Did you ever wonder what it was like to sit in the Oval Office at the President’s desk? As part of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum’s web site, you and your students have a unique opportunity to explore President Kennedy’s desk by examining treasured mementos and important presidential records. President Kennedy’s desk has been painstakingly recreated in a digital format based on historical photographs of the Oval Office. Newly digitized resources, ranging from recordings of meetings in the Oval Office to family photographs, populate the site and provide an engaging and fascinating look into John F. Kennedy’s life and presidency. This interactive experience is presented in conjunction with the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Kennedy Presidency.

The President’s Desk interactive exhibit can be used in a variety of ways in the classroom. In this guide, you will find a detailed description of the site’s layout and featured artifacts, as well as suggestions for how to use these materials with students in grades 4-12.
The desk that President Kennedy used in the Oval Office was a gift from Queen Victoria to President Rutherford B. Hayes in 1879. It was made from the timbers of the British Arctic exploration ship HMS Resolute. As the inscription on the front of the desk suggests, the HMS Resolute served as an important symbol of the relationship between the United States and Great Britain:

H.M.S. RESOLUTE forming part of the expedition sent in search of SIR JOHN FRANKLIN IN 1852, was abandoned in latitude 74 degrees 41 minutes N longitude 101 degrees 22 minutes W on 15th May 1854. She was discovered and extricated in September 1855 in latitude 670 degrees N by Captain Buddington of the United States Whaler GEORGE HENRY.

The ship was purchased, fitted out and sent to England as a gift to HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA by the PRESIDENT AND PEOPLE of the UNITED STATES as a token of goodwill & friendship. This table was made from her timbers when she was broken up, and is presented by the QUEEN OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND to the PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES as a memorial of the courtesy and loving kindness which dictated the offer of the gift of the RESOLUTE.

The desk was used in the White House, but not always in the Oval Office. It had been moved during alterations during the Truman Administration in 1952 and had disappeared from public view for many years. Early in the Kennedy administration, Mrs. Kennedy discovered it in the White House broadcast room. Because of President Kennedy's love of the sea and interest in naval history, she had the desk returned to a place of honor in his Oval Office on February 4, 1961. The desk is ornately carved on the four vertical sides, and has cupboard doors on the front and back sides. President Franklin D. Roosevelt commissioned the ornately carved Presidential Seal panel that may be seen on the front of the desk.
President Kennedy kept a number of items on the desk during his presidency. These objects included:

- Black Alligator Desk Set: (Desk Pad, Holder for Paper Clips and Pencils, Note pad, Rocker Blotter and Blotter holder, cigarette holder, letter sorter) Gift from President Charles de Gaulle of France, on the occasion of President Kennedy’s state visit to Paris in June 1961.

- Coconut Shell, Encased in Plastic: This is the coconut shell on which John F. Kennedy inscribed a message following his PT boat’s collision with a Japanese destroyer in the Solomon Islands during World War II.

- Book-ends: Replicas of the cannon mounted on the U.S.S. Constitution.

- Plaque Inscribed with the Breton Fishermen’s Prayer: “O, God, Thy sea is so great, and my boat is so small.” Presented to President Kennedy by Vice Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, “Father of the Nuclear Navy.”

- Gold Inaugural Medal: Medal commemorating President Kennedy’s inauguration.


- Telephones: One large green telephone and two small black telephones for communicating with staff and the Mansion.

- Diary: The President’s official appointment book.

- Picture Frames: Featuring family photographs.

Photo credit: Stanley Tretick, Look Magazine
The President’s Desk acts as a gateway to seven different interactive modules featuring a variety of topics related to President Kennedy's life and presidency. Each module is launched by clicking on a particular desk item (Telephone, White House Diary, Scrimshaw, Coconut Paperweight, Secret Recording Button, Picture Frame, and Campaign Button.) The presentation strategy is different for each item, but all offer the chance to explore a number of different primary source materials. Learners of all ages may reveal the stories and decipher the meaning behind the objects President Kennedy chose to keep on his desk.

This is a list of the desk items along with a detailed description of the module contents. By familiarizing yourself with the materials on the site you can direct students' attention to materials that best fit your instructional goals.
Beginning in 1939 and ending with the Nixon administration in 1974, taping systems have played an intriguing role in U.S. presidential history. John F. Kennedy was the first president to extensively record both his meetings and telephone conversations. In all, President Kennedy selectively recorded over twelve hours of telephone conversations using a Dictaphone system. These recordings capture discussions on many sensitive domestic and foreign policy matters. The system was a closely-held secret. Most of President Kennedy’s top aides were unaware of the system until its existence became known during the U.S. Senate hearings on Watergate in 1973.

In this module you can listen to some of these conversations and read a transcript.

1. President Kennedy and Attorney General Robert Kennedy discuss the Senate Committee’s review of the failed Bay of Pigs Invasion. They also discuss the results of a recent Gallup Poll and problems facing Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York. March 2, 1962.
2. President Kennedy and Senator Edward M. Kennedy discuss a meeting with the wool industry about international trade. March 7, 1963.
3. President Kennedy and Director of the Peace Corps R. Sargent Shriver discuss their desire to keep the CIA out of the Peace Corps, and to recruit returning Peace Corps volunteers into the Foreign Service. April 2, 1963.
4. President Kennedy and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara discuss the use of polygraph tests to determine the source of Defense Department leaks. April 2, 1963.
5. President Kennedy congratulates NASA astronaut Major Gordon Cooper on his orbital flight. May 16, 1963.
John F. Kennedy and PT-109

A slideshow recreating the story of John F. Kennedy's experiences in World War II and the destruction of his boat PT-109 through photos, sketches, letters, and artifacts.

The President's Secret Tapes

Beginning in 1939 and ending with the Nixon administration in 1974, taping systems have played an intriguing role in U.S. presidential history. John F. Kennedy was the first president to extensively record both his meetings and telephone conversations. The recording system used by Kennedy was designed and installed by Secret Service agent Robert Bouck in July 1962. Located underneath the Oval Office, it was connected to both the Oval Office and the Cabinet Room. The President could manually activate the system by pressing a button.

Meetings and Conversations

In all, President Kennedy selectively recorded over 238 hours of meetings and conversations that took place in the Oval Office or the Cabinet Room. These recordings capture discussions on many sensitive domestic and foreign policy matters. The system was a closely-held secret. Most of President Kennedy's top aides were unaware of the system until its existence became known during the U.S. Senate hearings on Watergate in 1973.

Vietnam

1. Excerpts of White House Presidential recordings of four meetings between President Kennedy and his highest level Vietnam advisors in late August of 1963.

Cuban Missile Crisis

2. Excerpt from meeting on Cuban Missile Crisis. This excerpt begins with Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara providing a detailed summary of the possible responses to the missiles that were under construction. October 16, 1962.
**Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty**

3. On July 9, 1963, President Kennedy met with Vice President Johnson, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Maxwell Taylor about the Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

4. A presidential recording of a meeting between President Kennedy and four high level government scientists that took place in the Cabinet Room of the White House on July 31, 1963 during which President Kennedy expresses optimism that the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty could lead to a détente with the Soviet Union.

**Space**

5. At an off-the-record meeting held on November 21, 1962, President Kennedy stated clearly that his administration's priority was for the United States to land on the Moon before the Soviet Union. The participants heard in this excerpt are: President Kennedy, NASA Administrator James E. Webb and Special Assistant to the President, Jerome Wiesner.

**Civil Rights**

6. Twenty members of the organization, Americans for Democratic Action met with the President on May 4, 1963 for a meet-and-greet/lobbying session about Civil Rights.

**The 1960 Campaign**

Materials related to the 1960 Presidential campaign.

1. Pins, jewelry, and ties (Democratic donkey, PT-109, slogans)
2. Campaign Trail Photographs
3. Stickers and Placards
4. Ephemera from the Democratic National Convention
5. Documents (Memo on Kennedy's performance in the debate, Letter to Kennedy from 6th grader about campaign, “Blue Bomb” pamphlet related to Kennedy's phone call to Coretta Scott King while Martin Luther King, Jr., was in jail for participating in a sit-in)
6. Debate Footage
Primary Sources Listed by Topic

1960 Election
- Campaign Materials (Campaign Button)
- Phone conversation between John F. Kennedy and Governor Ross Barnett on the integration of the University of Mississippi (Telephone)
- Meeting with Americans for Democratic Action regarding Birmingham, AL (Secret Recording Button)
- Blue Bomb Pamphlet (Campaign Button)
- White House Diary: June 11, 1963 (Address to the nation on Civil Rights) (Diary)

Civil Rights
- Phone conversation between John F. Kennedy and Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy about the Bay of Pigs (Telephone)
- Conversation between John F. Kennedy and Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric about the Missile Crisis (Telephone)
- Conversation between John F. Kennedy and President Eisenhower about the Missile Crisis (Telephone)
- Meeting on Cuban Missile Crisis (Secret Recording Button)
- White House Diary: April 17-20, 1961 (Bay of Pigs), October 16-28, 1962 (Cuban Missile Crisis) (Diary)

Cuba
- Phone conversation between John F. Kennedy and Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy about the Bay of Pigs (Telephone)
- Conversation between John F. Kennedy and Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric about the Missile Crisis (Telephone)
- Conversation between John F. Kennedy and President Eisenhower about the Missile Crisis (Telephone)
- Meeting on Cuban Missile Crisis (Secret Recording Button)
- White House Diary: April 17-20, 1961 (Bay of Pigs), October 16-28, 1962 (Cuban Missile Crisis) (Diary)

Diplomacy/International Travel
- Photo album for Mrs. Kennedy (Picture Frames)
- Telephone conversation with Special Assistant to the President Arthur Schlesinger discussing a prospective post in Central or Latin America for Samuel H. Beer and Schlesinger’s recent trip to a conference in England (Telephone)

International Trade
- Phone conversation with Senator Edward M. Kennedy discussing a meeting with the wool industry about international trade (Telephone)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desk Item</th>
<th>Module</th>
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| John F. Kennedy’s Life | • John F. Kennedy’s Love of the Sea (Scrimshaw)  
• John F. Kennedy in World War II and PT-109 (Coconut)  
• Photo Albums of his family, Mrs. Kennedy and their children (Picture Frame)  
• White House Diary (Diary) |
| Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty | • Phone conversation between President Kennedy and President Truman (Telephone)  
• Conversation between President Kennedy and leading scientists (Secret Recording Button)  
• Conversation between President Kennedy, Vice President, Secretary of Defense, and Joint Chiefs (Secret Recording Button)  
• White House Diary: June 10, 1963 (Commencement address at American University), October 7, 1963 (signs the Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty) (Diary) |
| Peace Corps | • White House Diary: March 1, 1961 (signs Executive Order 10924 establishing the Peace Corps)  
• Phone conversation between President Kennedy and Peace Corps Director Sargent Shriver, on the Peace Corps and the CIA (Telephone) |
| Space | • Meeting between John F. Kennedy and science advisors (Secret Recording Button)  
• Conversation with Major Gordon Cooper, Mercury Astronaut (Telephone)  
• White House Diary: May 25, 1961 (Special Message to Congress on Urgent National Needs), September 12, 1962 (Rice University Speech) (Diary) |
| Vietnam | • Meetings with Advisors in August 1963 regarding President Diem (Secret Recording Button) |
Suggestions for how to use the President’s Desk in your classroom are provided below. Activities and lesson plans are organized into three categories: the President’s Desk site as a whole, individual desk modules, and subject areas.

Although the activities and lesson ideas are divided by grade level, many of the suggestions could be easily modified for any grade. In addition to these offerings, related lessons and resources may be found on the Library’s website under “For Teachers”. They are listed in the following section for easy reference.

Learn: www.jfklibrary.org
• You be the Biographer Activity. Objects can tell us a lot about a person. Have students explore the President's Desk and think about what the objects tell us about John F. Kennedy's life. Ask students to write a biography of John F. Kennedy based on their findings. Students may illustrate their biographies with images from the "Media Gallery" in the JFK section of the Library's website. In addition to a lesson plan on this topic, teachers may use source material and criteria from the Library's web site that helps students learn how to critique biographies.

• Analyzing an Object Activity. Have students choose one object from the President's Desk exhibit. Ask students to draw a picture of the object, describe the object, and determine its purpose and function. Use the National Archives Artifact Analysis worksheet (http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/artifact_analysis_worksheet.pdf) to support this activity. Ask students to consider the following: Why is this object significant? Why do you think John F. Kennedy found this object valuable? If the President were alive today, what one question would you ask him about this object? What objects would you put on your desk and why?

• JFK in the White House Activity. The Oval Office is a symbol of the presidency and is the public office where the President works. Have students explore the President's Desk exhibit and consider the following: What are some of the issues that President Kennedy dealt with as President? What issues were important to the President? How do the objects on President Kennedy's desk reflect the life and presidency of John F. Kennedy? Have students create an exhibit poster or write a 1-2-page essay reflecting their research and analysis. Direct them to the “Media Gallery” of the JFK section of the Library's website and to the “Downloads and Resources” section of the JFK50.org website for additional visual sources. They may create their posters at glogster.com

The President's Desk

Elementary/ Middle School

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Middle/ High School

Listening in activities

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The President's Desk

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Elementary/Middle School

- **“Ask What You Can Do.” Lesson Plan** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Introduce students to Inauguration Day 1961 by showing the clip of JFK taking the oath of office on January 20th in the White House Diary. In this lesson, students listen to portions of JFK’s inaugural address and analyze a third-grader’s letter written in response to his speech. They then brainstorm ways to respond to JFK’s call to service in their communities and create an action plan for one strategy. Extended learning activities invite analysis of President Obama’s inaugural address.

