

A Resource Packet for Elementary Educators

ROSE FITZGERALD KENNEDY:
Her Life and Legacy



*Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy:
Her Life and Legacy*

Contents

Introduction.....	1
Who was Rose Kennedy?: Biography Detectives in the Classroom	
• Overview and objectives.....	2
• Curriculum standards.....	2
• Preparatory activity: Making a Timeline	3
• Activity #1. Traveling through a Century: Rose Kennedy’s Times.....	4
• Activity #2. Biography Detectives Examine the Evidence.....	7
• Activity #3. Interpreting the Evidence: Who was Rose Kennedy?.....	10
• Letter to Student Biographers	12
• Examining the Evidence Student Worksheet.....	13
• Biography of Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy.....	14
• Background information on source material.....	17
Bibliography and Websites.....	24
Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway	
• School Tour	25
• Map.....	26
Visit Information	
• John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum.....	27
• John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site.....	27
• Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway	27
Acknowledgements.....	28

Introduction

Although we may not always realize it, we are surrounded by historical evidence. Just look around at the names of streets, schools, waterways and parks and you'll see reminders of the "history makers," the people who made a difference in the life of our city and country. This resource packet was created to help you and your students make the most of a relatively recent addition to the Boston landscape, the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway, and to learn about the remarkable woman for whom it is named.

In this packet you will find unique resources to help students explore Rose Kennedy's life. She was the daughter of a mayor, wife of an ambassador, and the mother of nine children, three of whom were U.S. Senators and one of whom became our 35th President. She was a witness to and participant in some of the great events of her times, and her biography provides students with a window into twentieth-century history.

Rose Kennedy lived for over a century and closely documented her busy and exciting life in diaries and scrapbooks. We are fortunate to be able to provide archival resources from the Personal Papers of Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum to help tell her story. By examining these documents and photographs, your students can become "biography detectives" and investigate Rose's life through real historical evidence. The materials have been developed for younger students and focus on Rose's relationships, activities and accomplishments, and less on the tragic events in her life.

The packet includes 24 documents and photographs with relevant background information, three classroom activities, a biography, a bibliography, and information about the Greenway. The activities are designed to meet national and state standards in history and language arts.

After becoming biography experts, we invite you and your students to visit the Greenway and participate in a special tour designed to complement the activities in this packet.

The suggested activities in this packet have been piloted by third graders. We encourage you to use them and the primary sources provided in any way that will enhance your classroom curriculum. We hope that you and your students enjoy learning about Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy and that you will visit the Greenway, the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum and the John F. Kennedy National Historic Site.



Third grade students from the David Ellis School in Roxbury, Massachusetts helped create a forty-foot timeline of Rose Kennedy's life at the Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum.

Created by the Education Department at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. This project was made possible with generous support from John Hancock Financial Services.

Who was Rose Kennedy?

Biography Detectives in the Classroom

Objectives

- To introduce students to the life of Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy
- To engage students in historical thinking: examining and analyzing primary sources; arranging information chronologically; relating personal experiences to historical events; making inferences from evidence and formulating questions
- To have students become more familiar with the genre of biography and gain experience with nonfiction writing
- To reflect on Rose Kennedy's legacy and on what visitors might learn about her at the new park in Boston that bears her name

Overview of Activities

- **Activity #1: Traveling through a Century: Rose Kennedy's Times**
Use a timeline that spans from 1890 to the present both to introduce Rose Kennedy and identify important historical events of the last century.
- **Activity #2: Biography Detectives Examine the Evidence**
Students work in small groups to examine photographs and documents and record their findings. They post information about Rose Kennedy on the timeline.
- **Activity #3: Interpreting the Evidence: Who Was Rose Kennedy?**
Students compare what they have learned through primary sources to a secondary source, a written biography. They write their own response to the question, "Who was Rose Kennedy?"

Related Curriculum Standards

National History Standards

1) Chronological Thinking; 2) Historical Comprehension; 3) Historical Analysis and Comprehension

Massachusetts History and Social Studies Curriculum Framework

Concepts and Skills – History and Geography

- Explain the information that historical timelines convey and then put in chronological order events in the student's life or in the history of countries studied.
- Explain the meaning of time periods or dates in historical narratives.
- Observe and describe local or regional historic artifacts and sites and generate questions about their function, construction, and significance.

Learning Standards:

- 3.7 After reading a biography of a person from Massachusetts, summarize the person's life and achievements.

(Learning Standards, cont.)

- 3.12 Explain how objects or artifacts of everyday life in the past tell us how ordinary people lived and how everyday life has changed.

Preparatory Activity: Making a Timeline

Construct a timeline beginning in 1890, the year that Rose Kennedy was born, to the present. It is helpful to have unobstructed floor space to make the timeline. You may wish to prepare it ahead of time or have 2-3 students make it as a group project.

Materials:

- Long roll of plain brown wrapping paper (at least 24" wide)
- Roll of 1" masking tape (or narrower pressure-sensitive colored graphic tape)
- Ruler, yard stick or measuring tape
- Scissors
- Ball of string
- Pencils, markers
- Large sticky labels or index cards, each labeled with a "decade year" from 1890 to the present (1890, 1900, 1910, etc.)

Procedure:

- Determine the scale of the timeline to establish length of paper needed. A scale of four inches = one year will produce an impressive timeline about 40 feet long and will allow ample space to post information.
- Lightly tape one end of paper roll to the floor. Measure distance on floor equal to length of timeline, plus a few extra feet, and mark the end-point with tape. Unroll paper to the mark, cut and tape this end down.
- Run a string down the middle of the paper, lengthwise, taping both ends. Use the string as a guideline. Place a line of tape carefully down the full length of the paper, just below the string. Then remove the string.
- Use ruler and pencil to mark off the years on tape according to the scale chosen. Make a longer mark every tenth year, starting from the 1890 end.
- Indicate the decade years with large sticky labels or index cards. The intermediate years can be added in smaller characters along the line, or you may choose to leave them blank.
- Roll up the timeline and store until ready to use.

