



## William McKinley | Lesson Plan

How did William McKinley help shape America's role on the world stage through his leadership and policies?

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Students will understand how William McKinley, the 25th President of the United States, led the nation to victory in the Spanish-American War and expanded America's global influence. They will explore his achievements in foreign policy, his innovative use of modern communication technology, and the controversies surrounding his presidency.

### Learning Objectives:

- Identify the key life events of William McKinley.
- Explain McKinley's role in leading the United States during the Spanish-American War.
- Discuss McKinley's foreign policy decisions and how they changed America's global position.
- Evaluate William McKinley's legacy and his impact on American history.

### Key Vocabulary:

- **Spanish-American War:** A conflict in 1898 between the United States and Spain, leading to U.S. control over former Spanish colonies.
- **Colonization:** The act of taking over and controlling a territory and the people in that territory.
- **Tariff:** A tax on something being bought or sold to a customer in another country.
- **Anarchist:** A person who believes there should be no government authority anywhere in the world.
- **Gramophone:** A device from the late 19th and early 20th centuries that could record and play sounds and music.

**Educational Standards:** CCRA.R.1, CCRA.R.2, CCRA.R.7, CCRA.W.2, CCRA.W.4, CCRA.W.9, CCRA.L.1, CCRA.L.2, CCRA.L.4, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2

**Academic Subject Areas:** Biography, U.S. Presidents, Historical Figures

### What You'll Need

- Video: Guess or Mess: William McKinley (Watch [Here](#))
- Worksheet: Guess or Mess: William McKinley (Click [Here](#))
- PragerU Kids biographical book: William McKinley (Download [Here](#))
- Large paper or poster board for each group, along with markers



Scan to watch episode:

## Lesson Plan: Read and Discuss (60 minutes)

### **Introduction to McKinley: (5 minutes)**

1. Begin with a brief discussion about America's role in the world during the late 19th century. Ask students if they know how the United States first became a global power.
2. Display the *William McKinley* digital book using an electronic device. Briefly highlight McKinley's leadership during the Spanish-American War, his foreign policy decisions, and his use of modern technology.

### **McKinley History Huddle: (25 minutes)**

1. Read the "Meet William McKinley" section on page 2 together as a class, with the teacher leading to model fluent reading and set the tone for the lesson.
2. Split the class into small groups and assign each group a different section of the digital book to explore:
  - Group 1: *Young William, Interesting Facts* (page 3)
  - Group 2: *Civil War, Rise to Power* (pages 4-5)
  - Group 3: *President* (page 6)
  - Group 4: *A Modern Commander-in-Chief* (page 7)
  - Group 5: *Assassination, Legacy* (page 8)
3. Allow time for each group to read their assigned section, taking turns reading aloud. Students should discuss the main ideas.
4. Provide each group with a large piece of paper or a poster board and markers to write down key points and any interesting facts or quotes they find.
5. Allow each group one to two minutes to present their findings to the class. After each presentation, provide time for classmates to ask questions and discuss the content.

### **Worksheet Workshop: (15 minutes)**

1. Hand out individual copies of the worksheet to each student. Explain how to fill out each section with these instructions:
2. **Timeline:** Students should select key dates and events mentioned throughout the digital book. Suggested dates:
  - 1843 - Birth of William McKinley
  - 1897 - Becomes President
  - 1898 - Leads the U.S. in the Spanish-American War
  - 1901 - Assassination of McKinley
3. **Interesting Quote:** Have students choose a meaningful quote from the book to fill in the quote section on their worksheet.
4. **Interesting Fact:** Ask students to select an interesting fact about William McKinley that stood out to them and write it in the space provided.
5. **Vocabulary Builder:** Instruct students to choose a word from the Glossary that they find interesting and use it in a sentence that conveys its meaning.
6. **Multiple Choice:** Explain that students should complete the multiple-choice section of the worksheet individually. (Note: The multiple-choice section corresponds to the Guess

or Mess episode about William McKinley and can also be used to play along while watching. See "Extension Activity" below.)

### **Reflection Round-Up: (10 minutes)**

1. Briefly summarize the key points covered about William McKinley, focusing on his life, presidency, and legacy.
2. Think-Pair-Share: Ask students to recall one fact about William McKinley and share it with a partner. Encourage them to discuss why that fact was significant.
3. Give each student a sticky note or index card and ask them to answer one of these reflection questions:
  - What did you find most interesting about William McKinley?
  - How do you think his presidency impacted America's role in the world?
  - Can you think of a modern issue that relates to something McKinley dealt with?
4. **Bonus Activities:** If time allows, let students solve the puzzle on page 2 by finding hidden letters throughout the book. They can also explore other interactive activities included in the book.

### **Extension Activity: (20 minutes)**

**Guess or Mess Trivia Show:** After the lesson, students can participate in the *Guess or Mess* trivia show for William McKinley—direct students to the multiple-choice section of the worksheet. Students can play along with the contestants to see if they can answer the trivia questions correctly.

### **PragerU 5-Minute Videos:**

Did you know that PragerU has a comprehensive video catalog of U.S. Presidents in an easy-to-watch 5-minute format? Enhance this lesson plan with one of our insightful, engaging, and educational videos that provide students with a deep dive into the lives and legacies of America's leaders. To view *William McKinley: The Man Who Could've Been on Rushmore*, click [here](#).

### **Don't have time for a full lesson? Quick Activity (30 minutes)**

Read the *William McKinley* book together as a class, with students taking turns reading aloud. Then, watch the *Guess or Mess* video and play along with the trivia questions.