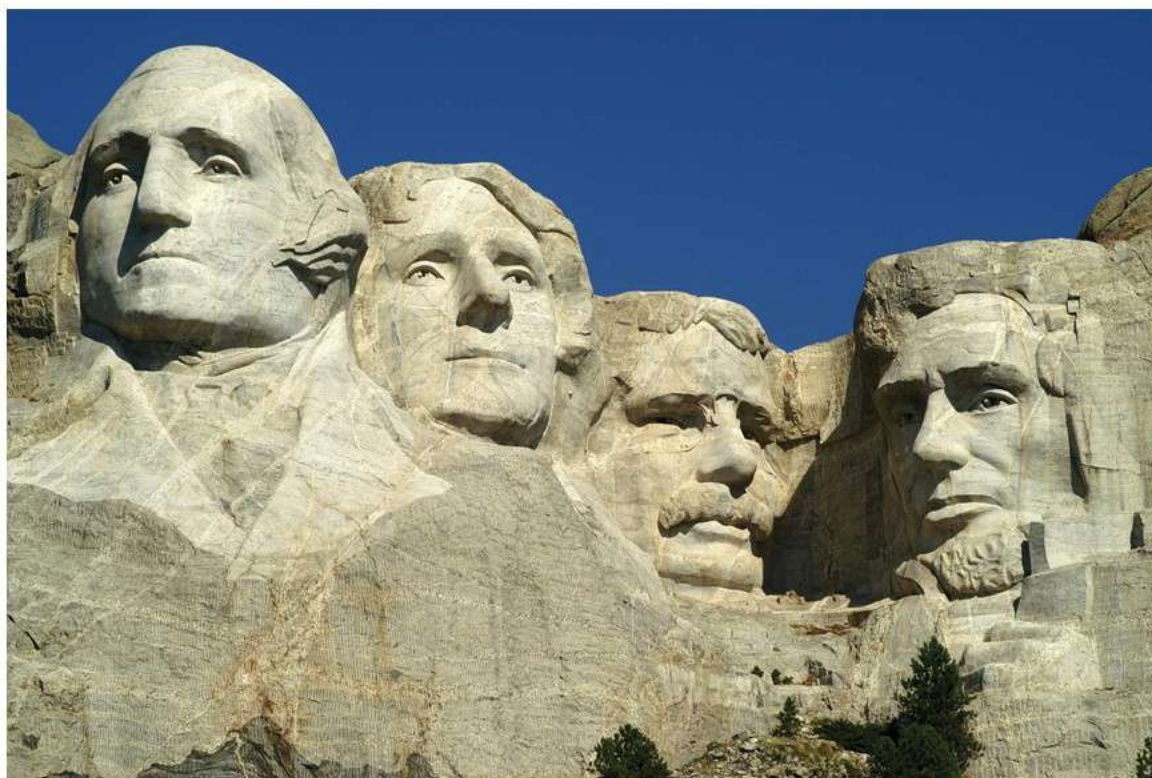


LESSON 9 - CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

Today I am going to tell you a story about a wonderful monument. This is a special monument of four of the presidents you have been learning about: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln. *This is Mount Rushmore. Let's name the four people shown.* This monument is carved, or cut out of rock, on Mount Rushmore in the Black Hills of South Dakota. *[Point to South Dakota on a U.S. map.]*



CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

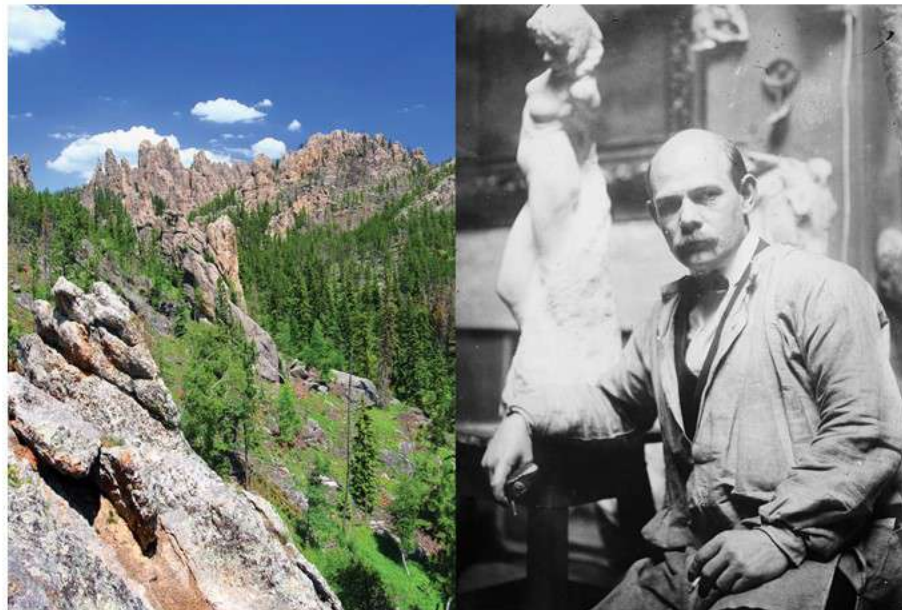
What is happening in this picture?