Activity #1. Traveling through a Century: Rose Kennedy's Times

Summary

Students discuss a mystery box labeled, "Rose Kennedy, 1890 -1995." As a giant timeline is unrolled, students identify important dates in their own lives, post historical events from the 20th century and consider the changes that took place during Rose Kennedy's life.

Key concepts

- There is a new park in Boston named after Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy.
- Rose Kennedy lived over a century, 104 years.
- She witnessed 100 years of history that shaped her life and the lives of other Americans and people around the world.
- She was the mother of John F. Kennedy, the 35th president of the U.S.

Materials needed

- "Mystery Box": A covered box that contains the primary source materials provided. (see Preparation below)
- Timeline (1890 – present) on long rolled sheet of paper
- Historical events notecards (see directions in 'C' below)
- Masking tape
- Large sheets of paper
- Markers

Preparation

There are 24 photographs and documents from Rose Kennedy's papers included in this packet. The material is divided into five categories:

- A. Growing Up
- B. Wife and Mother
- C. Life in England
- D. Campaigns and the White House
- E. Legacy

- The labels on documents and photographs (A1, B2, etc.) are for identification – they are not part of the original.
- You will present the box in Activity #1. Students will work in small groups to examine the primary source material in Activity #2.
- Familiarize yourself with the materials. Background information on each source is provided on page 18.
- You may want to make a duplicate set of sources or laminate them for future use.
- Place each set of sources in a separate folder or manila envelope. Label each set (A, B, C, etc.)
- Place folders/ envelopes in a covered box. Label it "Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, 1890 – 1995."

NOTE: The primary source materials may be reprinted for classroom use only.

Procedure

A. Introductory Discussion

Display the box of source materials with the label hidden. Tell students that a mysterious package has been delivered to the school, with only this information on the outside. (Show the label: Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, 1890 - 1995.)

Suggested questions:

- *Has anyone heard of this person?*
- *Did you know that there is a new park in Boston, Massachusetts with the same name – “The Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway”?*
- *Why do you suppose people in Boston wanted to honor and remember her?*
- *Who was Rose Kennedy?*

Give students a chance to give any facts they know, or think they know about her.

- *What are the dates on the box? What do they mean?*
- *Can anyone tell us how long she lived? [Over 100 years]*
- *Do you know a word that means “one hundred years”? [century]*
- *What do you think it would be like to live through a whole century? - Let’s find out!*

B. Presenting the Timeline

Student helpers will be needed to hold the paper as it is unrolled, and tape it at intervals.

Unroll the timeline, starting from the present and going back just a few years. Pointing to this part of the timeline, ask students questions to help them identify important dates in their own lives.

Suggested questions and comments:

- *Who was your teacher then?*
- *Can you remember a trip you took that year?*
- *Who moved from another town during this time?*
- *In which year did you enter our school?*
- *Who remembers when they had a younger sister or brother being born?*
- *Raise your hand as soon as you see the year when you were born.*

Go further back through the 1990s, indicating the time when Rose Kennedy was alive.

- *Does anyone know who was President then?*
- *What year do you think I was in elementary school?*
- *Raise your hand when we get to the time your parents were born.*

3) Unroll the timeline to the year Rose was born

Move a bit more quickly through the decades and see if students can come up with at least one important event or person in history for the 1960s, 1940s, etc. and you can verbally add a few of your own until you reach 1890 where the timeline begins.

C. Putting Rose's Life into Historical Context

Have historical event notecards prepared ahead of time, with the event written on one side and the year it happened on the reverse. Here are some possibilities:

- First successful powered airplane flight (1903)
- Model "T" Ford produced (1908)
- World War I (1914-18)
- American women receive right to vote (1920)
- First feature-length "talking" movie (1927)
- Great Depression begins (1929)
- World War II (1939-45)
- Russians launch first space satellite (1957)
- President Kennedy is elected (1960)
- Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech (1963)
- US astronauts land on the moon (1969)
- IBM produces its first personal computer (1981)
- Launch of the World Wide Web (1992)

1) Introduce the activity

Can you imagine what it must have been like to live through all these decades, with all the changes that took place? (Rose was older than you are now before the first airplane made it off the ground, and she got to see people land on the moon!)

What else happened during Rose's lifetime? Let's look at some big events that took place when she was alive and we'll take turns putting them on the timeline.

2) Place history facts along the timeline

Pick a card, read the description aloud, and ask students if they can identify the decade in which the event took place. Have the student who responds check the date on the card and then place it on the timeline. Repeat this process for several rounds.

Suggested questions

- *How old would Rose have been when [a particular event] took place?*
- *What events do you think made a big difference in Rose's life?*
- *What is her connection to John F. Kennedy?*
- *What would it have been like for her to see her son elected president of the U.S.?*

Extended activity

- Divide the class into research teams to find more events for each decade from the 1890s through first half of the 1990s.
- Use reference books in the library or the internet to choose three more historical facts per decade to add to the timeline. [Web sites such as www.infoplease.com have year-by-year and decade-by-decade chronologies.]

3) Brainstorm questions about Rose's life

Ask students what else they would like to know about Rose Kennedy and record their questions on a large sheet of paper.

Once the list has been extended, ask what kind of person might investigate questions like these.

That's right. Someone who's researching and writing a biography. And biographers are like detectives. They need to examine evidence about their subject's life. And it helps if they can investigate some of that person's belongings – such as diaries, photo albums, letters, school records and other personal materials. Biographers and historians often refer to such things as “primary sources” and they're always on the lookout for them because of the clues they hold. Now what do you think is inside that mystery box?

Activity # 2 - Biography Detectives Examine the Evidence

Summary

Students learn about the contents of the Mystery Box through a letter from the Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. They work in small groups to examine documents and photographs. Groups share findings and post information on the timeline.

Key concepts

- Rose Kennedy saved many documents that are now kept at the Kennedy Library.
- Documents and photographs which are called “primary sources” provide information about a person's life.
- Use a three-step process to examine historical evidence: identify what type of item you have, record your observations, and write down questions about it.