- **A President’s Day Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) If you are elected to the nation’s highest office, what are you actually expected to do? Students spend a day at the White House with John F. Kennedy to learn about some of the president’s most important roles and responsibilities.

Middle School

- **Recipe for an Inaugural Address Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Introduce students to Inauguration Day 1961 by showing the clip of JFK taking the oath of office on January 20th that is featured in the White House Diary. Students role play advisors to the President and study past inaugural addresses including President Kennedy’s in order to prepare a memo to the “President-Elect” with suggested ingredients for a successful speech.

- **The President at Work Lesson Plan.** (see page 53) In this lesson, students sleuth through the president’s appointment book to find out what he does and how it reflects the varied roles of the presidency.

High School

- **Analyzing JFK’s Inaugural Address and Analyzing the Rhetoric of JFK’s Inaugural Address Lesson Plans** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Introduce students to Inauguration Day 1961 by showing the clip of JFK taking the oath of office on January 20th that is featured in the White House Diary. In the first lesson, students view JFK’s inaugural address through the perspective of a person from the past. In the second lesson, students examine the effect of rhetoric in the President’s inaugural speech.

- **A Day in the Oval Office Activity.** Have students look through the White House Diary and examine the entries related to a particular topic. Students must first research the dates of their topic. As they explore the President’s schedule on those dates, ask students to consider the following: What other issues or events did President Kennedy have to deal with at this time? Was the President’s attention focused on one particular issue or was it divided among many? How long does the topic remain a focus on the schedule? What can we learn from the President’s schedule?

Elementary/Middle School

- **John F. Kennedy’s Love of the Sea**

Middle School

- **A Love for the Sea Activity.** Objects can tell us a lot about how people lived in the past and what they were interested in. President Kennedy’s love of the sea is evident by the maritime objects he collected. Have students explore the module and learn about Kennedy and the sea. Ask students to choose one object that they think best represents President Kennedy.

- **You Be the First Mate Activity.** Have students role play being the first mate on President Kennedy’s sailboat the Victura and explore the module. Have them write a story about their experiences sailing from port to port and what they found when they dropped anchor at each location. Students may complete the “Sail the Victura” on page to help focus their exploration of the module.

- **Your Favorite Object Activity.** Historians carefully analyze objects to get a better sense of what people did in the past. Analyzing an object involves carefully observing the artifact, paying close attention to the materials the object is made from, and thinking about the purpose and function of the artifact. Using the National Archives Artifact Analysis Worksheet (http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/artifact_analysis_worksheet.pdf), have students analyze their favorite artifact in the module. What can we learn from this artifact?

- **Sailing the Victura Activity.** Using a map of Cape Cod, have students plot the ports that the Victura sailed to in the module and calculate the distances between each port. Ask students to calculate distances such as the shortest and the longest routes to connect all ports. The fastest and most accurate mathematician wins the “regatta.”

High School

- **Preserving a National Treasure Activity.** Presidents often incorporate into their agenda policies that have meaning in their lives. President Kennedy’s interest in the sea and Cape Cod influenced the creation of the Cape Cod National Seashore. Have students conduct research on the history of the Cape Cod National Seashore (or any other National Park Service site) and consider the role of the federal government in land conservation. Have them present their findings in an essay or visual format and share through class discussion or a display.
Middle School

- **Telling the Story of the PT-109 Activity.** Have students read the narrative slideshow of John F. Kennedy's experience in World War II individually, in groups, or as a whole class read-aloud. Afterwards, have students retell, write the story in their own words, or create a storyboard to assess reading comprehension and chronological thinking. Ask them to hypothesize about John F. Kennedy's leadership qualities based on this experience.

- **A Letter Home Activity.** Individually, or as a whole group, view the slideshow and read the text. There are two letters that JFK wrote to his family from the Solomon Islands (see “Documentary Materials”) for both copies of the letter and transcriptions of each one. Have students imagine that they are one of the surviving crew members of the PT-109. In their role play, have them write a letter home after the rescue. Have students include the following in their letters: the location of the crash, details about the PT-109 — what it was made of, how it moved, and its mission; names of other crew members, including the commander; a description of the crash and its aftermath; and a description of the rescue. For additional information on the story of the PT-109, see the essay, “John F. Kennedy and the PT-109” in the JFK in History section of the Library’s website.

- **JFK and World War II Activity.** John F. Kennedy's experience in World War II was often used throughout his political career to promote his ability to govern. After reading the narrative, ask students to consider and discuss the following: What character traits or abilities did John F. Kennedy demonstrate during World War II? Are these important traits for a President to have? How might his experience impact whether or not people would vote for him in a political election? How do you think Kennedy's experience in World War II influenced him as President? Discuss as a class. Then have students investigate the Campaign Button module to ascertain how JFK's WWII experience was often used throughout his political career to promote his ability to govern. After reading the essay, “John F. Kennedy and the PT-109,” have students read the narrative and write a letter to the tape: What insights do these recordings provide us about President Kennedy and his decision-making process on significant issues? Do these conversations influence your views on President Kennedy’s handling of the issue addressed? Why do you think President Kennedy recorded these conversations? Should the President of the United States record conversations? As a whole class, in a jigsaw format, have students report on the selected recordings.

High School

- **The Cuban Missile Crisis: How to Respond! Lesson Plan** (see page 72)

  This lesson plan relates to taped conversations with Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and with telephone recordings with Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric and former President Dwight D. Eisenhower (Telephone module). In this lesson, students examine primary sources and consider some of the options discussed, what groups and which individuals supported each option, and the pros and cons of each option. This lesson also features the online exhibit World on the Brink: JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis (www.jfklibrary.org, “Interactive Exhibits”).

- **Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Lesson Plan** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) This lesson plan relates to the recording of JFK’s meeting with his top science advisors. This lesson plan features the online exhibit World on the Brink: JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis (www.jfklibrary.org, “Interactive Exhibits”).

- **Take a Seat at the Conference Table Activity.** The recordings in this module are excerpts from longer conversations and meetings. Have students choose one recording to listen to and guide them to additional information on the topic in the “JFK in History” section of the Library’s website. They may also undertake additional research about the topic addressed, the participants, and events surrounding the conversation. Using their new knowledge of the topic being discussed, ask students to write script that continues this conversation. Or ask students to write a summary of the conversation where they explain what was going on at the time, the information addressed in the conversation, and the eventual resolution to the issue.

Middle/High School

- **Why Choose the Moon Lesson Plan** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) This lesson plan relates to the recording of JFK’s meeting with his top science advisors. In Why Choose the Moon!, students study primary source materials and investigate the motivation for President Kennedy’s ambitious space program.

- **You Are There: JFK and Decision-making Activity.** As we attempt to understand President Kennedy’s decision-making process on significant issues, we are fortunate to have a recording of some important meetings related to these topics. Divide students into groups and assign each group a recording to listen to either as homework or in-class activity. Direct them to the JFK in History section of the Library’s website for more information on their topic. Ask them to consider the following as they listen to the tape: What insights do these recordings provide us about President Kennedy and the topic discussed during these meetings? Do these conversations influence your views on President Kennedy’s handling of the issue addressed? Why do you think President Kennedy recorded these conversations? Should the President of the United States record conversations? As a whole class, in a jigsaw format, have students report on the selected recordings.

Elementary School

- **Telling the Story of the PT-109 Activity.** Have students read the narrative slideshow of John F. Kennedy’s experience in World War II individually, in groups, or as a whole class read-aloud. Afterwards, have students retell, write the story in their own words, or create a storyboard to assess reading comprehension and chronological thinking. Ask them to hypothesize about John F. Kennedy’s leadership qualities based on this experience.

- **A Letter Home Activity.** Individually, or as a whole group, view the slideshow and read the text. There are two letters that JFK wrote to his family from the Solomon Islands (see “Documentary Materials”) for both copies of the letter and transcriptions of each one. Have students imagine that they are one of the surviving crew members of the PT-109. In their role play, have them write a letter home after the rescue. Have students include the following in their letters: the location of the crash, details about the PT-109 — what it was made of, how it moved, and its mission; names of other crew members, including the commander; a description of the crash and its aftermath; and a description of the rescue. For additional information on the story of the PT-109, see the essay, “John F. Kennedy and the PT-109” in the JFK in History section of the Library’s website.

- **JFK and World War II Activity.** John F. Kennedy’s experience in World War II was often used throughout his political career to promote his ability to govern. After reading the narrative, ask students to consider and discuss the following: What character traits or abilities did John F. Kennedy demonstrate during World War II? Are these important traits for a President to have? How might his experience impact whether or not people would vote for him in a political election? How do you think Kennedy’s experience in World War II influenced him as President? Discuss as a class. Then have students investigate the Campaign Button module to ascertain how JFK’s WWII experience was often used throughout his political career to promote his ability to govern. After reading the essay, “John F. Kennedy and the PT-109,” have students read the narrative and write a letter to the tape: What insights do these recordings provide us about President Kennedy and his decision-making process on significant issues? Do these conversations influence your views on President Kennedy’s handling of the issue addressed? Why do you think President Kennedy recorded these conversations? Should the President of the United States record conversations? As a whole class, in a jigsaw format, have students report on the selected recordings.

- **The Cuban Missile Crisis: How to Respond! Lesson Plan** (see page 72)

  This lesson plan relates to taped conversations with Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and with telephone recordings with Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric and former President Dwight D. Eisenhower (Telephone module). In this lesson, students examine primary sources and consider some of the options discussed, what groups and which individuals supported each option, and the pros and cons of each option. This lesson also features the online exhibit World on the Brink: JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis (www.jfklibrary.org, “Interactive Exhibits”).

- **Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Lesson Plan** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) This lesson plan relates to the recording of JFK’s meeting with his top science advisors. This lesson plan features the online exhibit World on the Brink: JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis (www.jfklibrary.org, “Interactive Exhibits”).
• The Road to the White House Lesson Plan. (see page 44) In this lesson, students explore the module and make the “trip” with JFK from the Democratic National Convention to the November 8, 1961 election. They then answer questions posed on the “Road to the White House” game board.

• Managing a Presidential Campaign: The 1960 Election Lesson Plan (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students use materials related to the 1960 presidential election to explore the elements of a successful political campaign. These include a letter from a sixth-grader to John F. Kennedy.

• Televised Debates: Candidates Take a Stand Lesson Plan (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students examine primary source material to determine what voters can learn from political debates. They then create a guide book to help voters select a candidate.

• Red States, Blue State: Mapping the Presidential Election Lesson Plan (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students use electoral maps to analyze the results of the 1960 election, and collect and analyze data for a recent presidential election. * for additional analysis of the 1960 presidential election. This lesson also includes a blank electoral map of the United States for use with any presidential election.

• Staying On Message: Creating Effective Campaign Materials Activity. As the materials in this module demonstrate, a successful presidential campaign reaches out to voters in a variety of ways. Have students examine the various campaign materials and keep a record of what they thought were successful techniques to promote John F. Kennedy as a presidential candidate. Using these ideas, ask students to create campaign materials for: 1) a candidate in a school, local, state, or national election; 2) John F. Kennedy or another former presidential candidate; or 3) themselves as a candidate in a hypothetical election. If possible, encourage students to use multi- and new-media by creating an ad jingle, a commercial, poster, or PowerPoint or GlogsterEdu presentation.

• Political Debates: Advising a Candidate Lesson Plan. (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) This lesson focuses on the Clark Clifford memo critiquing Kennedy's performance in the debate that is featured in this module. Students analyze excerpts from the first Kennedy-Nixon debate (September 26, 1960) and Clifford’s memo. They may apply this historical example to a current political debate as they consider the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate they support.

• Picturing the Past Activity. Photographs can tell us a lot about people’s lives and the time period in which they lived. Historians carefully analyze photographs to get a better sense of what was going on at the time the photograph was taken. Analyzing a photograph involves carefully observing the photograph, paying close attention to detail, making inferences about what is happening in the photograph, and thinking about what other information is needed to better understand the photograph. Using the National Archives Photo Analysis Worksheet (http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/photo_analysis_worksheet.pdf), have students analyze some of the photographs of President Kennedy and his family. What can we learn about John F. Kennedy through these photographs?

See the “JFK in History” section of the Library’s website for biographies of President Kennedy and Jacqueline Kennedy. Additional student biographies for the Kennedys may be found in the “For Teachers” section of the website. Lesson plans for the life and legacy of the Kennedys and the Presidents’ mother, Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, are located there also.

• Picture It: JFK in High School Lesson Plan. (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) In this activity, students examine a photograph from JFK’s high school years and write a caption that reflects their knowledge gained through observation, research, and interpretation.
Suggested Activities and Lesson Plans Listed by Topic

**Elementary School**
- **They Had a Dream Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students put themselves in the role of a civil rights leader and write a letter to President Kennedy after investigating primary source material on the March on Washington. To complement this lesson, individually, or as a whole class activity, view the film footage of President Kennedy meeting with leaders of the March and moving images from the March on August 28, 1963 in the White House Diary.

**Elementary/Middle School**
- **Integrating Ole Miss Lesson Plan.** (see page 60) This lesson relates to the taped telephone conversation with Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett. Have students listen to the tape as an introduction to the story and to pique their curiosity about it. Through an examination of primary source materials on the 1962 integration of the University of Mississippi, students will then explore the different positions held by prominent figures on the issue and consider the role of the President in enforcing civil rights. The lesson features the online exhibit, Integrating Ole Miss (www.jfklibrary.org, “Interactive Exhibits”).