“BOOM!” Everyone near the mountain was covering their ears, but they still heard the thunderous explosion, followed by loud crashes. “BOOM!” It happened again. Gutzon Borglum [/gut*sun/ /bar*glum/] was blowing up a mountain.



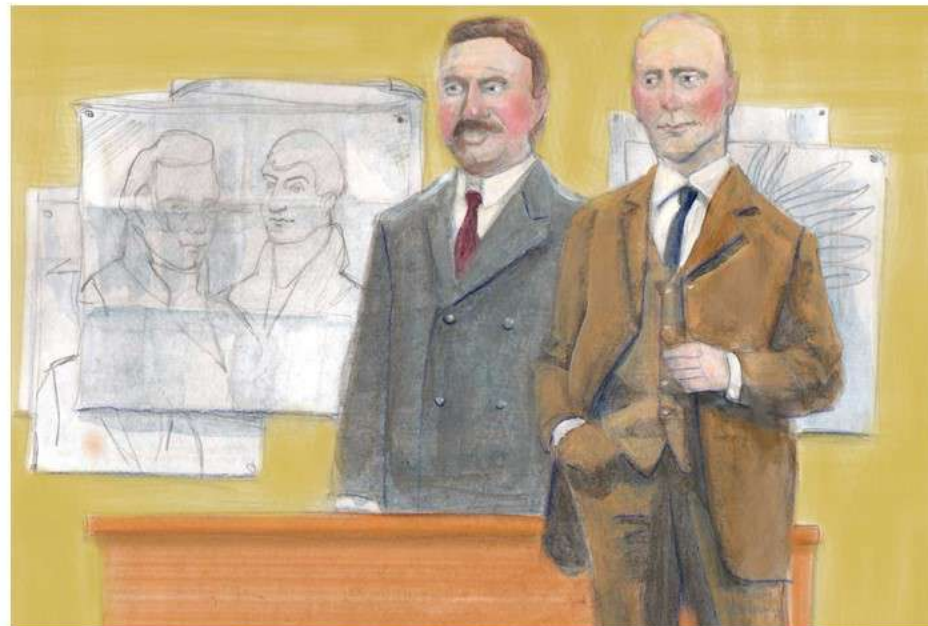
CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

Gutzon Borglum was a well-known American sculptor. *A sculptor is someone who creates a work of art by carving or molding clay or stone.* He created many statues of important people in history. One of his statues of Abraham Lincoln is on display inside the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C. Gutzon Borglum usually used a hammer and chisels with sharp points to make sculptures out of rock. But this statue was different. This time, Gutzon Borglum was using dynamite to blow away huge pieces of rock from the side of a gigantic mountain.



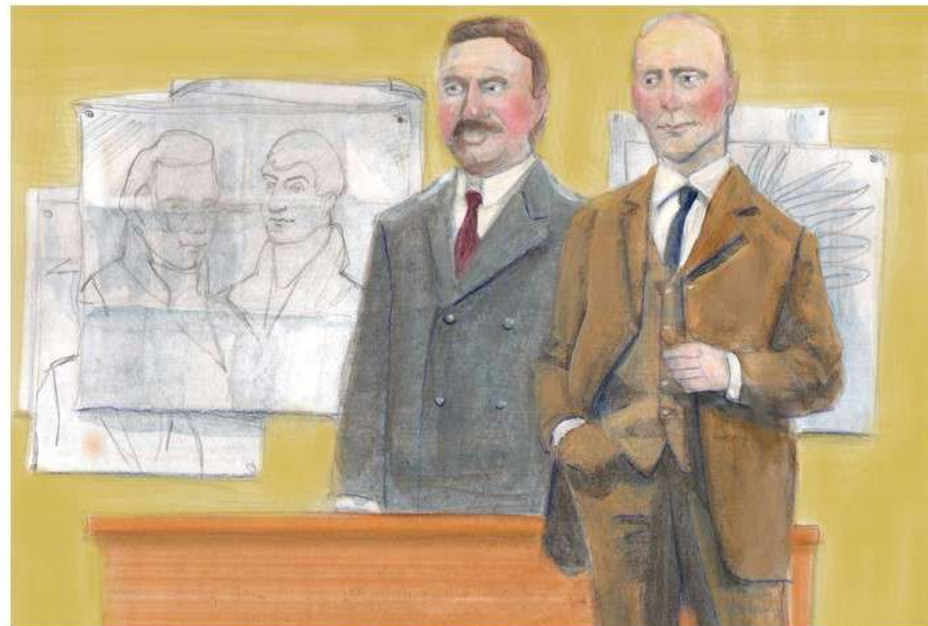
CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

It all began with a man who had a big idea—a very big idea. Doane [/dwaen/] Robinson loved his home state of South Dakota. He loved hearing stories about South Dakota from long ago. He loved South Dakota so much that he wanted people from all over America to visit and learn about his home state. “I know a way to get people to come to South Dakota,” thought Robinson. “People will come to see a giant statue carved into the side of one of our big mountains.”