Materials needed

- Mystery Box with five folders/envelopes of source material
- “Letter to Student Biographers (p.13),” placed inside mystery box
- Student worksheet, “Examining the Evidence (p.14),” one copy for each source (24 total)
- Large index cards

Procedure

A. Open the Mystery Box

Untie the string around the mysterious box and read aloud the “Letter to Student Biographers”:

Dear Historian or Biographer,

We understand that you are investigating the life of Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy. As you may know, Mrs. Kennedy lived a very long time (104 years)! Throughout that time she saved important family photos and documents and did

not like to throw things away. The enclosed documents are among the things she collected and you may find them of some use in your investigation.

She wouldn't mind at all to know that you were going through them. In fact she and her family decided to donate her papers and open them to the public. We keep them safe and secure at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. These copies are only a small sample of what we have in our archives. If you went into an area we call "the stacks," you would find over 185,000 items. (And that doesn't even include photographs and film.)

Perhaps you'll come to do research here one day or to visit our museum. You'd be most welcome. In the meantime, good luck, detectives!

Yours most sincerely,

*John F. Kennedy Presidential
Library and Museum Staff*

B. Model how to examine source materials

Before handing out items to students, it's helpful to model how to go about examining primary source materials, using one of the pictures and one of the written documents. A simple approach involves a three-step process:

- First, ask students to identify what *type* of source they're looking at [e.g. photograph, newspaper article, journal entry, etc.]
- Second, record observations, information and inferences.
- Third, write down any questions raised.

Example #1:



Take out the picture of Rose and Joseph Kennedy in England.

- *What is it that we're looking at, what kind of item? Yes, it's a photograph. Let's see what we can learn from it.*
- *Describe what you see. What details do you notice?*
[There's a man and a woman, and they're dressed up. The woman might be Rose Kennedy and she looks like she's wearing a crown.]
- *And who do you think the man in the picture is?*
- *About how old do they appear to be? Your parents' age? Older? Younger?*
- *And what sort of occasion could it have been that they would have worn such fancy clothes?*
- *What questions do you have about the picture?*

Example #2



Take out the news article about Rose's wedding and go through a similar process.

- *What type of source is this?* [a newspaper article]
- *What does it show?*
- *Are these the same two people in the first picture?*
- *How is it different from the first picture?*
- Choose a student to come up and read aloud a few sentences from the article. Record more information and observations.
- *What are some basic kinds of information that a newspaper provides?* [You can find the date that something took place. You can learn the names of people.]
- *Where was Rose's wedding? What was her husband's name? What was his background? What does it tell about her and her life up to this point?*
- *What questions do you have about the newspaper article?*

C. Investigative teamwork

- Next, divide class into groups and establish a procedure for the investigation. Assign roles within each group.
- Suggested roles
 - ✓ **handler** (picks out one thing at a time for the group to examine)
 - ✓ **recorder** (takes notes and fills in an information sheet about each item)
 - ✓ **reader** (reads aloud any written information)
 - ✓ **reporter** (shares findings with whole class)
- Hand each group copies of "Examining the Evidence" Student Worksheet (p.14) to complete for each document or photograph.
- Hand out a folder/envelope of source material to each group. Give groups at least 30 to 45 minutes to examine their evidence and complete the worksheets.
- When time is nearly up, ask each group to decide which item was of greatest interest and/or gave the most information about Rose.

D. Share findings

- First ask what kinds of items each group had in their collection of evidence. [A photo, a letter, etc.] Let each reporter share findings. Write their responses on large sheet (under heading, "Kinds of Evidence").

- Ask each reporter in turn to identify the item their group chose as most interesting/useful, and to read aloud the related information and observations. Record responses on a separate sheet or the board.
- Invite a group member to bring the selected items up and attach them with tape to the timeline under the (approximate) dates.
- Ask what information they discovered from the other pieces of evidence they examined. Extend the list of observations.
- Ask each group if they've noticed any connection between the items in their packet of evidence.
- Explain that groups will have another chance to look at their materials and findings. Ask them to pick out three facts that they think are the most important or most interesting.
- Hand out large index cards to each group so they can write each fact they chose on a separate card. Then have them attach their fact-cards to the appropriate part of the timeline.

E. Relate the personal to the historical

Have students look at the events from history that they first put on the timeline and ask if they can see connections between some of those and events in Rose and her family's lives.

Example:

When women in America were finally able to vote in 1920, what difference do you think it made for Rose? And what impact did World War II have on the Kennedys?

Extended questions

Go back to the original list of questions from Activity #1.

- *Which questions on this list have been answered?*
- *What new questions do you have now?*

Part 3 - Interpreting the Evidence: Who was Rose Kennedy?

Summary

Students read a biography about Rose Kennedy and compare it to their findings. They write their own response to the question, "Who was Rose Kennedy?"

Key concepts

- Biographers are storytellers; they interpret information and make decisions about what to tell about their subject's lives, and how to tell it.
- When you write a biography, you have to decide what information is important to tell.

A. Introduction

A biographer is more than a detective, a biographer is also a storyteller. Different biographers looking at the same evidence may interpret it differently. Each one can tell about their subject's life in their own way. But it can be helpful to first read what others have already said. Here's one version of Rose Kennedy's biography.

B. Read what other biographers have written

- Read aloud, or have students take turns reading aloud, the brief biography on page 15. It is based on an obituary that appeared in the *Boston Globe* the day after Rose Kennedy's death. You may need to define unfamiliar words as you read.
- Ask students what new information or insights this article gave them about Rose Kennedy and record responses on chart paper or the board.
- If possible, have students go to the library and find another biography of Rose Kennedy to read on their own. They can also find other biographical information on the internet. (See bibliography and web sites on page 25.)