**Middle/High School**
- **The 1960 Campaign: John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, and the “Blue Bomb” Lesson Plan.** (see page 64) In this lesson, students analyze a pamphlet featured in the Campaign Button module and consider its impact on the final days of the 1960 campaign and election.
• The Cuban Missile Crisis: How to Respond? Lesson Plan. (see page 71) This lesson relates to taped conversations with Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and generally with telephone recordings with Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric and former President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Students examine primary sources and consider some of the options discussed, what groups and which individuals supported each option, and the pros and cons of each option. This lesson also features the online exhibit World on the Brink: JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis (www.jfklibrary.org, “Interactive Exhibits”)

Inaugural Address

• “Ask What You Can Do” Lesson Plan. (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Introduce students to Inauguration Day 1961 by showing the clip of JFK taking the oath of office on January 20th in the White House Diary. In this lesson, students listen to portions of JFK’s inaugural address and analyze a third-grader’s letter written in response to his speech. They then brainstorm ways to respond to JFK’s call to service in their communities and create an action plan for one strategy. Extended learning activities invite analysis of President Obama’s inaugural address.

• Recipe for an Inaugural Address Lesson Plan. (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Introduce students to Inauguration Day 1961 by showing the clip of JFK taking the oath of office on January 20th that is featured in the White House Diary. Students role play advisors to the President and study past inaugural addresses including President Kennedy’s in order to prepare a memo to the “President-Elect” with suggested ingredients for a successful speech.

• Analyzing JFK’s Inaugural Address and Analyzing the Rhetoric of JFK’s Inaugural Address Lesson Plans. (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Introduce students to Inauguration Day 1961 by showing the clip of JFK taking the oath of office on January 20th that is featured in the White House Diary. In the first lesson, students view JFK’s inaugural address through the perspective of a person from the past. In the second lesson, students examine the effect of rhetoric in the President’s inaugural speech.

JFK in the White House

• JFK in the White House Activity. The Oval Office is a symbol of the presidency and is the public office where the President works. Have students explore the President’s Desk exhibit and consider the following: What are some of the issues that President Kennedy dealt with as President? What issues were important to the President? How do the objects on President Kennedy’s desk reflect the life and presidency of John F. Kennedy? Have students create an exhibit poster or write a 1-2-page essay reflecting their research and analysis. Direct them to the “Media Gallery” of the JFK section of the Library’s website and to the “Downloads and Resources” section of the JFK50.org website for additional visual sources. They may create their posters at glogster.com

Elementary/Middle School

Middle School

All

Middle School

High School
The Life of John F. Kennedy

Elementary School

• You be the Biographer Activity. Objects can tell us a lot about a person. Have students explore the President's Desk and think about what the objects tell us about John F. Kennedy's life. Ask students to write a biography of John F. Kennedy based on their findings. Students may illustrate their biographies with images from the “Media Gallery” in the “JFK” section of the Library's website. In addition to a lesson plan on this topic, teachers may use source material and criteria from the Library’s “For Teachers” section of the website that helps students learn how to critique biographies.

• Picture It: JFK in High School Lesson Plan. (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) In this activity, students examine a photograph from JFK's high school years and write a caption. The photographs in the Picture Frame module complement this lesson.

• Analyzing an Object Activity. Have students choose one object from the President's Desk exhibit. Ask them to draw a picture of the object, describe the object, and determine its purpose and function. Use the National Archives Artifact Analysis worksheet (http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/artifact_analysis_worksheet.pdf) to support this activity. Ask students to consider the following: Why is this object significant? Why do you think John F. Kennedy found this object valuable? If the President were alive today, what one question would you ask him about this object? What objects would you put on your desk and why?

Middle School

• A Love for the Sea Activity. Objects can tell us a lot about how people lived in the past and what they were interested in. President Kennedy's love of the sea is evident by the maritime objects he collected. Have students explore the Scrimshaw module and learn about Kennedy and the sea. Ask students to choose one object that they think best represents President Kennedy, and explain why through a picture postcard.

• You Be the First Mate Activity. Have students role play being the first mate on President Kennedy's sailboat the Victura and explore the Scrimshaw module. Have them write a story about their experiences sailing from port to port and what they found when they dropped anchor at each location. Students may complete the “Sail the Victura” activity on page to help focus their exploration of the module.

• Your Favorite Object Activity. Historians carefully analyze objects to get a better sense of what people did in the past. Analyzing an object involves carefully observing the artifact, paying close attention to the materials the object is made from, and thinking about the purpose and function of the artifact. Using the National Archives Artifact Analysis Worksheet (http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/artifact_analysis_worksheet.pdf), have students analyze their favorite artifact in the Scrimshaw module. What can we learn from this artifact?

• Telling the Story of the PT-109 Activity. Have students read the narrative slideshow of John F. Kennedy's experience in World War II in the Coconut module individually, in groups, or as a whole class read-aloud. Afterwards, have students retell, write the story in their own words, or create a storyboard to assess reading comprehension and chronological thinking. Ask them to hypothesize about John F. Kennedy's leadership qualities based on this experience.

• A Letter Home Activity. Individually, or as a whole group, view the slideshow in the Coconut module about the PT-109 and read the text. There are two letters that JFK wrote to his family from the Solomon Islands (see “Documentary Materials”) for copies and transcriptions of each letter.) Have students imagine that they are one of the surviving crew members of the PT-109. In their role play, have them write a letter home after the rescue. Have students include the following in their letters: the location of the crash; details about the PT109 – what it was made of, how it moved, and its mission; names of other crew members, including the commander; a description of the crash and its aftermath; and a description of the rescue. For additional information on the story of the PT-109, see the essay, “John F. Kennedy and the PT-109” in the “JFK in History” section of the Library's website.

• JFK and World War II Activity. John F. Kennedy's experience in World War II was often used throughout his political career to promote his ability to govern. After reading the narrative in the Coconut module, ask students to consider and discuss the following: What character traits or abilities did John F. Kennedy demonstrate during World War II? Are these important traits for a President to have? How might his experience impact whether or not people would vote for him in a political election? How do you think Kennedy's experience in World War II INFLUENCED him as President? Discuss as a class. Then have students investigate the Campaign Button module to ascertain how JFK's WWII experience was used in the campaign. As assessment, have them create new campaign materials based on this aspect of his experience.

• Sailing the Victura Activity. Using a map of Cape Cod, have students plot the ports that the Victura sailed to in the module and calculate the distances between each port. Ask students to calculate distances such as the shortest and the longest routes to connect all ports. The fastest and most accurate mathematician wins the "regatta."
• **Preserving a National Treasure Activity.** Presidents often incorporate into their agenda policies that have meaning in their lives. President Kennedy’s interest in the sea and Cape Cod influenced the creation of the Cape Cod National Seashore. Have students conduct research on the history of the Cape Cod National Seashore (or any other National Park Service site) and consider the role of the federal government in land conservation. Have them present their findings in an essay or visual format and share through class discussion or a display.

• **Picturing the Past Activity.** Photographs can tell us a lot about people’s lives and the time period in which they lived. Historians carefully analyze photographs to get a better sense of what was going on at the time the photograph was taken. Analyzing a photograph involves carefully observing the photograph, paying close attention to detail, making inferences about what is happening in the photograph, and thinking about what other information is needed to better understand the photograph. Using the National Archives Photo Analysis Worksheet (http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/photo_analysis_worksheet.pdf), have students analyze some of the photographs of President Kennedy and his family. What can we learn about John F. Kennedy through these photographs? Have students present their findings in a “photo album” with new captions based on their analysis.

See the “JFK in History” section of the Library’s website for biographies of President Kennedy and Jacqueline Kennedy. Additional student biographies for the Kennedys may be found in the “For Teachers” section of the website. Lesson plans for the life and legacy of the Kennedys and the Presidents’ mother, Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, are located there also.

**Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty**

• **Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) This lesson plan relates to the taped meetings with members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and top scientists. It also relates to the conversation with President Harry S. Truman about the criteria for the treaty (Telephone module.) In the lesson, students consider the threat of nuclear weapons in the early 1960s, and the opportunities and challenges in negotiating an arms control agreement.

• **The Road to the White House Lesson Plan.** (see page 44) In this lesson, students explore the Campaign Button module and make the “trip” with JFK from the Democratic National Convention to the November 8, 1961 election. They then answer questions posed on the “Road to the White House” game board.

• **Managing a Presidential Campaign: The 1960 Election Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students examine materials related to the 1960 presidential election to explore the elements of a successful political campaign. These include a letter from a sixth-grader to John F. Kennedy featured in the Campaign Button module.

• **Television Debates: Candidates Take a Stand Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students examine primary source material to determine what voters can learn from political debates. They then create a guide book to help voters select a candidate. Excerpts from the presidential debates complement this lesson.

• **Red States, Blue State: Mapping the Presidential Election Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students use electoral maps, including the one featured in the Campaign Button module, to analyze the results of the 1960 election, and collect and analyze data for a recent presidential election. See the “Campaign of 1960” essay in the “JFK in History” section of the website for additional analysis of the 1960 presidential election. This lesson also includes a blank electoral map of the United States for use with any presidential election.

• **Staying On Message: Creating Effective Campaign Materials Activity.** As the materials in this module demonstrate, a successful presidential campaign reaches out to voters in a variety of ways. Have students examine the various campaign materials and keep a record of what they thought were successful techniques to promote John F. Kennedy as a presidential candidate. Using these ideas, ask students to create campaign materials for: 1) a candidate in a school, local, state, or national election; 2) John F. Kennedy or another former presidential candidate; or 3) themselves as a candidate in a hypothetical election. If possible, encourage students to use multi- and new-media by creating an ad jingle, a commercial, poster, or PowerPoint or GlogsterEdu presentation.
Presidential Campaigns and Elections (cont’d)

Middle/High School
- **Political Debates: Advising a Candidate Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) This lesson focuses on the Clark Clifford memo critiquing Kennedy's performance in the presidential debate that is featured in this module. Students analyze excerpts from the first Kennedy-Nixon debate (September 26, 1960) and Clifford's memo. They may then apply this historical example to a current political debate as they consider the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate they support.

High School
- **The 1960 Campaign: John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the “Blue Bomb” Lesson Plan.** (see page ) In this lesson, students analyze a pamphlet featured in the Campaign Button module and consider its impact on the final days of the 1960 campaign and election.

Presidential Decision Making

Middle/High School
- **Take a Seat at the Conference Table Activity.** The recordings in this Secret Recording Button module are excerpts from longer conversations and meetings. Have students choose one recording to listen to and guide them to additional information on the topic in the “JFK in History” section of the Library’s website. They may also undertake additional research about the topic addressed, the participants, and events surrounding the conversation. Using their new knowledge of the topic being discussed, ask students to write a script that continues this conversation. Alternatively, have students write a summary of the conversation where they explain what was going on at the time, the information addressed in the conversation, and the eventual resolution to the issue. Topics include Civil Rights, the Cuban Missile Crisis, Space, the Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and Vietnam.

High School
- **You Are There: JFK and Decision-making Activity.** As we attempt to understand President Kennedy’s decision-making process on significant issues, we are fortunate to have a recording of one important meeting related to these topics. Divide students into groups and assign each group a recording to listen to either as homework or in-class activity. Topics include Civil Rights, the Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam, the Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and Space. Direct them to the “JFK in History” section of the Library’s website for more information on their topic. Ask them to consider the following as they listen to the tape: What insights do these recordings provide us about President Kennedy and the topic discussed during these meetings? Do these conversations influence your views on President Kennedy’s handling of the issue addressed? Why do you think President Kennedy recorded these conversations? Should the President of the United States record conversations? As a whole class, in a jigsaw format, have students report on the selected recordings and their impressions of the President.

Middle School
- **A President’s Day Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) If you are elected to the nation’s highest office, what are you actually expected to do? Students spend a day at the White House with John F. Kennedy to learn about some of the president’s most important roles and responsibilities. The date featured in the White House Diary for this lesson is September 25, 1962.

High School
- **The President at Work Lesson Plan.** (see page 53) In this lesson, students sleuth through the president’s appointment book to find out what he does and how it reflects the varied roles of the presidency.

High School
- **A Day in the Oval Office Activity.** Have students look through the White House Diary and examine the entries related to a particular topic. Students must first research the dates of their topic. As they explore the President’s schedule on those dates, ask students to consider the following: What other issues or events did President Kennedy have to deal with at this time? Was the President’s attention focused on one particular issue or was it divided among many? How long does the topic remain a focus on the schedule? What can we learn from the President’s schedule? Direct students to the “JFK in History” section of the website for more information on their topic. The list of essays is not exhausted, but covers the main content areas included in most history curricula. Have them roleplay the President’s press officer and prepare a briefing on their topic and selected highlights on other potential topics based on their findings in the Diary.

Space: The Race To The Moon

Elementary School
- **Race to the Moon! Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students learn about the “space race” by analyzing a letter of advice from a young student to President Kennedy. The telephone conversation with NASA Astronaut, Major Gordon Cooper complements this lesson.

Middle/High School
- **Why Choose the Moon? Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) This lesson plan relates to the recording of JFK’s meeting with his top science advisors. Students study primary source materials and investigate the motivation for President Kennedy’s ambitious space program. Additional primary source materials and classroom activities on exploring space may be found in the “For Teachers” section of the website. The interactive exhibit, “We Choose the Moon” is also accessible in the “JFK in History” section of the website. The “science and technology” sections of the JFK50.org website provide additional complementary source materials.
Lesson plans that are accessible on the Library's website under the “For Teachers” section are listed below by grade. Selected new lessons presented in conjunction with The President's Desk follow in this section of the Resource Guide.

Lesson Plans Related to the President’s Desk on the Library’s Website, www.jfklibrary.org

Elementary School

- Picture It: JFK in High School Lesson Plan. (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students examine a photograph from JFK’s high school years and write a caption. The photographs in the Picture Frame module complement this lesson.

- “Ask What You Can Do” Lesson Plan. (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students listen to portions of JFK’s inaugural address and analyze a third-grader’s letter written in response to his speech.