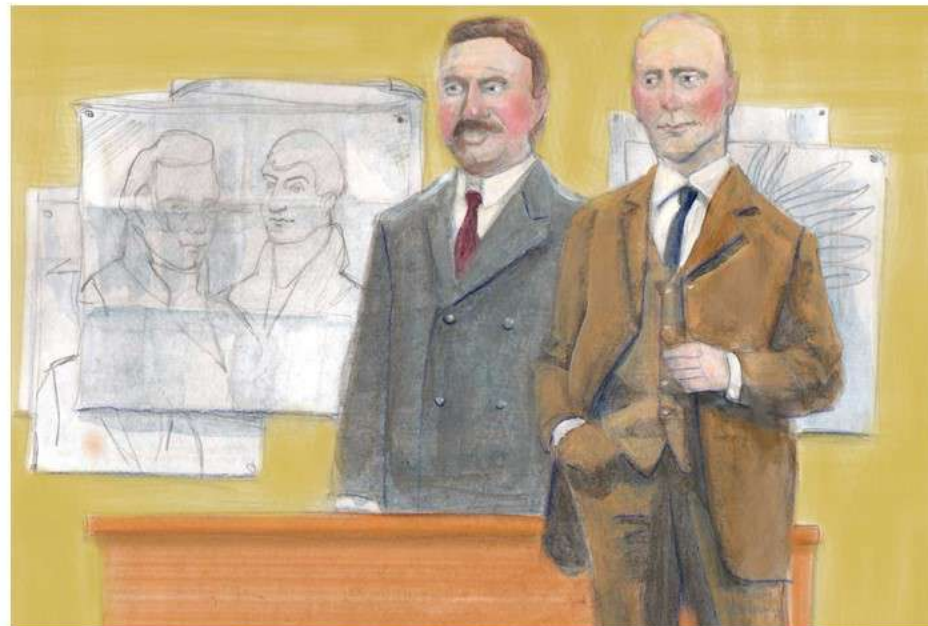
CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

Robinson thought the sculpture should feature well-known people from South Dakota's past. Maybe a Native American chief. Or a hero from the Wild West. Or perhaps explorers like Lewis and Clark. He wasn't quite sure who the statue should feature, but he knew one thing: it would have to be so big that people could see it from miles away.



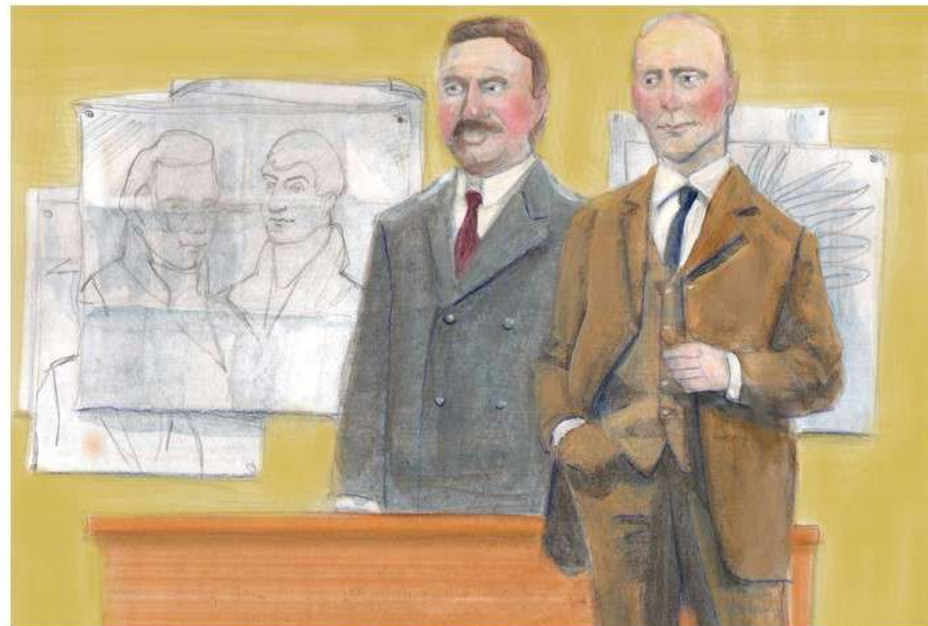
CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

Robinson knew that he would need to get permission to build such an enormous statue. He would also need money to pay for the project, and a sculptor to design it. The first person Robinson talked to was the United States senator from South Dakota. *[Point out the senator on the left and Robinson on the right.]* The senator thought it was a wonderful idea. "I will help get the United States government to agree with your plan," the senator told Robinson. "I will also ask my friends in the South Dakota government for their support, too."



CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

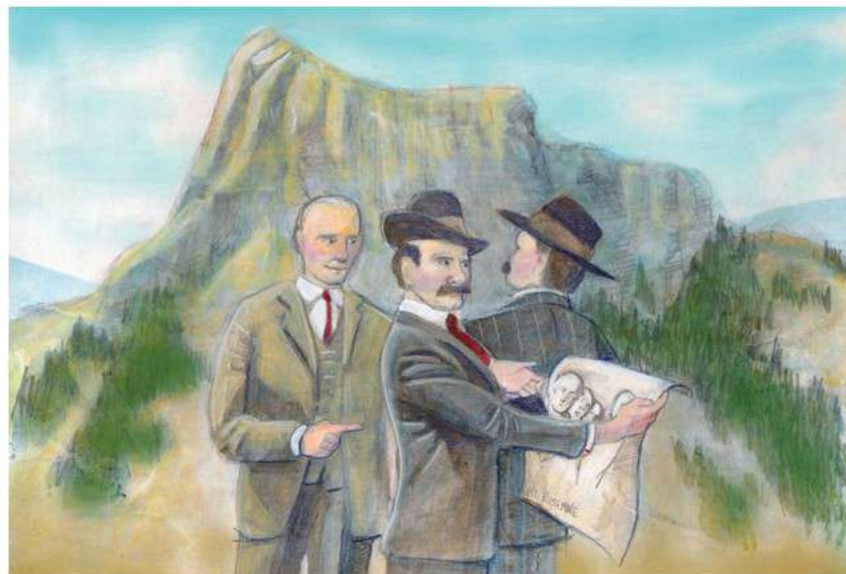
Not everyone thought the idea to carve a giant statue in the mountains of South Dakota was a good one. For many, many years, various Native American tribes lived on the land around Mount Rushmore. Many Native Americans, including the Lakota Sioux, believed the area of the Black Hills where Mount Rushmore was to be carved was sacred, or holy, land. They did not think it was right that their sacred land was first taken away from them years earlier. And now, they did not believe that a statue should be carved into the mountain.



CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

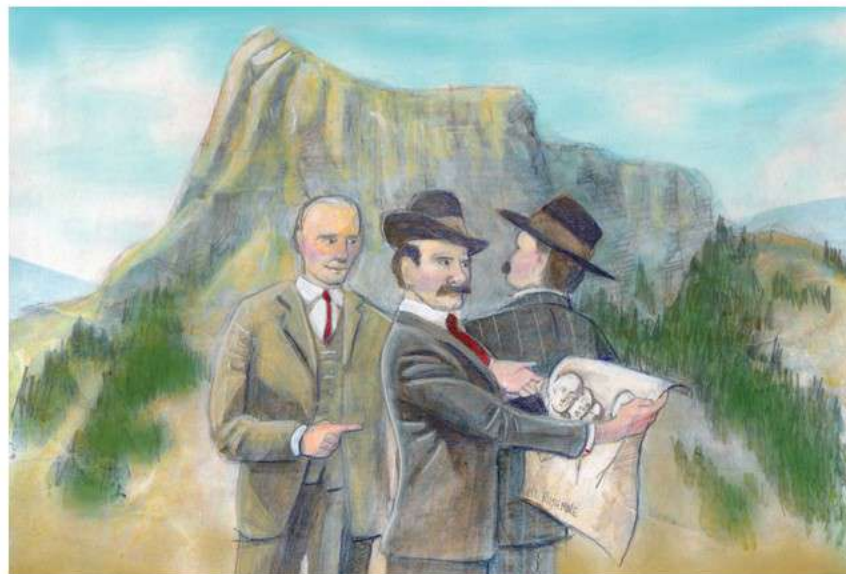
Despite the Native Americans' objections, Robinson and the senator moved forward with their plan to find a sculptor. *That means the Native Americans did not want them to carve the mountain, but they did it anyway.* They found the perfect man for the job: Gutzon Borglum. *[Ask students to repeat his name: /gut*sun/ /bar*glum/]*

Gutzon Borglum came to South Dakota to see the mountains for himself. He liked the idea of carving a huge statue into the Black Hills. But he believed this project should be even bigger than Robinson and the senator first imagined.



CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

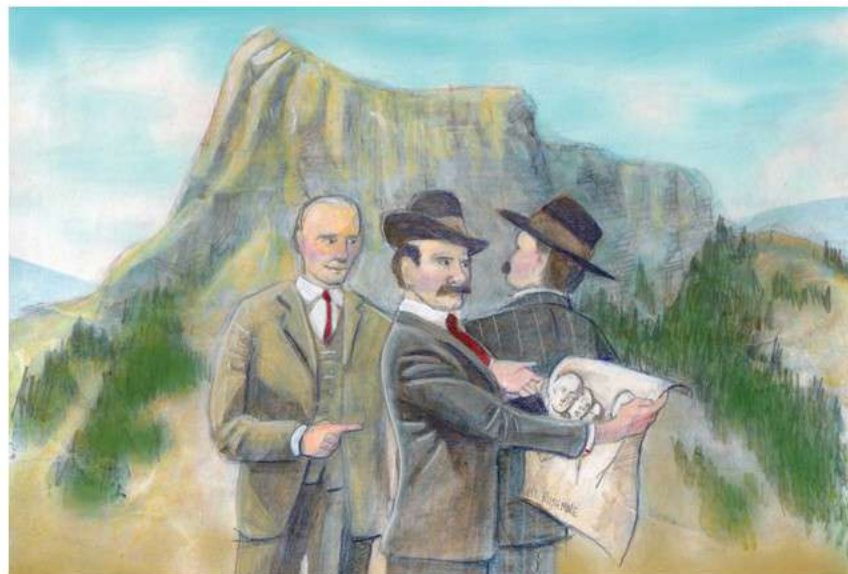
“To attract people from all over America,” said the sculptor, “we should carve statues of people who are familiar across the country—not just well-known in South Dakota.” Robinson and the senator liked Borglum’s idea. It was Borglum who suggested four presidents who he felt symbolized the first one hundred and fifty years of America: Presidents Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Roosevelt. President George Washington was our first president. President Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence.



CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

President Lincoln was the president during the Civil War, and President Roosevelt—a personal favorite of Borglum and Robinson—worked for nature conservation.

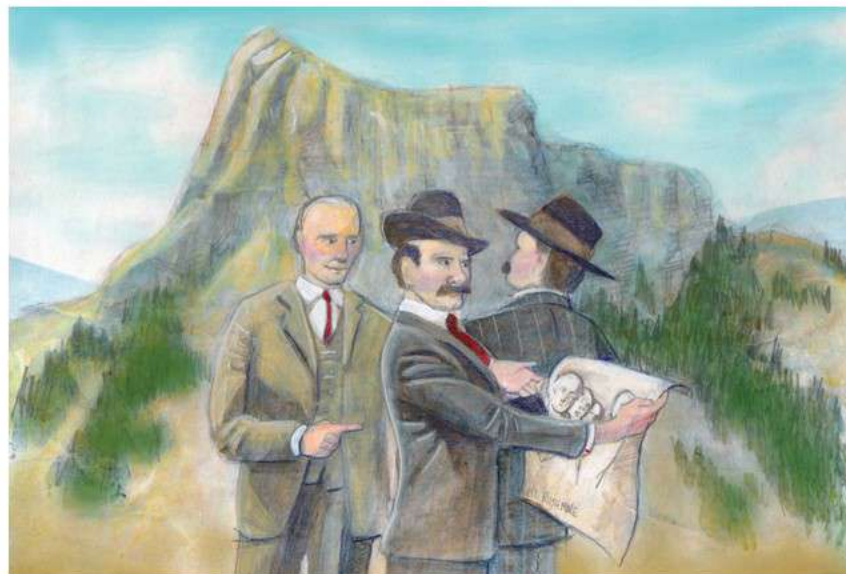
With the others' support, Gutzon Borglum began to search the Black Hills for the right spot to carve his monument. "No," he thought, "the rock in this one is not the right kind for carving. It will crumble and fall apart."



CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

“That mountain has the right kind of rock, but it cannot be seen well from a distance.”

Finally, Borglum announced, “We shall carve Mount Rushmore. American history will march along that mountaintop!”



CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

Now the only thing the group needed was the money to pay for the project. As luck would have it, Calvin Coolidge, the U.S. president at the time, and his wife came to South Dakota on vacation. To make sure that President and Mrs. Coolidge enjoyed their visit, the senator and his friends secretly moved extra fish into the stream outside the Coolidges' vacation cabin.



CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

They hoped the president would catch lots of fish and would want to stay in South Dakota longer. It worked! While he was there, Gutzon Borglum and Doane Robinson went to ask the president to help raise money for their project. President Coolidge liked the idea, too. He gave a speech about their plan so people from all across the country would read about it and send money to help. Finally, Gutzon Borglum could begin carving the mountainside monument.