C. Students write their own responses

- Ask students, "Who was Rose Kennedy?" and tell them it is their turn to write about her life. And what do they think that visitors to the new Greenway should know about her life and legacy?
- In their biographical writing assignment, you might encourage students to:
 - include illustrations. They might want to draw pictures based on some of the photographs.
 - incorporate the documents in some way – quoting a newspaper article, for example, or words that Rose had written in her diary. Remind them about using quotation marks to indicate when they're using someone else's actual words.

D. Concluding activities

Share students' writing:

- assemble passages from each student's writing to create a "Who was Rose Kennedy?" class book
- present a choral reading at a school assembly or to parents
- enhance the timeline; students can add captions based on what they have written and display their illustrations

Letter to Student Biographers

Dear Historian or Biographer,

We understand that you are investigating the life of Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy. As you may know, Mrs. Kennedy lived a very long time (104 years)! Throughout that time she saved important family photos and documents and did not like to throw things away. The enclosed documents are among the things she collected and you may find them of some use in your investigation.

She wouldn't mind at all to know that you were going through them. In fact she and her family decided to donate her papers and open them to the public. We keep them safe and secure at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. These copies are only a small sample of what we have here in our archives. If you went into an area we call "the stacks," you would find over 185,000 items. (And that doesn't even include photographs and film.)

Perhaps you'll come to do research here one day or to visit our museum. You'd be most welcome. In the meantime, good luck, detectives!

Yours most sincerely,

*John F. Kennedy Presidential
Library and Museum Staff*

Examining the Evidence

Group _____

1. Describe your evidence

What is it? (a journal entry, photograph, etc.)

2. Look at your evidence very carefully. Record your observations and ideas.

- *What do you notice?*
- *Record any names or dates that you find.*
- *Describe any other details you think are important.*
- *What does the evidence tell you about Rose Kennedy?*

3. Ask questions.

- *What is missing?*
- *What is confusing?*
- *What other information would you like to have about your source?*

Biography of Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy



Rose Elizabeth Fitzgerald was born in Boston's North End on July 22, 1890, the eldest child of John F. ("Honey Fitz") and Mary Josephine Fitzgerald.

She was first introduced to politics as a child. When she was 5, her father was a congressman. By the time she turned 15, Honey Fitz was one of the most popular and colorful mayors Boston had ever known. He once took Rose and her sister Agnes to visit President William McKinley in the White House, and the president at one point said to Agnes, "You're the prettiest girl who has entered the house." Rose remarked later, "I knew right then that I would have to work hard to do something about myself." Her graduation from Dorchester High School in June 1906 was front-page news in the Boston newspapers as Mayor Fitzgerald proudly gave his daughter her diploma.

Rose had been accepted at Wellesley College during her junior year in high school, but her father enrolled her instead at the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Boston. At the age of 90, in an interview, Mrs. Kennedy said her "greatest regret is not having gone to Wellesley College. It is something I have felt a little sad about all my life." However, she eventually grew fond of the convent school, and she said the religious training she received there became the foundation for her life.

In her teens, Rose became acquainted with Joseph P. Kennedy at Old Orchard Beach in Maine where their families were vacationing together. On Oct. 7, 1914, they were married in a modest ceremony in a small chapel at the residence of Cardinal O'Connell, who officiated. The couple's first home was a three-story gray building at 83 Beals Street in Brookline, now a national historic site.

At the time of their marriage, Joseph Kennedy was making \$10,000 a year as a businessman. When the family left Brookline and moved to Riverdale, N.Y., about 10 years later, he had become a multimillionaire.

In their first 18 years of marriage, the couple had nine children. Joseph Jr. was born in 1915, John in 1917, Rosemary in 1918, Kathleen in 1920, Eunice in 1921, Patricia in 1924, Robert in 1925, Jean in 1928 and Edward in 1932.

Mrs. Kennedy was considered by many to be a model parent. "Children," she said, "should be stimulated by their parents to see, touch, know, understand and appreciate." Mrs. Kennedy often retold stories from history books to her children -- about Bunker Hill, the Battle of Concord, and Plymouth Rock -- then took them on outings to see those sites. She also told them stories from the Bible. "I always told the children that if they were given faith when they

were young, they should try to nurture it and guard it, because it's really a gift that older people value so much when sorrow comes," she once said.

One of Mrs. Kennedy's main problems was keeping tabs on her large family. She kept careful records of all her children on index cards, and had an extensive filing system that she said helped her remember each one's physical condition. They listed weights, shoe sizes, dental treatments, eye examinations and illnesses each child had.

As Mrs. Kennedy's younger sons grew older, they began to look toward the political scene, and she did little to discourage them. She had learned from her father how to be at ease in public and how to conduct political campaigns, skills she used in her sons' numerous battles. When her son John ran in 1946 for the Massachusetts 11th Congressional District seat, Rose was the first to spur him on. "She was the greatest pol we had in 1946," said Dave Powers, a longtime family friend.

After John's victory in that election, his next big battle was for the US Senate. During his 1952 campaign to unseat Henry Cabot Lodge, Rose Kennedy was the hostess at many "Kennedy teas" sponsored by the Democratic Party. The success of the teas in attracting large numbers of women voters may have contributed to Kennedy's defeat of Lodge.

In her son's 1960 presidential campaign, Mrs. Kennedy again did her utmost. "For six weeks," Powers said, "every night I'd pick her up and we'd go to meetings. Maybe the first place would be an abandoned North End garage, and she'd put on a babushka [head scarf] and talk to the women about children. And the next stop might be West Roxbury, so in the car she'd change her shoes and maybe put on a mink jacket," he said.

Eight years later she returned to the campaign trail in support of another son when Robert F. Kennedy made his ill-fated quest for the presidency in 1968.

Mrs. Kennedy rarely talked publicly about her personal grief. But once she remarked to a friend: "Wasn't there a book about Michelangelo called 'The Agony and the Ecstasy'? That's what my life has been."

During World War II, her eldest son, Joseph Jr., a Navy pilot, was killed in action on Aug. 12, 1944, when the plane he was flying on a mission exploded over the English Channel. Her second-oldest daughter, Kathleen, wife of the Marquis of Hartington, who was also killed during World War II, died May 13, 1948, in a plane crash in France. Her second son, John, was assassinated in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, less than three years into his term as president. At the funeral in Washington, she turned to Ethiopia's Emperor Haile Selassie and said: "It's wrong for parents to bury their children. It should be the other way around."