- Managing a Presidential Campaign: The 1960 Election Lesson Plan. (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students examine materials related to the 1960 presidential election to explore the elements of a successful political campaign. These include a letter from a sixth-grader to John F. Kennedy featured in the Campaign Button module.

- Televised Debates: Candidates Take a Stand Lesson Plan. (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students examine primary source material to determine what voters can learn from political debates.

- They Had a Dream Lesson Plan. (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students put themselves in the role of a civil rights leader and write a letter to President Kennedy after investigating primary source material on the March on Washington.

- Race to the Moon! Lesson Plan. (www.jfklibrary.org “For Teachers”) Students learn about the “space race” by analyzing a letter of advice from a young student to President Kennedy. The telephone conversation with NASA Astronaut, Major Gordon Cooper complements this lesson.
• **Red States, Blue State: Mapping the Presidential Election Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students use electoral maps, including the one featured in the Campaign Button module, to analyze the results of the 1960 election, and collect and analyze data for a recent presidential election.

• **A President's Day Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) If you are elected to the nation's highest office, what are you actually expected to do? Students spend a day at the White House with John F. Kennedy to learn about some of the president's most important roles and responsibilities.

• **Recipe for an Inaugural Address Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students role play advisors to the President and study past inaugural addresses including President Kennedy's in order to prepare a memo to the “President-Elect” with suggested ingredients for a successful speech.

• **Political Debates: Advising a Candidate Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) Students analyze excerpts from the first Kennedy-Nixon debate (September 26, 1960) and Clifford's memo. They may then apply this historical example to a current political debate as they consider the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate they support.

• **Why Choose the Moon Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) This lesson plan relates to the recording of JFK's meeting with his top science advisors. Students study primary source materials and investigate the motivation for President Kennedy's ambitious space program. The “Science and Technology” sections of the www.JFK50.org website provide additional complementary source materials.

• **Integrating Ole Miss Lesson Plan.** (see page 60) Through an examination of primary source materials on the 1962 integration of the University of Mississippi, students will then explore the different positions held by prominent figures on the issue and consider the role of the President in enforcing civil rights. The lesson features the online exhibit, Integrating Ole Miss (www.jfklibrary.org, “Interactive Exhibits”)


• **Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Lesson Plan.** (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”) This lesson plan relates to the taped meetings with members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and top scientists. Students consider the threat of nuclear weapons in the early 1960s, and the opportunities and challenges in negotiating an arms control agreement.
Goals/Rationale: by exploring the primary sources in the Campaign Button module, students will gather information about the key people in the 1960 election and the steps one takes in running for presidential office.

Essential Question: How does a presidential candidate campaign for the presidency?

Objectives
Students will:
• analyze multiple primary sources
• identify the key steps in the presidential campaign process
• identify the candidates in 1960 and describe impressions of their performance in the campaign

Connections to Curriculum (Standards)
National History Standards
K-4 Historical Analysis and Interpretation; standards 3, 4
National Standards for Civics And Government
K-4, Standard 5: What are the roles of the citizen in American democracy?

Historical Background and Context
The “Kennedy for President” button is one of the iconic symbols of John F. Kennedy’s 1960 presidential campaign. It is one of several primary sources featured in the Campaign Button” module. All are presented within the context of a virtual campaign office.

Highlights include television “programs” featuring speeches by JFK, a campaign spot and interview with Mrs. Kennedy, excerpts of televised presidential debates, and the Kennedy jingle. Campaign placards, bumper stickers, posters, buttons and pins, memos, a letter from a sixth-grader to the candidate, and Frank Sinatra’s “High Hopes” 45 rpm record are featured as well. All provide students with a sense of the spirit and energy of the 1960 campaign.  For more historical background, refer to the “Campaign of 1960” essay in the “JFK in History” section of the Library’s website. In this activity, students explore the terminology of the campaign for the presidency. They next explore, individually or as a whole class, the primary sources in the campaign office and make the “trip” with JFK from the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, CA to the 1960 presidential election on November 8th. They “travel” around a game board answering questions posed on each square with information gleaned from the primary sources featured in the virtual campaign office.

Materials
• Campaign Button Module/ Internet Access
• Campaigning for the Presidency: Definition Key
• Word Challenge! JFK’s Path to the Presidency
• Road to the White House Game Board

Preparation
Print each word below in large letters on its own 8 ½” x 11” piece of paper. Post these words in your room in sequential order reflecting the path to the presidency.
1. Candidate
2. Primary
3. Convention
4. Nomination
5. Campaign
6. Debate
7. Election
8. Inauguration

Photocopy one “Word Challenge” handout for each student
Photocopy one “Road to the White House” Game Board for each student

Procedure
1. Begin by asking students to look closely at the “Kennedy for President” campaign button. Why might JFK’s campaign have selected this design? What might they have intended to communicate to American voters? What does the design communicate to the students today?

2. Next introduce students to the terms involved in a presidential campaign and election. Ask students to look at the words around the room: “Can anyone figure out what these posters are about? What are all of these words about?”

Prompts if needed: “Are any of these words familiar to you? If you used one of these words in a conversation, what topic might you be talking about?”

If students haven’t already done so, point out that these posters all have to do with becoming president of the United States.

3. Web of ideas: The President. Draw a circle on the board and write the word,”President” in the center. Ask students “Tell me anything you know about being the president.” Write student answers on strands of a “web” around the circle. Words and phrases might include: lives in the White House; meets with world leaders; elected every 4 years; commander-in-chief; decides to go to war; gives speeches; decisions affect everyone in the country.

4. Campaign Talk. Ask student to consider the words posted around the room. Adapt these suggestions as necessary for your group. “If you think you know what a word means, or want to take a guess, stand underneath that word - without talking.” Invite students to get out of their seats and quietly stand under a poster.

Explain the directions: “Let’s assume each of you is running for President of the United States. These words are key to your becoming president. Let’s see if you can answer two questions: a. What does your word mean? b. What does your word have to do with becoming president?”
Allow students 1 minute to come up with answers. If there is more than one person under a word, invite students to talk to everyone in that “word group” and see if they can come to agreement about the meaning of the word and its relevance to the presidency. Point out that some words may have more than one meaning.

Go around the room, asking a student representative from each group to offer a definition: “You want to be President. What does this word have to do with your getting to the White House?”

Ask students to explain how they came up with their answers. Then discuss the correct answer, drawing from the glossary handout. If any words aren’t chosen, invite students to look the words up in a dictionary or reference book.

5. Word Challenge: JFK’s Path to the Presidency. Introduce John F. Kennedy and inform them that learning these words will help them play a board game based on an online exhibit they will see “Have any of you heard of John F. Kennedy or JFK? He was a Senator from Massachusetts and, in 1960, ran for president and won the election. Students work in pairs. Distribute a copy of the “Word Challenge” handout to each student and review the directions. “First you’ll use the special words on the page to fill in the blank of each stage of JFK’s path to the presidency. Then you’ll figure out the order in which JFK accomplished each of these stages on his way to becoming president. Number the squares 1-8. Debrief Parts I and II. Go around the room and ask students to tell which word square comes next and read the description of JFK’s experience.

6. Introduce students to the JFK campaign office in the Campaign Button module. Show them JFK’s speech announcing his candidacy (program #1) on the television set.

7. Distribute a Game Board to each student. Introduce them to the Game Board and, explain that they will be making the trip to the 1960 Democratic National Convention and on to the November 8th election as they explore the Campaign Button module. Assign either as homework or explore as a whole group activity. Have them record their answers on the game board. The final question may be answered with students’ previous knowledge, or by clicking on January 20, 1961 in the White House Diary.

On a separate piece of paper, have students jot down what evidence helped them answer the question for each square of the Game Board.

8. Evaluation. Review students’ answers and have them cite their evidence. Ask them to write a summary of the “trip” and comment on what portion was most memorable for them and why.

Campaigning for the Presidency: Definition Key

Candidate - a person who is formally “in the running” for a particular position or award. You might be a candidate for student council, or a candidate for team captain, or a candidate to win a music award. If you want to run for president, you have to formally announce your candidacy so that people know you are running.

Primary - this means “first”. Sometimes elementary school is called primary school because it comes first. Primary colors (red, yellow, blue) are the first colors from which all other colors come. Before the presidential election, mini-elections (first elections) are held in each state to help political parties decide which of their candidates has the best shot at winning the national election. These mini-elections are called “state primaries.” If a candidate wins most of the state primaries, he or she stands a good chance of getting his or her party’s nomination for president.

Convention - a big meeting of people who belong to the same group or share a similar interest. There are teachers’ conventions, gardeners’ conventions, dog owners’ conventions. This is the big meeting where the Democrats pick one candidate to run for president and decide on the platform, or ideas, that the party stands for. The Republican party will hold their own national convention to choose the Republican candidate for president.

Nomination - the naming of a candidate for election. When someone is running for president, he or she needs to be chosen by his or her party as the best of all candidates: the one they want to name (nominate) as their choice for president. A candidate wins his or her party’s nomination at the national convention.

Campaign - a series of organized, planned actions taken by a candidate to help him or her get elected. In a campaign for president, for example, he or she may “hit the campaign trail” and travel to different towns and cities, make speeches, talk to voters, run advertisements on TV, etc. All of this costs a lot of money, so they need to do a lot of fundraising to keep your campaign going!

Debate - to debate is to discuss opposing viewpoints. The presidential debates are formal discussions among presidential candidates. Before the presidential election, candidates participate in a series of televised debates and answer a lot of tough questions so that voters can hear how their viewpoints differ from one another on all sorts of issues: education, the military, the environment, taxes, the death penalty, etc.

Election - to elect is to choose. You can elect to have chocolate ice cream rather than vanilla, or elect to stay home rather than go out to the movies. American citizens elect a president by voting. Presidential elections happen every four years. Election day is the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

Popular Vote - the popular vote is the final number of votes cast for each candidate by the people.

Electoral Vote - the electoral vote is the number of votes cast for each candidate for president and vice president by the Electoral College, a group of people chosen by the political party’s candidates for president and vice president. These representatives meet in their respective state capitals to cast their votes.

Inauguration - the start of something. The presidential inauguration is a formal ceremony where the president is sworn in and officially starts his or her job. This is held on January 20th, two-and-a-half months after the presidential election. At the inauguration ceremony, held on the steps of the Capitol, the president recites an oath: “I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.”
Q. In what city was the 1960 Democratic National Convention?  
A. Los Angeles, CA  
Sources: Donkey Coaster, Convention Ticket

Q. Who ran for Vice President with John F. Kennedy?  
A. Lyndon B. Johnson  
Sources: Leadership for the 60s pin (pin table); Johnson for Vice President poster on the back wall of the office

Q. Listen to JFK’s DNC Acceptance Speech and complete this sentence to find the theme of his campaign.  
A. “And we stand today on the edge of a New Frontier*” (Television program # 3)  
Source: JFK’s DNC acceptance speech (television program #3)

Q. What office equipment do you see that is not often used today?  
A. A typewriter  
Source: Campaign Office desktop

Q. Make a campaign button for JFK in this box. What symbol will you use? Why?  

Q. Who were the candidates in the 1960 presidential debates?  
A. Republican: Richard M. Nixon; Democrat: John F. Kennedy  
Sources: campaign buttons; television - jingle, debates, speeches

Q. Click on the typewriter to find a file with a memo from Clark Clifford. Circle the candidate he thought won the first televised presidential debate.  
A. John F. Kennedy  
Source: Clark Clifford memo to JFK

Q. What do you notice about Nixon?  
A. open-ended  
Sources: debate excerpts (television program #9, #10)

Q. What do you notice about Kennedy?  
A. open-ended  
Sources: campaign buttons; television - jingle, debates, speeches

Q. How can you tell it was a close election?  
A. The popular votes were: JFK - 34,227,096; Nixon - 34,108,546  
The Electoral College votes were: JFK -- 303; Nixon -219  
Source: “Election Results: 1960” Map

Q. What was the date of John F. Kennedy's Inauguration?  
A. January 20, 1961  
Source: student's previous knowledge; White House Diary page 1

Sample Game Board answers and evidence for the answer:
Words: campaign, inauguration, debate, candidate, convention, nomination, election, primary

JFK wins this important mini-election in West Virginia on May 10, 1960. Many people there don't want JFK to be president because he is Catholic. He convinces people that they should not vote against him because of his religion.

Word: ______________________________
What number? 2

John F. Kennedy announces that he is running for president on January 2, 1960 at the Capitol in Washington, D.C. At 42, he is the youngest person to run for president.

Word: ______________________________
What number? 1

On January 20, 1961, JFK is sworn in as President of the United States. It's a freezing cold day. In his acceptance speech, JFK says these famous words: “Ask not what your country can do for you-ask what you can do for your country.”

Word: ______________________________
What number? 8

On September 26, 1960 JFK and his Republican opponent, Richard Nixon, go on TV to discuss their opposing viewpoints. This is the first time 2 presidential candidates have this kind of discussion on TV.

Part 1: Word Challenge!
Read the information in each square. Fill in the blank with the word that best describes this step on JFK's path to the presidency. Hint: Use the underlined words as your main clue!

Part 2: Path to the Presidency.
In what order did JFK take each step on the path to the presidency? Number the squares in order: 1-8.

On July 13, 1960, Democrats name John F. Kennedy as their presidential candidate at the National Convention.

Word: ______________________________
Word Challenge! JFK's Path to the Presidency
(Answer Sheet)

Word: debates
What number? 6
During September and October, JFK travels around the country, making speeches and
telling people why they should vote for him.

Word: campaign
What number? 5
On July 13, 1960, Democrats name JFK as their presidential candidate at the National
Convention.

