

# NHD

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## NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

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## Election 2016

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Sponsored by  
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## Grade Level:

9-12

## Objectives:

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to

- . Synthesize the changing characteristics of effective leadership
- . Present a persuasive argument
- . Analyze primary and secondary sources and use them to support and argument

## Guiding Question:

What characteristics of leadership are consistent across time? What leadership skills from centuries ago would still make a leader effective today?

## Connections to Common Core:

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

## **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9**

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

## Connections to C3 Framework:

**D2.His.3.9-12** Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context.

**D2.His.7.9-12** Explain how the perspectives of people in the present shape interpretations of the past.

**D2.His.16.9-12** Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past.

## Documents Used:

National History Day's *100 Leaders* profiles ([www.100leaders.org](http://www.100leaders.org)) and linked resources

## Lesson Description:

### Overview:

You will assign students a leader from the NHD *100 Leaders* list. Students will put forth that leader as a potential candidate in the next U.S. presidential election. This synthesizing activity will ask them to evaluate a leader they have studied in terms of foreign, domestic, and economic policies, and will force them to study their leaders' personal lives. The assignment requires the use of primary and secondary sources.

This works well when looking at several leaders from the same era. Absolute monarchs from fifteenth through seventeenth century Europe would be ideal.

**Time:** two 90-minute blocks

### Materials:

- . Signing out laptops or a computer lab would be the most effective way to do this.  
This lesson will run smoothly if students can use multiple computers to complete the research. At a minimum, students must have one computer per group.

### Lesson Preparation:

- . Copy one of the following for each student:
  - o Instruction sheets
  - o Vetting rubrics
  - o Grading rubrics
- . Secure computer access (at least one per group, preferably one per student)

### Procedure:

- . Distribute assignment sheet and read instructions on sheet with students.
- . Divide students into groups of four or five.
- . Assign each group a different leader from the NHD *100 Leaders* website ([www.100leaders.org](http://www.100leaders.org)).
- . Tell students to find their leader's profile on the 100 Leaders site as a starting point.
- . After reading over the site's material for their leaders, teams will follow the instructions on the attached worksheet
  - o Remind them to use the appropriate number of sources, and to integrate them into their findings. They should not simply make a "laundry list" bibliography and then ignore the content in their project.
- . Monitor the class. Be sure that as they research, they are keeping track of which sources they are using for which information.
- . This research should carry them through day one and the beginning of day two.
- . During the second half of day two, groups will present their case for why this leader would or would not be a good selection as a candidate.
  - o Presentations should be 3-5 minutes in length.
  - o While students are presenting, the rest of the class will use the Vetting Rubric to rank the candidate based on the argument being presented.
  - o There are also points on the sheet that critique the speakers. This should help to keep students engaged when they are not presenting.
- . Evaluate the groups as they present using the attached grading rubric.

### Assessment Materials:

- . The presentation portion will force students to demonstrate their grasp of the given leader. The grading rubric will then assess the categories that students address in the exercise.

### Methods for Extension:

- . Each group could select a spokesperson and teachers can assign those students to have a presidential debate. The teacher could make a list of debate style questions based on the following potential topics: infrastructure, foreign policy (especially with specific countries or cases), gun control, crime, education, taxes, civil rights, terrorism, domestic policy, religion, character.
- . Establish a presidential cabinet of other leaders. Have each group choose secretaries of state, defense, treasury, etc. based on the strengths and weaknesses their classmates illustrated for the various leaders. This will force them to demonstrate a further level of comprehension than just filling out their sheets.
- . Make the bibliography an annotated bibliography, requiring students to explain what parts of each source were helpful.

### Adaptations:

- . If students need prompts as to what each of the evaluated categories are, they can use the attached organizer to get an idea of what foreign policy, domestic policy, etc. entail.