Her third son, Robert, who was US Attorney General under his brother and later a senator from New York, was assassinated in Los Angeles on June 5, 1968 while campaigning for president. Her eldest daughter, Rosemary, spent most of her adult life in a home for intellectually disabled people. Mrs. Kennedy's husband suffered a stroke in 1961, and it left him an invalid until his death eight years later.

"Willpower, just willpower and doing what's necessary is what keeps me going," Mrs. Kennedy once said. And despite all the tragedies she lived to see, she wrote in her 1974 autobiography: "There have been times when I felt I was one of the most fortunate people in the world, almost as if Providence, or Fate, or Destiny, as you like, had chosen me for special

favors."

When asked what were the greatest thrills of her life, one of the first Mrs. Kennedy mentioned was being at her son John's inauguration in January 1961 as President Eisenhower's successor. But she recalled other highlights few people might remember. In the late 1930s, her husband was named US ambassador to Britain. While living overseas, the Kennedy family was invited to attend the coronation of Pius XII in March 1939. They enjoyed a private audience with the new Pope. In 1951, she had the rare title of papal countess conferred on her by the Vatican in recognition of her "exemplary motherhood and many charitable works." She was only the sixth woman from the United States to have the title bestowed upon her by the Roman Catholic Church.

Aside from the most important aspects of Rose Kennedy's life -- family, religion and politics - she was also interested and active in many other areas. Much of her time in later years was devoted to securing public support for the campaign to enlighten the public about mental retardation and its causes. The Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation has donated millions of dollars since 1946 to hospitals, institutions, and day-care and research centers throughout the United States. In 1957, daughter Eunice Kennedy Shriver took over direction of the Foundation and was later awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Reagan for her work on behalf of people with intellectual disabilities, including founding of the Special Olympics.

In 1974, Mrs. Kennedy's youngest daughter, Jean Kennedy Smith, founded Very Special Arts, an international organization that provides opportunities in the creative arts for those with disabilities. (Jean Smith would also serve as US Ambassador to Ireland in the Clinton Administration.)

Mrs. Kennedy spoke several languages fluently and was an accomplished pianist. Petite and slim, she dressed stylishly. During the '30s she was named the best-dressed woman in public life by a poll of fashion designers.

For relaxation, she played golf or swam off the beach at the family compound on Cape Cod. She could often be seen, well past her middle-age years, carrying her own clubs on the difficult Hyannisport Country Club golf course, playing nine holes against the biting gusts of sea air. During the 1970s, Mrs. Kennedy loved to walk village streets alone, unrecognized by most passersby. After suffering a stroke in 1984, she needed to use a wheelchair.

Perhaps the most fitting tributes to Mrs. Kennedy's life are those given by her children and grandchildren. In 1987, celebrating his grandmother's 97th birthday, Rep. Joseph Kennedy II spoke of her as "the magnet that always pulled all of us together as a family, ever since I was a little boy. We could look to her when things were going very well, and she'd give us a smile and encouragement. When things were not going so well, we'd get the same thing. Grandma's so strong and just a tremendous inspiration to all of us."

Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy died in her Hyannis Port home on Jan. 22, 1995. She was 104.

Note: This biography was adapted from an obituary in *The Boston Globe*.

Background Information on Source Material

These notes include references and historical context to help you guide students as they examine and analyze the historical evidence. The numbers listed correspond to the numbers on each document or photograph. (Kennedy Presidential Library archival identification numbers are also given for each of the photographs.) The material is organized by topic, as described in the lesson plan.

Note: The Kennedy children had nicknames (Joe Jr. for Joseph Jr., Jack or JFK for John, Bobby for Robert, Teddy for Edward). These names are also used in this text.

A. Growing Up

A1 Journal entry about meeting President McKinley in 1896 (recorded in 1972)

When John Fitzgerald, Rose's father, was a U.S. Congressman, he brought his daughters to the White House to meet the president. After three terms in Congress, John Francis Fitzgerald, known as "Honey Fitz," became mayor of Boston in 1906. From an early age, Rose accompanied her father in his travels and participated extensively in public life. This was one of thousands of journal entries that Rose wrote during her life. Rose edited typed versions of her journals in her own handwriting.

A2 Photograph of Rose, Agnes and Thomas Fitzgerald: c. 1898

Rose was the oldest child in her family. In this photograph she was eight years old, her sister Agnes was six, and her brother Thomas was three. The children are dressed in stylish clothing appropriate for that time; Thomas appears to be wearing what we might consider girls' clothing by today's standards. Two siblings, John Francis, Jr. and Eunice, were born after the family moved to Concord, Massachusetts in 1897, and Rose's youngest brother, Fred, was born after the family moved to Dorchester. (KFC2113P)

A3 Dorchester High School Commencement Program: June 23, 1906

Graduating second in her class and with honors, Rose was the youngest person to receive a diploma from Dorchester High School. Her father, who was then mayor of Boston, awarded the diplomas. He thrilled the audience when he announced, "Rose Elizabeth Fitzgerald." Front-page headlines in the *Boston Post* announced the news of Rose's achievement. The document has terms and features that may be unfamiliar to students. "Order of Exercises" refers to the listing of events of the graduation ceremony. "Fifty-fourth Annual Exhibition" means that it is the 54th graduation ceremony at the school. The graphic image in the middle of the page is the seal of the city of Boston.

A4 Photograph, Old Orchard Beach: 1907

P.J. Kennedy, Rose Fitzgerald, John Francis Fitzgerald (second, third, fourth from left), and Joseph P. Kennedy (second from right) at Old Orchard Beach in Maine. The Fitzgeralds and Kennedys vacationed at this resort, along with many of Boston's Irish Catholic families. Rose first met Joseph, P.J.'s son, at Old Orchard when they were small children, and the two fell in love when they were reintroduced there as teenagers.