Word: nomination
What number? 4
In July 1960, thousands of Democrats meet in Los Angeles to choose a candidate for
president.

Word: convention
What number? 3
On November 8, 1960, people all over the country turn out to vote for president.

Word: election
What number? 7

Goals/Rationale
Through an examination of President Kennedy's appointment calendar, students will
explore sample days in his presidency and in doing so, consider and identify the roles of
the President of the United States.

Essential Question: What can we learn about a president's various roles and
responsibilities from JFK's official appointment book?

Objectives
Students will:
• conduct internet-based historical research
• analyze a primary source document
• identify the roles of the President

Connections to Curriculum (Standards)
National History Standards
Historical Thinking: K-4; #4 and #5

Historical Background and Context
The president has an extremely complex and demanding job. Americans place no greater
responsibility on any one individual than the president. The Constitution provides
only a vague outline of the American presidency. Presidents have defined and extended
the powers of office over time. Some presidents thrive at balancing the numerous roles
they are expected to play, while others have been less successful doing this. The seven
classical roles of the president are defined in the What Does the President Do?
handout.

President Kennedy liked the real and serious challenges that came with being president.
According to President Kennedy's speechwriter and counselor, Ted Sorensen, he "thrived
on its pressures." He enjoyed a busy day full of continuous action and often liked to fill in
the gaps in his appointment schedule.

The White House Diary module provides a day-by-day account of these activities from
meetings with advisors and discussions with Congressional representatives to visits
from foreign heads of state and speaking engagements. This interactive module allows
students to see President Kennedy's schedule for every day of his presidency. It features
daily highlights, digital scans of his actual appointment diary (by clicking on "View
Appointments"), as well as video, audio, and photographs of the day's events. In this
lesson, students gather information about the President's schedule from the
White House Diary and consider how these activities are representative of the seven traditional roles of the president. With this knowledge, they then match these roles to symbols featured in the Seal of the President of the United States and have the opportunity to create their own interpretation of a seal for the president.

“A President’s Day” lesson plan complements the plan below. The procedure that follows includes the overview reading for “A President’s Day” in order to provide students with explanatory text for a sample day in JFK’s presidency, September 25, 1962. See www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers” for “A President’s Day” lesson plan. For students more familiar with the president’s “job”, the lesson below may be abbreviated by skipping this reading and going directly to the assignment in the White House Diary.

Materials
- White House Diary module/Internet Access
- A Day With President Kennedy handout
- What Does the President Do? handout
- The President’s Seal handout (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”)
- Image of the President’s Seal
- A President’s Day handout (optional) (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”)

Procedure
1. Introduce the term diary. Ask students how they might define a diary. Explain that in this context, diary means an appointment book. Note that the president didn’t record the information into the diary himself; his staff kept this record and made it available to the press.

2. As noted above, as background information, assign students the reading “A President’s Day” or read as a whole class activity. Discuss what President Kennedy did on September 25, 1962 and how these activities reflected the roles and responsibilities of the president’s job. These include: Head of State, Chief Executive, Party Leader, and Commander-in-Chief. (Three roles not specified in the reading are: Chief Diplomat, National Leader, and Manager of the Economy.)

3. As homework have students travel back in time to spend a day with the President. Have each student research one of the following dates in the White House Diary: March 1, 1961 (Executive Order establishes the Peace Corps); February 20, 1962 (John Glenn becomes the first American to orbit the Earth; June 11, 1963 (President Kennedy speaks to the nation and firmly commits his administration to the cause of civil rights); June 26, 1963 (President Kennedy on European diplomatic trip speaks in Berlin and travels to his ancestral homeland, Ireland.) Alternatively, ask students to research their birthday for the year 1961, 1962, or 1963. (For students whose birthdays fall between November 23-December 31, they will have two dates to look at - 1961 and 1962 as a result of President Kennedy’s death on November 22, 1963.)

4. Distribute the handout A Day With President Kennedy and ask them to record their answers based on the events of that day.

5. As a class or in smaller groups, have students share their findings and list them on the board or in their groups. Ask them to see if there are similarities in the activities. Have them group like activities. What presidential roles or responsibilities might they assign to these activities?

Lesson Extension
Begin by introducing the President’s Seal. Show the Seal. Explain its history. The Seal of the President of the United States is used to mark correspondence from the president to the United States Congress and as a symbol of the presidency. The central design is based on the Great Seal of the United States. It is the official coat of arms of the U.S. presidency. Ask where they may have seen the Seal before (presidential flag, vehicles, podiums, and even the carpet in the Oval Office.) Although President Rutherford B. Hayes used a presidential seal in 1877, the design of today’s seal was specified in 1945 by executive order by President Harry S. Truman. Distribute the handout, The President’s Seal. Have students “Discover the Symbols in the Seal” and match the symbols with their meaning. Students may score their work of the matching game with the answer code on the back page of the handout. Then have students create a new seal of their own design based on their understanding of the roles of the president. Students may score their work of the matching game with the answer code on the back page of the handout. Display student seals as an exhibit on the “President’s Job.”
The President at Work

What does the President Do?

Roles and Responsibilities of the President

Commander in Chief:
The president serves as commander in chief of the armed forces, and has the responsibility for making decisions about sending young men and women in the armed forces to dangerous places around the world.

Chief Executive:
The president serves as the government’s chief executive, or head of the Executive Branch of the U.S. government. The Executive Branch carries out laws passed by Congress (the Legislative Branch) and performs other essential services. It includes departments such as Education, Defense, Treasury, State, Energy, etc. The president also has the authority to approve or veto laws proposed by Congress and to appoint officials, with the advice and the consent of the Senate.

Chief Diplomat:
As chief diplomat, the president has the power to make treaties with foreign governments and to maintain formal relationships with other nations.

Ceremonial Head of State:
The president is in charge of international relations and often meets with foreign heads of state, ambassadors, and government officials.

Manager of the Economy:
The president is expected to maintain the financial health of the nation, and to keep America a prosperous nation.

Party Leader:
The president meets with members of his or her party to discuss important issues and legislative initiatives.

National Leader:
The president articulates the nation’s priorities and new challenges, and is expected to comfort and inspire in times of crisis.

A Day with President Kennedy

Travel back in time to the early 1960s and spend a day with JFK. See if you can keep up with him!

Date

Day of the Week

What time does the president begin working?

What does he do?

- Does he make speeches? If so, on what subject(s)? Who is his audience?
- Does he have a news conference?
- Does he sign legislation? If so, what is the purpose of the legislation?
- Does he issue any executive orders? If so, what is the purpose of the order?
- Does he meet with foreign leaders? Who? From what country?
- Does he participate in any ceremonies? What kind and where?
- Does he meet with members of Congress? Who? What is the topic of the meeting?
- What else does he do?

What time is his last appointment for the day?
Sail the Victura!

Click on the piece of Scrimshaw on the desk.

Scrimshaw is the white triangular piece that has engravings on it.

Once you click on the scrimshaw, watch the video. A scrapbook will appear when the video is finished. Click on the map in the bottom right hand corner. A map will appear and you will be able to sail your boat to different ports on Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

With your cursor click on Plymouth, MA, and sail to this historic port.
• What is Scrimshaw?
• Is it still produced today?

Get back on your boat and sail to the port near Chatham, MA.
• What national seashore did President Kennedy authorize on August 7, 1961?
• Why did President Kennedy take this action?
• On November 9, 1620, what famous ship landed on what is now known as Coast Guard Beach?

Your next port of call is Wellfleet, MA. Sail the Victura into the harbor.

• Which model ship shows that France helped the American colonies fight the British during the Revolutionary War?

Now, sail up to Boston, which is the red “x” mark in the top left hand side of the map.
• What famous American warship is moored in Charlestown, MA?

Finish your trip by sailing to Hyannisport and watch the short film.

List two things that President Kennedy liked to do during his leisure time.

1.
2.
Essential Question: What role should the President take in enforcing civil rights?

Goals: Through an examination of primary source materials on the 1962 integration of the University of Mississippi, students will explore the different positions held by prominent figures on the issue and consider the role of the President in enforcing civil rights.

Instructional Objectives:
Students will be able to
- conduct internet-based historical research.
- analyze a primary source document and identify the author's position on the integration of the University of Mississippi.
- use primary source evidence to defend an argument.

Historical Background: In the fall of 1962 the college town of Oxford, Mississippi, erupted in violence. At the center of the controversy stood James Meredith, an African American who was attempting to register at the all-white University of Mississippi, known as “Ole Miss.” Meredith had the support of the federal government, which insisted that Mississippi honor the rights of all its citizens, regardless of race. Mississippi’s refusal led to a showdown between state and federal authorities and the storming of the campus by a segregationist mob. Two people died and dozens were injured. In the end, Ole Miss, the state of Mississippi, and the nation were forever changed.

Prior Knowledge and Skills: Students should be familiar with the term “civil rights” and have a basic understanding of the struggle for civil rights in the United States during the 1960s.

Materials:
- Internet Access
- Take a Stand Labels
- Graphic Organizer (included)

Procedure:
In this lesson, students will work in groups to explore the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library’s web site exhibit “Integrating Ole Miss.” Each group of students will need ample access and time to work on a computer with internet access. If this is not possible, print out and distribute copies of the documents to each group.

This lesson is divided into three parts.

Part I: Historical Research
1. Visit the Kennedy Library’s online exhibit “Integrating Ole Miss” (http://jfklibrary.org/meredith/index.htm). With the whole class, read the three documents found in the section labeled “The Controversy” to introduce students to the issues involved in the integration of the University of Mississippi.

2. Divide the class into groups and have each group examine the controversy from one of the following perspectives:
   a. James Meredith and the NAACP
   b. John F. Kennedy and the federal government
   c. Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett
   d. The University of Mississippi
   e. Residents of Mississippi
   f. Governors/Senators from southern states
   g. Civil Rights Leaders

3. Arrange computer access for each group and direct students to visit “Integrating Ole Miss.” Tell students to search the exhibit for primary source materials related to the perspective they were assigned to.

4. Have students analyze their documents and answer the following questions based on the perspective they were assigned. (A graphic organizer is provided.)
   a. What position does your individual/group take on the integration of the University of Mississippi?
   b. What arguments do they make and what evidence do they use to support their arguments?
   c. Critique their argument. Is it compelling? What are its flaws?

Part II: “Take a Stand”
1. In this activity, students move to different parts of the room, depending upon whether they agree or disagree with a statement. This enables students to see a visual representation of competing ideas.

2. To set up this “Take a Stand” activity, write each of the following terms on a separate sheet of paper:
   a. Strongly Agree
   b. Agree
   c. Neutral
   d. Disagree
   e. Strongly Disagree
3. Place the “Strongly Agree” and “Strongly Disagree” signs on opposite sides of a wall. Place the other three signs on the wall in between the two outer signs.

4. Read each of the following statements out loud to the class. After each statement, ask each group (or a representative from each group) to stand under the sign that best reflects how the individual/group they focused on would respond to the statement. Record how the groups responded to the statement on a chart and ask each group to provide evidence from the documents they looked at to support “their stand.” Repeat this process for each statement.

Statements:
- James Meredith should be allowed to enter the University of Mississippi.
- The federal government has the right to intervene in this case.
- Southern states should determine who goes to a state school.
- Supreme Court rulings must be enforced.

5. Discuss the different positions that the different individuals/groups took on the integration of the University of Mississippi, the evidence they used to support their positions, and the different ways that President Kennedy could respond to the controversy.

Part III: Assessment
Have students complete one of the following writing prompts:
- Imagine that you are President Kennedy. Write a speech describing the actions you will take in response to James Meredith's attempt to enter the University of Mississippi and explain the reasons behind your actions.
- Imagine that you are an advisor to President Kennedy. Write a memo to the President where you outline the different options that President Kennedy can take in response to the controversy over James Meredith's admission to the University of Mississippi. In your memo, describe how key people/groups stand on the issue and then give your advice on how the President should respond.
- Imagine you are one of the individuals/groups that your class discussed. Write a letter to President Kennedy to try to convince the President that your position is the correct one. Use evidence from the primary source documents to support your argument and then tell the President what you think he should do in response to the crisis.

Lesson Extension:
- Have students compare and contrast the integration of the University of Mississippi with the integration of the University of Alabama or Little Rock Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas.

As you read through the documents, consider the following questions:
- What position does your individual/group take on the integration of the University of Mississippi?
- What arguments do they make and what evidence do they use to support their arguments?
- Critique their argument. Is it compelling? What are its flaws?

(Write your answers in the space provided below)

Individual/Group:
Position on the integration of the University of Mississippi:

Evidence used to support position:

Critique the argument:

Additional research:
Goals/Rationale
During the 1960 presidential election, both candidates sought ways to persuade all Americans to vote for them. In a nation intensely divided over race, this often involved delicate negotiations as the two candidates lobbied for the support of black voters, while attempting to maintain support from white voters. This was the challenge that John F. Kennedy faced at the end of his campaign in October 1960. In this lesson, students will examine one instance where Kennedy made a statement about civil rights that galvanized black voters to support the Democratic Party.

Essential Question:
How did the issue of civil rights factor the 1960 presidential campaign?

Objectives
Students will:
- analyze a primary source and hypothesize about its historical significance.
- analyze a map to interpret voting patterns.
- identify a significant event related to civil rights in the 1960 presidential campaign.

Connections to Curriculum (Standards)
National History Standards
Standard 2: Historical Comprehension (Historical Thinking)
Standard 4: The struggle for racial and gender equality and for the extension of civil liberties.
(U.S. History Standards, 5-12)
Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Frameworks
USII.25 Analyze the origins, goals, and key events of the Civil Rights movement.