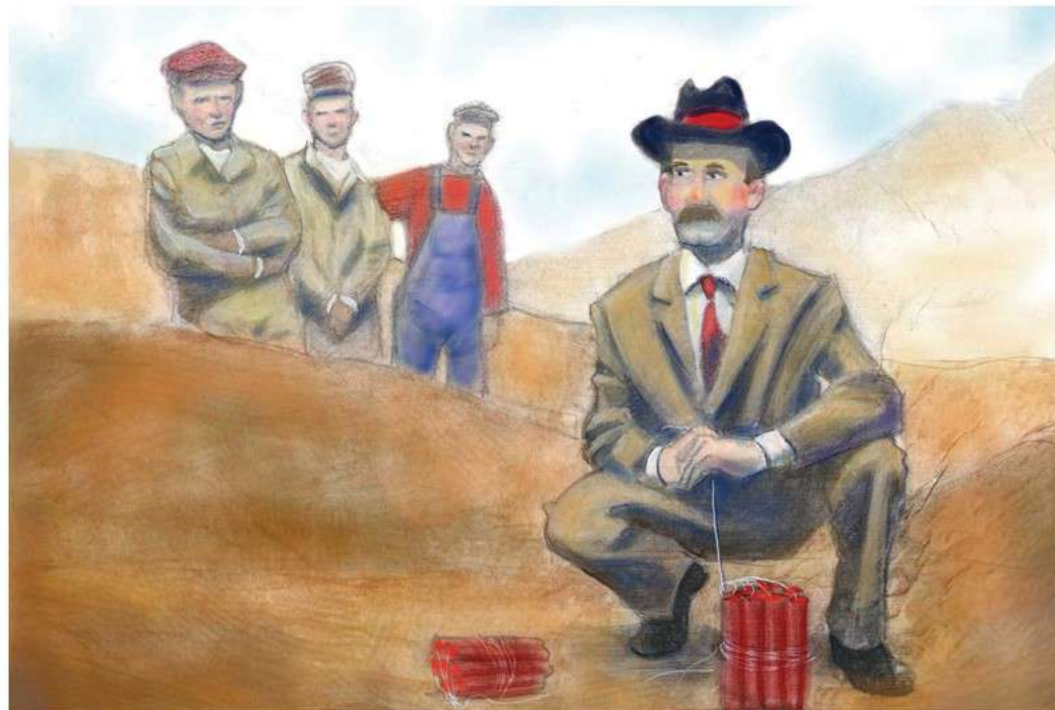
CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

This carving was too big to create with a hammer and chisel, the way Borglum sculpted other statues. *Hammers and chisels are tools that a sculptor uses.* Some of the chunks of rock he wanted to cut away from the mountainside were as big and heavy as a truck. He would have to blow them away with dynamite.



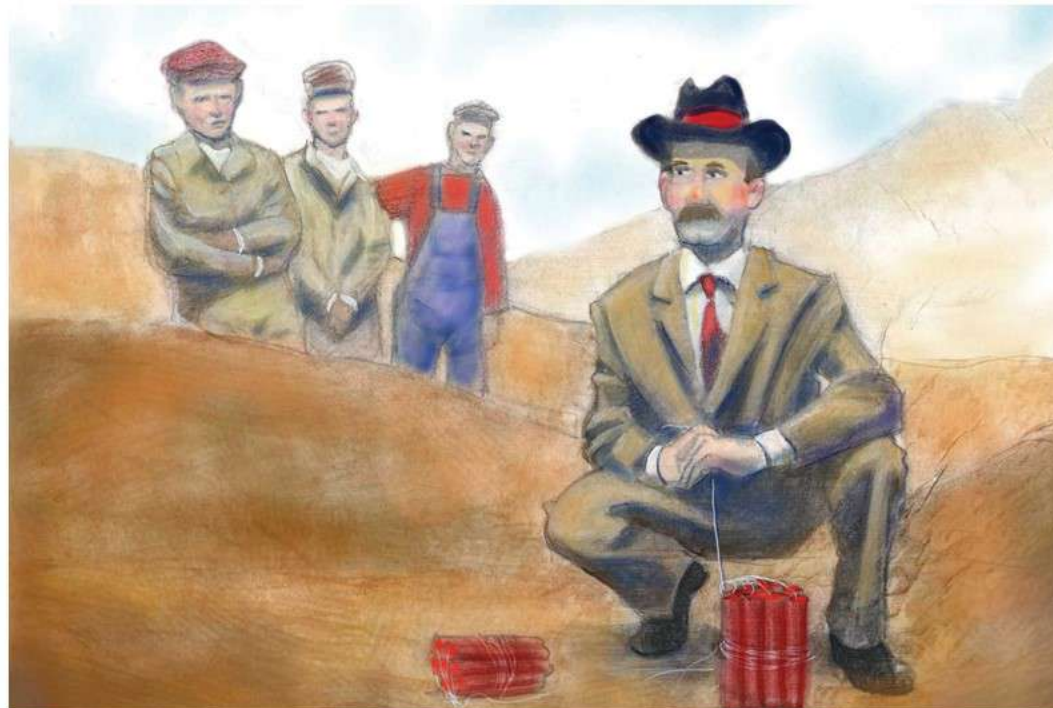
CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

Gutzon Borglum had about four hundred people helping him. Many had worked in mines and knew about cutting rock. *People in mines dig into the ground to find coal and minerals. In order to dig through the ground, they needed to cut through rock.* Others had used dynamite to blow open holes for mines. But they told Borglum, "Nobody has ever asked us to shape a mountain before. We do not know where to set the dynamite so it will explode in the right direction. We don't know how to blow up just the right amount of rock, but not too much."