The people in the photograph are wearing bathing suits of the era which were much more modest than those of today. (FY-P14)

A5 Photograph, Fitzgerald family portrait: 1907

This photograph shows Rose's immediate family: her younger sisters, Eunice (seated) and Agnes (standing), her mother, Mary Josephine Hannon Fitzgerald, her brothers, Thomas and John F., Jr. (both standing), and Rose Elizabeth Fitzgerald. Her youngest brother, Frederick, is seated in the middle of the photo next to her father, John Francis Fitzgerald. This postcard, complete with stamp and postmark, is from "Old Home Week," a city-wide celebration hosted by Mayor Fitzgerald. (KFC2112P)

B. Wife and Mother

B1 Newspaper article: October 7, 1914

The article is one of several newspaper clippings that Rose kept in her "Wedding Log" scrapbook to document her marriage to Joseph P. Kennedy on October 7, 1914. The article profiles the couple and includes details about the small wedding ceremony held in a private chapel in the home of the archbishop of Boston. The marriage came after a long and somewhat secretive courtship. When Rose first became interested in Joseph Kennedy, her father was reluctant to accept him as her beau. She and Joe would arrange "accidental" meetings at dances, concerts, parks and other venues. Several years later, with a Harvard degree and a financially secure position as president of a Boston bank, Joe earned Honey Fitz's approval. After their honeymoon, the couple settled into a three-story house at 83 Beals Street in Brookline, Massachusetts. This first Kennedy home, the birthplace of the 35th President, is now open to the public as the John F. Kennedy National Historic Site and contains original furnishings and artifacts.

B2 Journal entries: January, 1923

Rose found some of her early journals in the "rambling attic" of her Hyannis Port home. The entries of this typed version contain revealing details about her busy life as a mother of five young children. The first entry was written in Poland Springs, Maine, where the family often took winter vacations. A horse-drawn sleigh would pick them up at the train station to take them to their hotel, bells jingling along the way. Eddie Moore, referred to in the first entry, worked for Honey Fitz and then for Joseph P. Kennedy as a trusted assistant. The Moores were very close friends of the family. (Edward Moore Kennedy was named after him.) Rose also mentions the Ace of Clubs dance, the annual benefit sponsored by the club she founded for young women interested in discussing history and current events. Fashion was important to Rose throughout her life: she notes the "Hickson dress" which was one of the first dresses she had made by a designer. She described it as "wildly expensive."

B3 Family Christmas card: 1927

At the time this card was created, the Kennedy family lived in Riverdale, New York, having moved from Brookline, Massachusetts in 1926. The card shows the growing Kennedy family, now comprised of seven children, and a beloved dog, Buddy. Two more children had yet to be born: Jean, in 1928, and Ted, in 1932. Along with her sense of fun, as shown in the card's creative illustration, Rose kept her large family well-

organized and believed that having high expectations of the older children would encourage them to be role models for their younger siblings. (FY G34-1927)

B4 Photograph of family at Hyannis Port: 1931

From left to right: Robert, John, Eunice, Jean, Joseph, Rose, Patricia, Kathleen, Joe Jr., Rosemary, and the dog, Buddy. One child is missing from the photograph; Edward (Teddy) was born in 1932. The family spent summers at their home in Hyannis Port on Cape Cod where they enjoyed swimming, sailing, tennis and football. Rose encouraged her children to be active and to have fun, but they needed to follow rules, too. She would raise a flag to signal that it was time to come home from sailing and swimming adventures. The Kennedy family continues to spend vacation time in Hyannis Port. Rose is wearing a cloche hat. Usually made of felt, it was a popular style of the time. (KFC2114P or PC8)

B5 Letter to Mrs. St. John, at the Choate School (2 pages): c.1932

One of hundreds of letters the Kennedy family wrote to the Choate School, a private college preparatory boarding school in Connecticut, where Jack (JFK) and his older brother Joe, Jr. attended high school. This letter to the wife of the headmaster shows Rose's deep concern about Jack's health and her desire for the staff to monitor his diet. Rose discusses weight in many of her letters to her children, but in Jack's case, it was for good reason. JFK battled various illnesses his entire life and struggled to maintain his weight. Rose kept file cards on her nine children, diligently recording their illnesses and physical condition. The weights recorded in the letter correspond to the figures on Rose's file cards. The "Tuck Shop" still exists as a snack bar at the school, which is now coeducational and known as Choate Rosemary Hall. Years after sending the letters, Rose requested copies of them from the Choate School. She would then underline sections to use in her memoirs and other writing.

Here is a transcription of the letter:

(added comment at top: Jack and Joe came in to tea yesterday)

Dear Mrs. St. John,

I understand from Jack's letter that he is much better and he also said something about eating in the Tuck Shop in order to get "built up." I was a bit worried at that suggestion because the "Tuck Shop" usually means sweets to me, and Jack has no discretion, in fact he has never eaten enough vegetables to satisfy me. I do not want to bother you but will someone please investigate this matter a little? Mr. Kennedy will probably be up next week, but I have not been well enough to visit Jack and I do ~~not~~ want him to go along the right track.

Again let me thank you.

Sincerely yours,
Rose F. Kennedy

Mrs. Joseph P. Kennedy

How is his weight? My records show 114 ½ in Sept. 115 in January (after supper)

C. England

C1 Photograph of Ambassador Kennedy and Rose at embassy residence: 1938

This photograph was published in the December 7, 1938 issue of *The Sketch*. Joseph Kennedy had been appointed Ambassador to Great Britain by President Franklin Roosevelt. With Rose in a floor-length gown and Joe in a well-fitted tuxedo, the Ambassador and his wife seem comfortable in their formal wear and excited to attend one of many social gatherings with politicians and members of the royal family. (KFC2321P)

C2 “Royal Hostess and her Guest”, newspaper clip: March 18, 1938

Rose carefully documented her new life in England in her “Letts Quikref Diary,” a bound scrapbook full of newspaper clippings, letters, postcards, menus and tickets. This newspaper clipping, pasted onto the “March 18” page of her diary, publicized her meeting with Queen Elizabeth at Buckingham Palace, just a few days after she arrived in London. In her memoir, Rose fondly remembers that the Queen (mother of the current Queen) “had such a happy, natural smile and friendly manner that I felt at ease at once.”