Historical Background and Context
Although his campaign focused heavily on international issues, presidential hopeful John F. Kennedy was keenly aware of the role that domestic issues such as civil rights would play in the 1960 presidential election. As the Democratic Party’s nominee, Kennedy faced the challenge of promoting policies that white southern Democrats supported, while, at the same time, courting black voters away from the Republican Party, the Party that many black voters aligned with after the Civil War because it was the party of Abraham Lincoln and emancipation.

One of the most significant moments where Kennedy faced this challenge occurred towards the end of the campaign. In October 1960, Martin Luther King, Jr. was arrested for the first time after participating in a sit-in with a group of students in Atlanta, Georgia. When King and the students were arrested, they chose to remain in jail instead of paying bail to be released. King’s arrest was compounded after he was ordered to serve four months at a hard labor prison for a previous minor traffic offense.

Although it was politically risky, John F. Kennedy called Martin Luther King, Jr.’s wife Coretta, to express his sympathy and concern over King’s imprisonment. Shortly thereafter, his brother Robert Kennedy called the judge in charge of the case and King was released the following day. Fearing that news of the phone calls could cost white votes in the South, some Kennedy staffers quickly produced a pamphlet on blue paper (which they called “the blue bomb”) to boost support among African-American voters. The pamphlet highlighted Kennedy’s phone call to Mrs. King and capitalized on Republican opponent Richard Nixon’s silence on the matter. Approximately two million copies of the pamphlet were distributed in the week before the election.

Some believe that the phone call and “the blue bomb” were key factors in Kennedy’s narrow victory. Post-election analysis reveals a noticeable increase in the percentage of African-Americans voting Democratic.

Materials
- Student Handout
- Directions and Questions
- “blue bomb” pamphlet (www.jfklibrary.org, “For Teachers”)
1960 Presidential Electoral map

Procedure
Have students read the historical background introduction on the student handout either individually or as a whole class.

Have students read “the blue bomb” pamphlet. Have them insert page 2 inside page 1 and fold into a pamphlet. Remind students that the original was a pamphlet and that the copy in the handout shows the front and back side. Therefore, they should start reading the right hand column of the first page, followed by the left and right hand columns on the second page, and finish with the left hand column of the first page. (Page numbers have been added to further clarify page order.)

Have students answer the questions on the handout.

Assessment
Assess students’ answers to the questions on the handout.
Lesson Extensions

Have students conduct research on Richard Nixon's presidential campaign to create a response pamphlet to "the blue bomb" from Nixon’s perspective.

Have students explore the other campaign materials on the President's Desk web site. Compare and contrast those materials with "the blue bomb." How did the Kennedy campaign attempt to address and appeal to different constituencies?

Ask them to consider – how did John F. Kennedy do in the Deep South?
Show them the map of the results of the 1960 election in the Campaign Button module.

The 1960 Campaign: John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the “Blue Bomb”

Although his campaign focused heavily on international issues, presidential hopeful John F. Kennedy was keenly aware of the role that domestic issues such as civil rights would play in the 1960 presidential election. As the Democratic Party’s nominee, Kennedy faced the challenge of promoting policies that white southern Democrats supported, many of whom he needed to pass legislation once in office, while, at the same time, court black voters away from Richard Nixon and the Republican Party, the Party traditionally associated with Abraham Lincoln and emancipation.

One of the most significant moments where Kennedy faced this challenge occurred towards the end of the campaign. In October 1960, Martin Luther King, Jr. was arrested for the first time after participating in a sit-in with a group of students in Atlanta, Georgia. When King and the students were arrested, they chose to remain in jail instead of paying bail. King’s arrest was compounded after he was ordered to serve four months at a hard labor prison for a previous minor traffic offense.

Although it was politically risky, John F. Kennedy called Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s wife Coretta, who was six months pregnant at the time, to express his sympathy and concern over King’s imprisonment. Shortly thereafter, Robert Kennedy called the judge who ordered King’s release the next day. Fearing that news of the phone calls could cost white votes in the South, some Kennedy staffers quickly produced a pamphlet on blue paper (which they called "the blue bomb") to boost support among African-American voters. The pamphlet quoted Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; King’s father Martin Luther King, Sr.; King’s wife Coretta; and two pastors associated with King, Reverend Ralph Abernathy and Dr. Gardner Taylor. The pamphlet highlighted Kennedy’s phone call to Mrs. King and capitalized on Republican opponent Richard Nixon’s silence on the matter. Approximately two million copies were distributed in the week before the election, mostly through African American churches.

Some people have claimed that the phone call and "the blue bomb" were key factors in Kennedy’s narrow victory in the election. Post-election analysis reveals a noticeable increase in the percentage of African-Americans voting Democratic.
The 1960 Campaign: John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the “Blue Bomb”

**“No Comment” Nixon versus A Candidate With a Heart, Senator Kennedy**

THE CASE OF MARTIN LUTHER KING

The following statements have been issued or appeared in the press on the case of international significance testing American justice.

FROM N.Y. POP EDITORIAL

In the white kennedy was suspected, and he was promptly accused by the police of one of the worst types of narcotics possession, his name was immediately linked to the drug trade. The investigation shifted to a more personal level, with many wondering whether the facts were true or not.

Throughout this time, the Nixon administration continued to focus on “law and order,” a theme that was particularly salient in the aftermath of the Vietnam War. The American public was becoming increasingly disillusioned with the war, and Nixon was seen as a hardliner who was determined to restore law and order at any cost.

REB. RALPH ALBANIA

Professional, Montgomery Improvement Association, Secretary-Treasurer, Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

I remember and still believe that it is time for all of us to take a look and think about the Nixon administration. Nixon had warned about the dangers of communism in the 1950s, and he had been right. We must now act to prevent a similar situation from developing again.

MRS. MARTHA LEE LINDEN

I was really afraid of the accumulating evidence, but I was also determined to see that justice was done. I have always believed in the power of love and nonviolent protest, and I was not about to bow to John F. Kennedy’s threats.

REB. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

I am deeply indebted to Senator Kennedy who served as a great force in making my release possible. It was a real triumph for Senator Kennedy to do this, especially in Georgia. For him to be that courageous shows that he is really acting upon his principles and not expediency. He did it because of his great concern and his humanitarian bent.

I hold Senator Kennedy in the high esteem, I am convinced he will seek to exercise the power of his office to fully implement the civil rights plank of his party’s platform.

I never intend to be a religious bigot. I never intend to reject a man running for President of the United States just because he is a Catholic. Religious bigotry is as immoral, un-democratic, un-American and un-Christian as racial bigotry.

**American Justice on Trial**

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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The Cuban Missile Crisis: How to Respond?

**Topic:** The Cuban Missile Crisis
**Grade Level:** 9-12
**Subject Area:** U.S. and World History after World War II
**Time Required:** 1 class period

**Goals/Rationale:**
During the Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy's advisers discussed many options regarding how they might respond to Soviet missiles in Cuba. In this lesson plan, students consider some of the options discussed, what groups and which individuals supported each option, and the pros and cons of each option.

**Essential Question:** Does an individual's role in government influence his or her view on how to respond to important issues?

**Connections to Curriculum (Standards)**
- **National History Standards**
  - U.S. History, Era 9
  - Standard 2: How the Cold War and conflicts in Korea and Vietnam influenced domestic and international politics.
  - Standard 2A: The student understands the international origins and domestic consequences of the Cold War.
- **MA History and Social Science Curriculum Frameworks**
  - USII.19 - Analyze the sources and, with a map of the world, locate the areas of Cold War conflict between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. (H, G)

**Objectives**
Students will:
- discuss some of the options considered by Kennedy's advisers during the Cuban Missile Crisis.
- identify the governmental role of participants involved in decision-making and consider whether or not their role influenced their choice of option(s).
- consider the ramifications of each option.
- evaluate the additional information that might have been helpful as of 10/18/62 for Kennedy and his staff to know in order to make the most effective decision.

The 1960 Campaign: John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the “Blue Bomb”

**Directions:**
Read “the blue bomb” pamphlet and answer the following questions. (Create the pamphlet by folding each page in half and inserting page 2 inside page 1.)

- How does the pamphlet portray John F. Kennedy?
- How does the pamphlet portray Richard M. Nixon?
- How might you explain Nixon's position?
- Up until October 1960, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the other individuals quoted on the pamphlet, had not given their support to John F. Kennedy. What were some of their reasons for not supporting Kennedy in the past?
- What were some of their reasons for voting for Kennedy after Martin Luther King, Jr. was released from jail?
- What do you think the impact of this pamphlet might have on voters? Explain your answer.
Procedure
1. Have students listen to Defense Secretary Robert McNamara’s 10/16/62 discussion of possible responses to the missiles in Cuba. McNamara outlines three approaches (1) political (2) “open surveillance” and (3) military action. Have students note McNamara’s comments on each approach.

2. Have students read Ted Sorensen’s memo as of 10/18/62 (http://microsites.jfklibrary.org/cmc/oct18/) in which he spells out the various options and who supports which option. Ask them:
   • What were the options that Kennedy’s advisers were considering as of October 18th?
   • What positions in the government did each of these officials hold? How might those positions relate to their recommendations?
   • If you were the President, what information would you want to know to rule out or go forward with each of these options?

Assessment
• Have students research the arguments of one of Kennedy’s advisers mentioned in Sorensen’s memo and/or McNamara’s discussion and then have write a 2-3 page essay on the rationales for their adviser’s arguments and some follow-up questions that President Kennedy might have asked of their adviser.
Documentary Materials

Documents

Letter #1 from John F. Kennedy to his family and transcription
Letter #2 from John F. Kennedy to his family and transcription
Letter from Walter T. Apley to Senator John F. Kennedy
Letter from Senator John F. Kennedy to Walter T. Apley
Certificate from Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron Training Center, Melville, RI
Memo from Clark M. Clifford to Senator John F. Kennedy

Letter #1 from John F. Kennedy to his family
Dear and when he grows up he can come out and
see me. We're both feeling better.

Stay home and send me your love.

Jack has started to feel
better. I hope you're not too sick.

On reading back over this letter I may have caused you some worry. Don't worry, everything is fine.

In the best clays. I am happy and healthy.

We can always get away.

Love,

Jack
Dear Dad & Mother & Brothers and Sisters:

I'm sorry that I haven't written sooner – but I've been extremely occupied with the South Pacific phase of this total global war. I have finally seen what I came 10,000 miles to see – and to the question was it worth coming 10,000 miles to see – the answer – with a quick look up in the air – is yes – but I must admit that a 10,000 mile trip in the other direction to see peace – would be a heck of a lot more worthwhile.

I can't tell you in much detail about where I am or what doing – but I will try to ......a son – and when he grows up – he can come out and relieve Bobby. Teddy better stay home – and join the W.P.B.

Back has stood up fine – the rest of me is O.K. also. On reading back over the letter I may have caused you some worry – don't – am in an excellent spot—in the best duty I could possibly be in the Navy – and we have the boat going very fast. We can always get away.

Love to all,
Jack

over

How about those victrola needles – and that small camera & film – you can put the needles in an air mail letter.

Have not seen Jerry lately but he is around someplace – Saw Jack Pierrepont yesterday. He has rotten duty and is moaning like the devil. Am serving under Kelly (They were expendable) now. He does a good job and am fortunate.
August 12 – 1943

Dear Folks:

This is just a short note to tell you that I am alive and not kicking in spite of any reports that you may happen to hear. It was believed otherwise for a few days – so reports and rumors may have gotten back to you. Fortunately they misjudged the durability of a Kennedy – [and] am back at the base now and am OK. As soon as possible I shall try to give you the whole story.

Much love to you all

Jack
Senator John Kennedy
20 The Senate
Washington 6, D.C.

Dear Mr. Kennedy:

In view of the fact that the presidential elections are being held this November, my sixth grade class decided to elect a President from the list of potential candidates.

The class first had a straw vote and the outcome was this:

- Nixon: 17
- Stevenson: 8
- Kennedy: 2
- Humphrey: 0
- Johnson: 0
- Rockefeller: 0
- Lyndon: 0

Our teacher, Mrs. Mendelson, asked for volunteers to head each candidate’s campaign, and I volunteered to head yours. We all were allowed four posters.

Two weeks later we had the arguments on who was the best man for president. President. After the arguments, we voted for a President.

Kennedy: 15
Nixon: 12
Stevenson: 7
Humphrey: 0
Johnson: 0
Rockefeller: 0
Lyndon: 0

As you and Mr. Nixon were fairly close, we decided to vote again between you two.

Kennedy: 15
Nixon: 12

Good luck in the primaries.

Your Salem Heights
Campaign Manager,
Walter T. Apley, Jr.
April 7, 1960

Mr. Walter T. Apley, Jr.
Salem Heights School
Salem, Oregon

Dear Walt:

I want to thank you for your letter. I was pleased to see the results of your class's election, and I am grateful to you for your outstanding efforts on my behalf. Certainly my victory in the second vote demonstrated what an effective campaign manager you are, and I am both proud and fortunate to have had you representing me.

I tentatively plan to be in Salem on Sunday, April 23, for a Young Democrats reception. Should this materialize, I hope that I will have an opportunity to thank you personally for your impressive work.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

John F. Kennedy

Certificate from Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron Training Center
MEMORANDUM ON TELEVISION DEBATE
WITH VICE PRESIDENT NIXON, SEPTEMBER 26TH

To: Senator John F. Kennedy
From: Clark M. Clifford

Your time is so limited, I shall make my comments as brief as possible.

1) You clearly came out the winner. You were clear, concise and very convincing.

2) You kept Nixon on the defensive. This kept him off balance and was a great plus for you.

3) Unquestionably this appearance made you votes. I feel sure the other three will do the same.