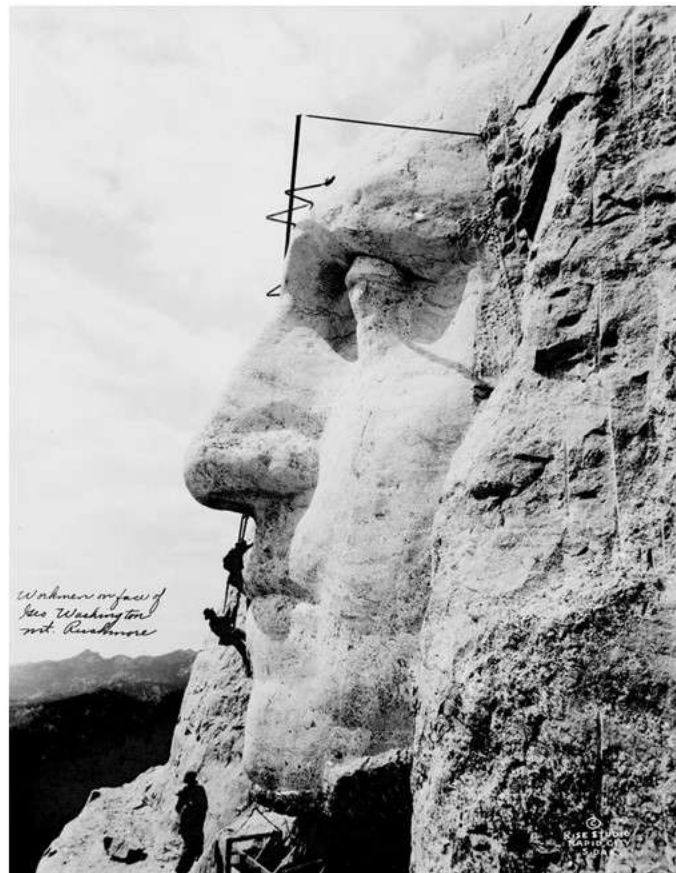
CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

Borglum had to figure out how to do that himself and teach his workers. Every step had to be done very carefully. If they cut too much rock, they could not put it back. After the dynamite did its job, some workers smoothed the surface, while others cleaned up the rocks and dust left from the explosions.



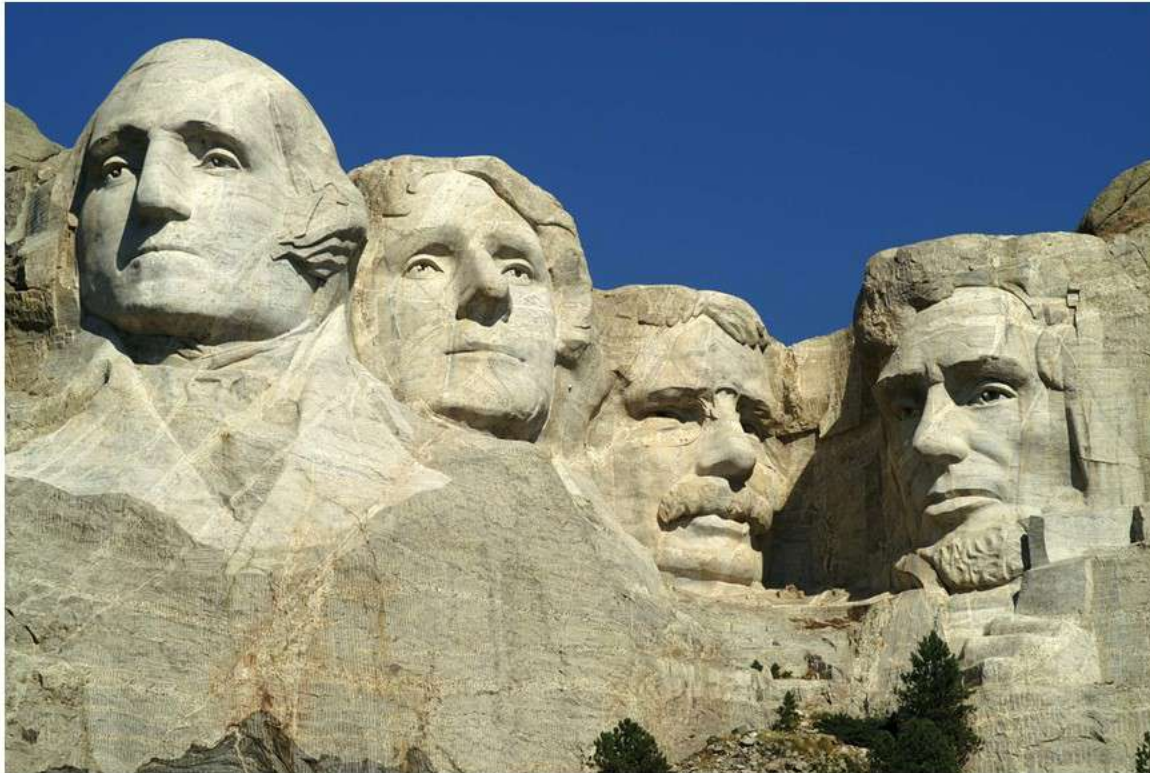
CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