C3 Draft of letter to the Queen of England (2 pages): April, 1938

With her handwritten edits, this draft letter expresses Rose’s appreciation to the Queen for the weekend she and Joe spent with the royal family at Windsor Castle. In her memoir, she described the visit as “one of the most fabulous, fascinating, experiences of my life.” Being at the castle and enjoying formal feasts, it was a fairytale-like visit. On a more sober note, it was there that Joseph Kennedy had his first extended conversation with England’s Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain. Confronted with threatening dictatorships in Germany and Italy, Kennedy and Chamberlain were in agreement. They both hoped to avoid war at all cost. They held a common belief in “appeasement,” trying to arrange peaceful solutions to Hitler’s and Mussolini’s demands and claims.

C4 “With the Kennedy Family in London Town” (2 pages): 1938

This newspaper clipping shows London’s enthusiasm for the large, spirited, and attractive Kennedy family. The description of Rose is flattering: “Mrs. Kennedy might be mistaken for one of her daughters. She is young, looks even younger, is slimmer than most of the girls, hasn’t a gray hair, prefers running up and down stairs to taking the iron-gated life, and is said to have the prettiest and best-dressed feet at Ascot.” The large Kennedy family lived in the embassy, a six story residence with over twenty bedrooms. There was an elevator that fascinated Bobby and Teddy; they spent hours making it go up and down. As in Brookline and Riverdale, Rose had help at the embassy managing her large family: a butler, chef, secretaries, cleaners, “nursemaids” and a governess. The article describes the bustling activity of the large Kennedy family:

“the house echoes with phonograph records....they have their own dances, their own movies, and at Christmas reunions their family gifts alone add up to 110!”

C5 Photograph of the Kennedy family in London: 1939

All eleven Kennedys are pictured in this photograph made at the U.S. Embassy residence in London in 1939 by Dorothy Wilding, a noted portraitist and society photographer. (Left to right) Eunice, John, Rosemary, Jean, Joseph, Edward, Rose, Joseph Jr., Patricia, Robert, and Kathleen. (MUS-MUR-WILDING)

D. Campaigns and the White House

D1 Photograph, John F. Kennedy’s campaign for Senate: 1952

After serving three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, John F. Kennedy decided to run for the U.S. Senate, representing Massachusetts. As in his congressional campaigns, his family played a significant role. At this “tea” during the 1952 campaign, Rose is the featured speaker. John, Eunice and Patricia are also pictured, appearing to appreciate their mother’s charm and confidence. Kennedy family members helped organize the teas, a grass-roots strategy planned to attract women. The first tea, held in Worcester, Massachusetts, was an overwhelming success: 1,000 guests were expected but 5,000 attended. Journalists claimed that Rose helped draw the large audiences; her fame, excellent speaking skills, wisdom from mothering nine children, and sense of fashion appealed to female voters. (KFC1171)

D2 Photograph, televised tea party: 1952

The photograph shows the Kennedy family in action during a televised campaign “tea”, aired at a time when Americans were just beginning to own television sets. Patricia and Rose enjoy tea as JFK and Jean watch Eunice display her John F. Kennedy skirt. Instead of a poodle, a popular fashion trend of that time, this skirt features a donkey, the symbol of the Democratic party. (PC518)

D3 Photograph, the Democratic National Convention: July, 1960

Patricia Kennedy and JFK look on as Rose speaks at the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, where JFK was nominated as candidate for president of the United States. At age seventy, Rose played an active role in her son’s presidential campaign, making 46 appearances in 14 states. Rose also worked on later campaigns for Robert and Edward Kennedy. (KFC290P)

D4 Journal entries: June and October, 1960

These journal entries were written during the summer and fall of John F. Kennedy’s presidential campaign. With descriptions of her own campaign experiences, they reveal Rose’s personal involvement in the race. In the October 7 entry, Rose spends her 46th wedding anniversary on the campaign trail and apart from her husband. She anticipates that evening’s presidential debate, the second of four meetings between her son and Richard M. Nixon. These four sessions were the first televised presidential debates. Many historians attribute Kennedy’s narrow win to his successful use of television, which was relatively new to many American households.

D5 Journal entry, Impressions as the mother of the President: 1971

In her 1971 journal, Rose reflects on what it was like to be mother of the 35th president of the United States. She expresses her gratitude for her unique life experiences: as the daughter of a mayor, wife of an ambassador, mother of nine, and for “being the mother of the youngest elected president and the first Catholic.” The entry includes specific references to the White House and details about JFK’s life there. Rose made several visits to the White House during JFK’s time in office. She enjoyed staying in the Lincoln Room where she could see the Washington Monument and also have a view of the garden where her grandchildren Caroline and later John Jr. would play. In the absence of First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, Rose acted as hostess at state dinners to President Arosmena of Ecuador and Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia.