Suggestions:

1) Nixon is making a determined effort to convince the American people that your and his goals are the same. That the only difference lies in the means to attain those goals.

   This is false. The goals are very different, and he must not be permitted to create the illusion that you and he are working toward the same end.

   Be prepared the next time to point out specifically the positive differences that exist in goals, i.e., minimum wage, housing, etc.

   If Nixon can convince the people that his and your philosophies are the same, then he will rob you of one of your greatest strengths.

2) Attention must be given to adding greater warmth to your image. If you can retain the technical brilliance and obvious ability, but also project the element of warmth, human understanding, you will possess an unbeatable combination.

   Give illustrations based on contacts with service personnel when you were in the Navy. Also conversations you have had with ordinary people who have discussed their problems with you during the campaign.

3) Take advantage of every opportunity to appear with Nixon. You are better than he is.

C. M. C.

September 27, 1960
A non-Flash version of the Desk will be available in the future.

The primary sources that follow- selected documents and transcriptions of secret presidential recordings -- are included here for easy reference.

Secret Taping Button Transcripts

1. Vietnam:

Excerpt compilation file: clips 1-6 for 8/26/63-8/28/63 with transcript

Description:
The following are excerpts of White House Presidential recordings of four meetings between President Kennedy and his highest level Vietnam advisors in late August of 1963.

These meetings are the first ones to take place after Cable 243, described by some historians as the "single most controversial cable of the Vietnam War," was drafted on Saturday August 24, 1963 when President Kennedy, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, and CIA Director John McCone were all out of town. The telegram set a course for the eventual coup in Vietnam on November 1, 1963 leading to the fall of President Diem and his death on November 2, 1963.

After the cable was sent and during the course of four days of meetings, President Kennedy met with his advisors to discuss the evolving situation in Vietnam and what steps should be taken. There was considerable disagreement between the State Department advisors, who had drafted Cable 243 and the President's military and intelligence advisors on whether the coup was advisable and what support it would have in Vietnam with the Vietnamese military.

Details

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Transcript

Vietnam Excerpt Compilation file:

Clip 1: 8/26/63

107 Reel 1 at 59:16 8/26/63 CD at 6:53 Excerpt CD at :04

President Kennedy: Diem and his brother with all of their defects have just reached in the situation there which permit the... Harkins, based on his report to us a week ago, to feel that this thing is really moving to a positive, successful conclusion. So when we move to eliminate a government, we want to be sure we're not doing it just because the New York Times is excited about it.

Clip 2: 8/27/63

107 Reel 3 at 18:56 8/27/63 CD at 56:26 Excerpt CD at :35

President Kennedy: What about - in the wire that went Saturday, what's the degree of... My impression was that based on the wire that went out Saturday, asked General Harkins and Ambassador Lodge recommending a course of action unless they disagreed. General Taylor then stated that Harkins concurred? That's right, so I think we ought to find out whether Harkins doesn't agree with this - then I think we ought to get off this pretty quick.

Clip 3: 8/27/63

107 Reel 3 at 20:36 8/27/63 CD at 58:00 Excerpt CD at 1:07

President Kennedy: Let's get out a cable - shall we now - and - in which we would ask them, based on what they know as of now, what they feel their projects are for success and do they recommend continuing it or do they recommend now warning on the grounds as suggested by the Ambassador? We might wait and see whether the situation begins to disintegrate and then the United States would lose its maximum influence and how far we've gone and so on and so forth. And if we've decided not to, whether what action should be taken to insure the safety of those - All these questions seem to me ought to go right down to the people involved.

Clip 4: 8/27/63

107 Reel 3 at 24:01 8/27/63 CD at 1:01:17 Excerpt CD at 1:58

President Kennedy: Ah, do we cut our losses in such a way where we don't endanger those who've been in contact. McGeorge Bundy: Do we want to ask the question - I'm not sure that we do, I think it's hard to say it's a hard one to put to a new Ambassador. If I understand Ambassador Nolting correctly, one of the things that he would be bumped to do is to recommend to people on the scene is one more try at them as to the political liquidation of his brother and unter-true, is that right? You would like to try that once more!
1. Vietnam:

V. N. [Vietnam] and I think it would put this way, the political liqui-
dation of his sister-in-law and the - putting the curbs on his brother.  

President Kennedy: The response that we’ve gotten on the coup 
at this point does not give assurances that it’s going to be succes-
ful based on it... or maybe it’s impossible to get those assurances.

2. Cuba:

I don’t think we ought to take the view here that this has gone beyond our control 'cause I think that would be a mistake.

McGeorge Bundy: I have to (say to) ask whether you and Harkins 
in light of developments presently favor operation as currently 
planned by General and their side, to use as simple as this - on 
the basis of which we now know, both General Harkins and I favor 
operation.

President Kennedy: I don’t know where it’s going but I mean, I don’t think these things are ever gone until they happen, and I think it we decided that it wasn’t in... with lawyers, well let’s not do it.  So I think we ought to try to 
make it without feeling that it’s forced on us.

McGeorge Bundy: I have to (say to) ask whether you and Harkins 
in light of developments presently favor operation as currently 
planned by General and their side, to use as simple as this - on 
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SECRET TAPING BUTTON TRANSCRIPTS

3. Nuclear Test Ban
Treaty:

4. Space:

SECRET TAPING BUTTON TRANSCRIPTS

4. Space:

Scrip

WEBB: So you can put this program... Do you think this program is the top priority program of the agency?

PRESIDENT KENNEDY: I agree that we're interested in this, but I think it is one of the top priority programs, but I think it's very important to recognize here that as you have found what you need to do, it means that we will have to make sacrifices in other areas. So I think we have to take the view that this is the top priority of the administration...

JAMES WEBB (Administrator of NASA): No sir, I do not. I think it is one of the top priority programs, but I think it's very important to recognize here that as you have found what you need to do, it means that we will have to make sacrifices in other areas. So I think we have to take the view that this is the top priority of the administration...

PRESIDENT KENNEDY: Yes, I think it is a top priority. I think we ought to have that very clear. You... Some of these other programs can slip six months or nine months and nothing... Then, of course, that would be very serious. So I think we have to take the view this is the top priority of NASA...

WEBB: Number one, there are real unknowns to whether man can live under the weightless condition and we viewed every make the lunar landing. This is one kind of political vulnerability I'd like to avoid such a flat commitment to...

WEBB: When you talk about this, it's very hard to draw a line with what, between what...

PRESIDENT KENNEDY: Everything that we do ought to really be tied in to getting the moon ahead of the Russians.

WEBB: Why can't it be tied to preeminence in space, which are your own words...

PRESIDENT KENNEDY: Because, by God, we've been telling everyone we're preeminent in space for five years and nobody believes it because they have the booster and the satellite. ...because we hope to beat them and demonstrate that starting behind as we did by a couple of years, by God, we passed 'em.

WEBB: The President goes on to pointedly comment that in a recent meeting with a newspaper, the reporter commented on how ‘men aren’t surgeons in Birmingham’ and I said ‘you can work on the ones being at the Metropolitan Club everyday’. You talk about Birmingham and you’re up there at the Metropolitan Club ... they wouldn’t even let Negro ambassadors in’. So now (the reporter) said ‘well we want to work from the inside, and I said ‘well your contribution is that now they won’t let white ambassadors in’. (laughter) Most of your readers that you read every day... they all give us over there at the Metropolitan Club... I don’t think that we have worked hard on civil rights. I think it is a national crisis.”

SECRET TAPING BUTTON TRANSCRIPTS

5. Civil Rights

Description:

The President goes on to pointedly comment that in a recent meeting with a newspaper, the reporter commented on how ‘men aren’t surgeons in Birmingham’ and I said ‘you can work on the ones being at the Metropolitan Club everyday’. You talk about Birmingham and you’re up there at the Metropolitan Club ... they wouldn’t even let Negro ambassadors in’. So now (the reporter) said ‘well we want to work from the inside, and I said ‘well your contribution is that now they won’t let white ambassadors in’. (laughter) Most of your readers that you read every day... they all give us over there at the Metropolitan Club... I don’t think that we have worked hard on civil rights. I think it is a national crisis.”

Transcript

SECRET TAPING BUTTON TRANSCRIPTS

4. Space:

PRESIDENT KENNEDY: I see what you’re saying, yeah, but only when that information directly applies to the program... Jim, I think we’ve got to have that...

WEBB: May I say one word, Mr President! We don’t know a damn thing about the surface of the moon and we’re making the wildest guesses about how we’re going to land on the moon and we could get a terrible disaster from putting something down on the surface of the moon that’s very different than we think it is and the scientific programs that find us that information have to have the highest priority. But they are associated with the lunar program. The scientific programs that aren’t associated with the lunar program can then be any priority we please to give it.

PRESIDENT KENNEDY: Yeah. The only thing I said would certainly not favor spending six or seven billion dollars to find out about space... Why are we spending seven million dollars on getting fresh water from salt water when we’re spending seven billion dollars finding out about space? So obviously, you wouldn’t put that in your priority because, except for the defense implications behind that and the second point is, the, the fact that the Soviet Union has made this a top item of the system. So that’s why we’re doing it... So I think we’ve got to take the view that this is the key program, the rest of it if we can find out about but there’s a lot of things we want to find out about...cancer and everything else...

WEBB: When you talk about this, it’s very hard to draw a line with what, between what...

PRESIDENT KENNEDY: Well I want to, just want to, say a word or two about this treaty and how about we ought to go to function, and it is the treaty and we don’t expect from it... There are a good many theorems as to how the Soviet Union is willing to this idea, and I don’t think anybody can say with any precision but there isn’t any doubt that the difference with China is certainly a factor, I think their domestic, economic problems are a factor. I think that they may feel that (events) in the world are moving in their direction and over a period of time they... there are enough contradictions in the free world that they would be successful and they don’t want to – they want to avoid a nuclear struggle or that they want to lessen the chance of conflict with us. (Whichever) the arguments are, we have felt that we ought to try to – it does represent a possibility of avoiding the kind of collision that we had last fall in Cuba, which was quite close – and Berlin in 1941 – we should seize the chance. We felt that we’ve minimized the risks – our detection system is pretty good and in addition to doing underground testing which we will continue...and we have a withdrawal clause.

And it may be that the Chinese test in the next year, 18 months, 2 years and we would then make the judgment to see if we should go back to testing. As I understood it, we’re not going to test ‘til 1964 anyway, in the atmosphere, so this gives us a year or, to a least a year and a half; to explore the possibility of a détente with the Soviet Union – which may not come to anything but which quite possibly could avoid some big...

Obviously if we could understand the Soviet Union and the Chinese to a degree, it would be in our interest. But I don’t think we – I don’t think that we – knowing all the concern that a good many scientists to a degree, it would be in our interest. But I don’t think we – I don’t think that we...
A non-Flash version of the Desk will be available in the future.

The primary sources that follow—selected documents and transcriptions of secret presidential recordings—
are included here for easy reference.

Documentary Materials

Telephone Transcripts

President Kennedy and Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, March 2, 1963, 10:32 PM

RFK: Hello, Jack!
JFK: Yeah.

RFK: The thing, of course, to remember on this . . . I don't know how much you're gonna get into it, but the thing to remember on this . . . is this, uh, what you did on that day, Tuesday, for Wednesday, was something that was added to the plan.
JFK: Yeah. Oh, yeah.
RFK: And not something that was taken away or was in . . . a plan that was made inadequate by some deficiency in . . . in, uh, withdrawal of something . . .
JFK: Yeah. That's right.
RFK: That you added that on Tuesday . . .
JFK: Yeah.
RFK: And it's never been planned before and this . . . plan specifically said this wouldn't be done.
JFK: Yeah.
RFK: It was something that you added in order to help.
JFK: You heard about, uh . . .
RFK: But I, you know, if somebody's gonna say something in the Senate about it . . .
JFK: Yeah. Well, you know how they are. Make everything look lousy these days. You know, Rowland Evans said that he talked to Dirksen. Dirksen said, "I don't quite get this." He said, "[laughs] . . . What? [laughing] What,
you know, just say I don't know, they . . . I think the Kennedys are planning something to trap us into this thing [laughs] 'cause they're pretty smart down there."
JFK: Well, that's what we have . . . We haven't figured how to close the trap yet.
RFK: Yeah. That's right. We haven't quite figured out . . .
JFK: Uh, well, we'll learn it.
RFK: It just shows you, boy, what that press is, doesn't it?
JFK: But, God. Still, the poll.
RFK: What?
JFK: What . . . you're down to seventy percent?
RFK: What?
JFK: When?
RFK: Huh!
JFK: When was this?
RFK: The Gallup Poll.
JFK: When was that?
RFK: Oh, about two days ago?
JFK: No. I didn't see it.
RFK: Yeah. It went seventy-six percent to seventy.
JFK: Yeah.
RFK: But, with your popularity seventy percent now . . .
JFK: Yeah.
RFK: . . . you'd break fifty-fifty with a Republican.

JFK: What?

RFK: Seventy percent . . . Eighteen percent are against you.

JFK: Yeah?

RFK: Well, I mean, I don't get what the . . . the press must be doing you some good.

JFK: Then what, you'd break fifty-fifty?

RFK: Do fifty-fifty with a Republican.

JFK: Oh, you mean on approval/disapproval?

RFK: Yeah. And then the, uh, independents.

JFK: I didn't see that poll. Was this in the Post?

RFK: I don't know what paper. I read it going up in the plane Wednesday or Thursday.

JFK: I see.

RFK: You think you got troubles, you ought to see what's happening to Nelson Rockefeller.

JFK: Why? What?

RFK: Well, you know, all the bars . . . They call every drink a Nelson cocktail . . . a Rockefeller cocktail. Everything costs fifteen percent more. In every bar. How would you like that following you around?