It took more than fourteen years to complete the project—from beginning to end. Unfortunately, Gutzon Borglum died in March 1941, just six months before the giant faces were done. Thankfully, his son, Lincoln, who Borglum had named after the president, was determined to finish what his father had begun. *He decided not give up on the work to finish the monument.*



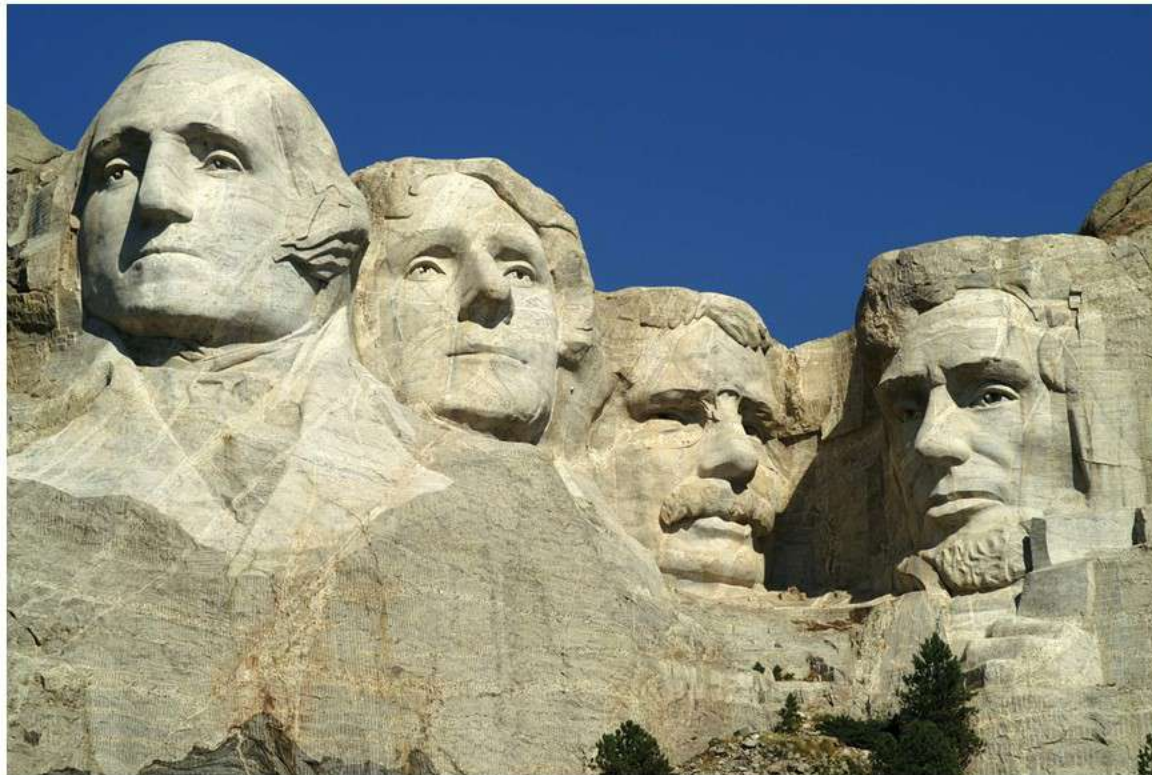
CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

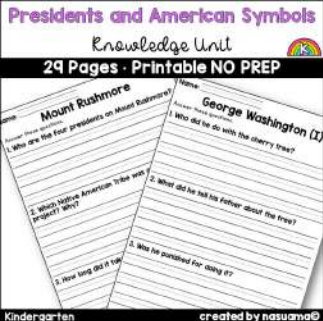
Today, millions of people from all across America and all around the world visit Mount Rushmore every year to see the enormous images of Washington, Jefferson, Roosevelt, and Lincoln. The carved faces sit five hundred feet above the ground and measure sixty feet long. That's the height of a six-story building from forehead to chin. Even more amazing, the monument can be seen from sixty miles away! *[Name a familiar location about sixty miles away to provide reference.]*



CARVING MOUNT RUSHMORE

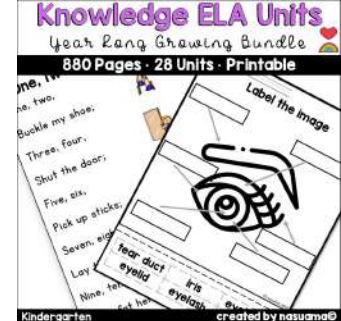
Doane Robinson had dreamed that people would come. The senator worked tirelessly to make it happen. And Gutzon Borglum and his son, Lincoln Borglum, brought the dream to life.





PRESIDENTS AND AMERICAN SYMBOLS

BUNDLE



Name: _____

Mount Rushmore

Answer these questions.

1. Who are the four presidents on Mount Rushmore?

2. Which Native American Tribe was against the project? Why?

DO YOU NEED EXTRA ACTIVITIES?

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