E. Legacy

E1 Photograph of ground-breaking ceremony: May 1, 1966

Rose Kennedy and Robert Kennedy attended the ground-breaking ceremony of the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Center for Research in Mental Retardation and Human Development at Yeshiva University in New York City. Rose was a life-long advocate in this area and naming the research center after her honored the contributions she made to the field. Rose had first-hand experience with children with special needs. Her oldest daughter, Rosemary, was developmentally disabled. During much of Rosemary’s life, most people, including many health care professionals and educators, had little understanding of what was then called mental retardation. Rose worked hard to change this by speaking out publicly about her own experience as a parent, educating the public, and providing opportunities to people with disabilities. Her contributions had an historic impact on this field and significantly improved the lives of many intellectually disabled people and their families. (Photo credit: Yeshiva University)

E2 Photograph of Rose Kennedy at the Special Olympics in Maine: May, 1971

Rose receives roses from a young participant in the Special Olympics, an internationally acclaimed sports program for people with intellectual disabilities. In 1946, Rose helped establish the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation, named after her oldest son who was killed in World War II. The Foundation was created to educate the public, sponsor research, and fund programs for people with intellectual disabilities. With the help of the Foundation, Eunice Shriver launched the Special Olympics in 1968. (PX79-36)

E3 Letter from Sargent Shriver (3 pages): November 1, 1972

In this letter, written six days before the 1972 presidential election, Sargent Shriver, Eunice Kennedy’s husband, expresses his admiration of his mother-in-law. The Democratic vice-presidential candidate took time out from his final days of campaigning to tell Rose how much she has meant to him and also acknowledge the care she had given her husband after his stroke in 1961. At age 83, Rose made a few campaign appearances to support “Sarge” and presidential candidate George McGovern.

E4 “Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Family Appreciation Day” (2 pages): July 22, 1990

President George H.W. Bush signed this joint congressional resolution which proclaimed July 22, 1990, Rose’s 100th birthday, “Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Family

Appreciation Day.” The resolution pays tribute to her serving as a model of motherhood and citizenship, her encouragement of all citizens to serve others, and her work to improve the lives of people with mental and physical disabilities. The Kennedy family celebrated Rose’s 100th birthday with a week of festivities in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts. The proclamation is also signed by Thomas Foley, Speaker of the House, and Senator John Glenn, the former astronaut who made an historic space flight during President Kennedy’s administration when he became the first American to orbit the earth.

Documents are from the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Personal Papers Collection, courtesy of the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation.

Photo credits: “John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston” unless otherwise noted.

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Books

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Film/DVD

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Websites

<http://www.jfklibrary.org>: **John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum**. Includes biographies of Rose Kennedy and members of the Kennedy family, documents, photographs, and curriculum materials.

<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/33jfk/33jfk.htm>: **“Birthplace of John F. Kennedy: Home of the Boy Who Would Be President.”** An inquiry-based unit developed by the National Park Service. Questions guide students in the examination of photographs and texts, including Rose Kennedy's description of her Beals Street home.

http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2007/05/13/finding_her_way_in_the_clan/ **“Finding Her Way in the Clan.”** A *Boston Globe* article by Kevin Cullen. Includes 4 minutes of video footage with commentary.

<http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/eyewitness/html.php?section=20> **“Ambassador and Mrs. Joseph Kennedy at Windsor Castle.”** Rose Kennedy's account of her visit to Windsor castle is part of “Eyewitness”, a traveling and online exhibit from the National Archives.

The Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway

Boston's new parkland, the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway, is named after the matriarch of the Kennedy family and a prominent Bostonian. The Greenway stretches from the North End of downtown Boston to Chinatown. When the elevated Central Artery highway was replaced with an underground expressway during the Big Dig project, the city found itself rich in prime urban land. Community and political leaders took the opportunity to enhance Boston's city life by providing more than 15 acres of new parks and gardens to connect some of its oldest, most diverse and vibrant neighborhoods. The creation of the Greenway has been a joint effort of the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the City of Boston and citizens groups. In 2004, the non-profit Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway Conservancy was founded as the official steward of the Greenway.

Tour for Elementary Students

In an effort to serve school-aged students, the Conservancy has developed a tour to complement the classroom activity packet, "Who was Rose Kennedy?" The activities are designed to prepare students for the Greenway tour, the culminating activity of the unit. Students will visit parts of the Greenway, see sites related to Rose Kennedy, and learn about Boston's history. The program will be available to students and teachers beginning in the fall of 2008.

The tour meets the Massachusetts Social Science and History Curriculum Frameworks for Grade 3: "Drawing on information from local historic sites, historical societies, and museums, third graders learn about the history of Massachusetts from the time of the arrival of the Pilgrims. They also learn the history of their own cities and towns and about famous people and events in Massachusetts history."

Transportation Details

- Arrival by subway: Haymarket Station on the Green Line and Orange Line, see www.mbta.com
- Arrival by bus: School buses may drop off on Surface Artery South Bound just south of Hanover Street across from the North End Parks.



Tour meeting place

The tour leaves from the corner of Hanover Street and Surface Artery South marked by the large dot where the Freedom Trail passes through the North End Parks (also see #1 on Tour Map, p. 26). The program lasts roughly 75 minutes.

Materials

Teachers will be able to download all their materials for the tour (including tour route with interpretive language, maps, post-tour activities and some photographs for the children to identify). Educators will need to bring for each student 1) a clipboard and pencil, 2) a downloaded copy of the tour map, 3) the photographs, and 4) the activity sheet. Weather permitting, students will be able to sit and eat lunch or a snack.

Contact Alexandra Lee, Director of Public Programs, 617-292-0020, alee@rosekennedygreenway.org



The Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway - Rose F. Kennedy Tour



Visit Information

Enrich your study of Rose Kennedy and the Kennedy family with a visit to the sites below. Call for information or to reserve a guided program for students.

John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum

Columbia Point

Boston, MA 02125

www.jfklibrary.org

(617) 514 – 1600

(866) JFK – 1960

TDD: (617) 514 – 1573

Hours: Seven days per week, 9am – 5pm,
except New Year's Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day.

Fee: Free for New England Schools

John F. Kennedy National Historic Site

83 Beals Street

Brookline, MA 02446

(617) 566 – 7937

www.nps.gov/jofi

Open to the public from spring through early fall.

Curriculum-based programs for school groups, development opportunities for teachers, and programs for organized groups are available throughout the year by reservation.

Call to reserve guided program for elementary students

Hours: 10am - 4:30pm

Fee: Children age 17 and under are free but must be accompanied by an adult.

Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Conservancy

One International Place, 14th Floor

Boston, MA 02110

(617) 292 - 0020

www.rosekennedygreenway.org/

Schedule of guided walking tours and events available on website

Rose Kennedy Tour for elementary students

Fee: Free for students

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