JFK: Yeah. And have . . . He's lucky those papers aren't publishing . . .

RFK: Well, then, did you see the story about him in, uh . . .

JFK: Wall Street Journal?


JFK: Yeah. Yeah.

RFK: I didn't see that poll. Was this in the Post?

JFK: I don't know what paper.

RFK: You think you got troubles, you ought to see what's happening to Nelson Rockefeller.

JFK: Which one?

RFK: Oh, since that Congress has been back.

RFK: Yes, and to get a little bit more partisan, but imagine seventy percent more.

JFK: Better than you were in 'sixty.

RFK: Rights.

JFK: [phone hangs up]

President Kennedy and Senator Edward M. Kennedy, March 7, 1963

EMK: . . . it says, "Come in and buy a Nelson . . . a Rockefeller cocktail." Everything costs fifteen percent more. In every bar. How would you like that following you around?

JFK: Yeah, but . . . and have . . . He's lucky those papers aren't publishing . . .


JFK: Who's that?

EMK: Herter.

JFK: Oh, is that right?

EMK: Yeah, and he evidently drives around here and he's got that, uh, Massachusetts governor's license plate on it, or something, so . . .

JFK: [laughs]

EMK: . . . everyone turns around and takes a look . . .

JFK: [laughs]

EMK: . . . he drove up to that wool meeting. He said that really let the balloon -- air out of every balloon in there.

JFK: Right.

EMK: Good enough.

JFK: O.K., good. Fine.

EMK: See you later.

JFK: Bye.

President Kennedy and Director of the Peace Corps Sargent Shriver, April 2, 1963

JFK: Hello.

Shriver: Hello, Jack?

JFK: Yeah, Sarge.

Shriver: Hi, how are you?
Shriver: But, uh, we’ve got a group in training now.
JFK: Right.
Shriver: They sent out messages and the rest of it.
JFK: Right. Right.

Richard Helms.

Beginning of Dictabelt 17B, Item 1, and continues on that belt.

Dictabelt 17A ends. Last part of conversation is repeated on the Dictabelt.

Allen W. Dulles.

JFK: Yeah. He’s the operations officer over there.

Shriver: Dick Helms?
JFK: Well, would you call Dick Helms?

Shriver: But, uh, we’ve got a group in training now that looks suspicious, and I’d like, uh, to follow whatever you recommend, but I see in hell want these guys, uh, . . .

JFK: Well, would you call Dick Helms?

Shriver: Dick Helms?
JFK: Yeah. He’s the operations officer over there under . . . And just say to him that you’ve talked to me and that I don’t want anybody in there.

Shriver: Okay.
JFK: And if they are there, let’s get them out now before we have it. And if there is any problem about it that Dick Helms ought to call the President about it.

Shriver: Okay.
JFK: . . . this is very . . . We are very, very anxious that there be no, uh, we don’t want to discredit this whole idea.

Shriver: Okay. Fine.
JFK: Yeah. So it really is suspicious, and I’d like, uh, to follow whatever you recommend, but I see in hell want these guys, uh, . . .

JFK: Right. Right.

Shriver: And, John McCone has told me on two or three occasions, and Dulles, of course, did, that they never would do that.

JFK: Yeah. Yeah.

Shriver: And, John McCone has told me on two or three occasions, and Dulles, of course, did, that they never would do that.

JFK: Right. Right.

Shriver: They sent out messages and the rest of it.
JFK: Right.

Shriver: But, uh, we’ve got a group in training now that looks suspicious, and I’d like, uh, to follow whatever you recommend, but I see in hell want these guys, uh, . . .

JFK: Well, would you call Dick Helms?

Shriver: Dick Helms?
JFK: Yeah.

Shriver: . . . USAID has done the same thing, and AID is trying to do something.

JFK: Yeah. Yeah.

Shriver: Thanks.
JFK: Bye, Sarge.

President Kennedy
and Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara
April 3, 1963

President: Hello.
Sec. McNamara: Bob McNamara, sir.
President: Good morning. How are you?
Sec. McNamara: Fine, sir.
President: Did you talk to Gene Zuckert?
Sec. McNamara: I talked to him last night, after you.
President: I see.
Sec. McNamara: . . . if they would be willing to volunteer for the test.
President: I tell you what I wonder if Sylvester or who would you suggest that we could get some details. Pierre thought that the Air Force ought to put out some statement this morning so that the story would be ended so that I wouldn’t have to be the one to end it.
Sec. McNamara: I think that’s wise. I’ll work with Sylvester and we will get it out.

8 United States Information Agency.
Agency for International Development.
President and Major Gordon Cooper
May 16, 1963

[There is a great deal of background noise and static during the conversation. This is due to the fact that the President's call was put through to Astronaut Cooper just after he was taken aboard the recovery ship]

President: Major! Oh Major! Oh, uh, can you hear me? Hello, Major Cooper, hello, can you hear me? Hello, Major Cooper!

Cooper: Yes sir.

President: Can you hear the President?

Cooper: Yes sir.

President: Alright. Oh major, I just want to congratulate you. That was a great flight.

Cooper: Thank you very much sir.

President: We talked to your wife and she seemed to stand it very well.

Cooper: Oh very good

President: And we hope, we are looking forward to seeing you up here Monday but we are very proud of you major.

Cooper: Thank you sir. It was a good flight and I enjoyed it.

President: Oh good, fine. Well, I look forward to seeing you Monday. Good luck.

Cooper: Thank you sir.

President: Thanks major.
JFK: Okay, good.

Gilpatric: Yeah. The Air Force is doing that. We can go through there at four steps, such as ask them to stop. If they don’t stop asking them to have their crew above deck so that they don’t get damaged, and three, so that we have this record made. Maybe you could talk to somebody about this.

JFK: Okay. Have you taken a look at West Palm?

Gilpatric: That’s right.

JFK: Okay. Have you taken a look at West Palm yet?

Gilpatric: Yeah. We’ve got instructions at CINCLANT which start with those steps. Shot across the bow, shot through the rudder. Shot through the rudder.

JFK: Shot through the rudder.

Gilpatric: Then a boarding party and then order the crews to come on deck. The minimum amount of force at each stage. Now maybe we haven’t thought of everything but we’ll take another look at it.

JFK: Okay. Fine. How’s those photographic expeditions go this morning? Do you know?

Gilpatric: Well, what’s that’s what we’ll be in touch with him about, because I’m hoping Pinan and Ed McDermott(?) will come today anyway —

Gilpatric: No, he just wanted to have the Civil Defense Committee.

JFK: Okay, fine. How’s those photographic expeditions go this morning? Do you know?

Gilpatric: They will.

JFK: Then we’ll send a wire from him to them and arrange that meeting.

Gilpatric: Do everything right.

JFK: Okay. Ros.

Gilpatric: Okay. Ros.

[Background conversation]

JFK: Hello? Tez has it.

Gilpatric: Tez has it. It’s alright there Ros, thank you.

JFK: Okay.

Gilpatric: All right.
President Kennedy and Special Assistant to the President
Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.
March 22, 1963

President: Hello Arthur
Schlesinger: Mr. President
President: Hi, I read this letter of Sam Beer's
Schlesinger: Yeah.

President: I think that's fine. Now the only uh... I think in fact we could tell him if he would go to work on his Spanish that we could get him a uh... assure him of a country in Latin America or Central America.

Schlesinger: Oh really.

President: So that I... we'll just work it out so that he gets uh... he gets some place.

Schlesinger: Okay.

President: And then he could go along and he could study Spanish then between now and December. The only caveat I have is that will mean he'll be gone from December 'til the next November during the election. I don't know if you need him for a... I don't suppose that is important for the A.D.A. [Americans for Democratic Action]

Schlesinger: I think if we don't carry Massachusetts...

President: Well I wasn't thinking of Massachusetts so much as the A.D.A.

Schlesinger: Well he could come back you know quiet and do backstairs stuff.

President: Which is really all that is needed. Just to keep them from going off the deep end. Well why don't you tell him that I think it is very good. I would be glad to have him go there and I will work out our arrangements so that we send him some place in Central or Latin America. And if he would just go ahead and study Spanish on that expectation.

President: Sounds great.

Schlesinger: Yeah.

President: We had a good conference in San Jose.

Schlesinger: Fine.

President: Good.

Schlesinger: He will be very pleased.

President: We had a good conference in San Jose.

President: It was really good. You would have loved it.

Schlesinger: Dick [Richard Goodwin] gave me a full great report of it.

President: You would have loved it. Who did you see over in England?

Schlesinger: I saw everybody.

President: You didn't see Boofy Gore did you? [laughing]

Schlesinger: That was a great... Did you see that interview in the Sunday Express?

President: No.

Schlesinger: Hell, I should have brought it back. The Sunday Express got him on a Trans-Atlantic steamer. He was very irritated at David [Ormsby-Gore].

President: And then he apologized!

Schlesinger: He said that my nephew or cousin or whatever he is has been apologizing behind my back.

President: Oh did he. He's really... What about the uh... the uh... looks like the conservatives are in real trouble don't you? I think the elections are coming.

Schlesinger: They are in real bad shape and the whole party is falling apart.

President Kennedy and Governor Ross Barnett
September 1962

RFK: Yeah. I think, uh, Governor, that, uh, the president had some, uh, questions that he, uh, wanted some answers to, uh, to...

Barnett: Uh, oh, Governor, this is... 

RFK: ...make his own determination.

Barnett: ...that's right. He wanted to know if I would, uh, obey the orders of the court, and I told him I'll have to do some, [audibly] that over. That's a serious thing. I've taken an oath to abide by the law of this state and our state constitution and the Constitution of the United States. [Clears his throat.] And, General, how can I violate my oath of office? How can I do that and live with the people of Mississippi? You know, they expecting me to keep my word. That's what I'm up against, and I don't...

RFK: Uh, oh, Governor, this...

Barnett: ...understand why the court, why the court wouldn't understand that.

RFK: Governor, this is the president speaking.

Barnett: Yes, sir, Mr. President.

RFK: Uh, now, it's, I know that your feeling about the, uh, law of Mississippi and the fact that you, you don't want to carry out that court order. What we really want, to, uh, have from you, though, is some understanding about whether the state police will maintain law and order. We understand your feeling about whether the state police will maintain law and order. We're concerned about is, uh, how much violence is going to be and what kind of, uh, action we'll have to take to prevent it. And I'd like to get assurances from you about that the state police down there will take positive action to maintain law and order.

Barnett: Yes.

RFK: ... and your disagreement with it. But what we're concerned about is, uh, how much violence is going to be and what kind of, uh, action we'll have to take to prevent it. And I'll like to get assurances from you about that the state police down there will take positive action to maintain law and order.

Barnett: Oh, they'll do that.
JFK: Then we'll know what we have to do.

Barnett: They'll, they'll take positive action, Mr. President, to maintain law and order as best we can.

JFK: And now, how good is . . .

Barnett: We'll have two hundred and twenty highway patrolmen . . .

JFK: Right.

Barnett: . . . and they'll absolutely be unarmed.

JFK: I understa- . . .

Barnett: Not a one of 'em'll be armed.

JFK: Well, no, but the problem is, well, what can they do to maintain law and order and prevent the gathering of a mob and, uh, action taken by the mob? What can they do?

Barnett: [Well?]

JFK: Can they stop that?

Barnett: Well, they'll do their best to. They'll do everything in their power to stop it.

JFK: . . . can you maintain this order?

Barnett: Well, I don't know.

JFK: Yeah.

Barnett: I, I, that's what I'm worried about . . .

JFK: That's . . .

Barnett: I see. I don't know whether I can or not.

JFK: Right.

Barnett: I couldn't have the other afternoon.

JFK: Well, then at what time would it be fair?

Barnett: Oh, you couldn't have?

JFK: You couldn't have?

Barnett: There was such a mob there, it would have been impossible.

JFK: I see.

Barnett: There were men in there with trucks and shotguns, and all such as that. Not, not a lot of 'em, but some we saw, and, uh, uh certain people were just, uh, they were just enraged.

JFK: Well, now, will you talk . . .

Barnett: You just don't understand the situation down here.

JFK: Well, the only thing is I got my responsibility.

Barnett: I, I, I'll do everything in my power to maintain order . . .

JFK: I know you do.

Barnett: I, I don't know.

JFK: Yeah.

Barnett: It might be in, uh, two or three weeks, it might cool off a little.

JFK: Well, would you undertake to register him in two weeks?

Barnett: Well, I you know I can't undertake to register him myself . . .

JFK: I see.

Barnett: . . . but you all might make some progress that way, you know.

JFK: Yeah. Well, I'll be faced with, uh . . . I'm, I, unless we had your support . . .

Barnett: You see . . .

JFK: . . . and assurance, we'll be . . .

Barnett: . . . I say I'm going to, I'm going to cooperate. Uh, I might not know, uh, when you're going to register him, you know.

JFK: I see. Well, now, Governor, why don't, uh . . . Do you want to talk to Mr. Watkins?

Barnett: I might not know that, what, what your plans were, you see.

JFK: Do you want to, uh, do you want to talk to Mr. Watkins then . . .

Barnett: I'll be delighted to talk to him . . .

JFK: . . . the . . .

Barnett: . . . and, uh, we'll call you back.

JFK: Okay, good.

Barnett: Uh, uh, Mr. . . .

JFK: Uh, call the general, and then I'll be around.

Barnett: All right.
JFK: Tha- . . .
Barnett: I appreciate it so much . . .
JFK: Thanks, Governor.
Barnett: . . . and I, I thank you for this call.
JFK: Thank you, Governor.
Barnett: All right.
JFK: Right.
Barnett: Bye.
[Phone hangs up.]