



## John Tyler Lesson Plan

How did John Tyler set a precedent for presidential succession and contribute to the expansion of the United States?

Students will understand how John Tyler, the first vice president to become president after a predecessor's death, established important practices for presidential succession and played a crucial role in the annexation of Texas. They will also explore Tyler's complex political journey and the challenges he faced during his presidency.

### Learning Objectives:

- Identify the key life events of John Tyler.
- Explain how John Tyler set a precedent for presidential succession after the death of a president.
- Discuss the significance of John Tyler's actions in the annexation of Texas.
- Evaluate John Tyler's political decisions and their impact on the United States.

### Key Vocabulary:

- **Precedent:** An event or action that serves as an example for similar situations in the future.
- **Annexation:** The act of adding or incorporating a new territory into a country.
- **Secessionist:** Someone who supports leaving an entity, such as a country.
- **National Bank:** A financial institution created by the nation's government to manage the country's banking system and money supply.
- **Tariff:** A tax on goods being imported or exported.

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

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

#### Introduction to Tyler: (5 minutes)

1. Begin with a brief discussion about U.S. presidents and the qualities that make a great leader. Ask students if they know any presidents who were known for their leadership during challenging times.



2. Display the *John Tyler* digital book using an electronic device. Briefly highlight Tyler's significance as the 16th president, his role in preserving the Union, and his efforts to end slavery. Show images from the digital book to give a visual overview of his life and achievements.

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

1. Read the "Meet John Tyler" section on page 2 together as a class, with the teacher leading this page to model fluent reading and set the tone for the lesson.
2. After completing the teacher-led reading, explain that students will now explore other key aspects of Tyler's life in small groups.
3. Split the class into small groups and assign each group a different section of the digital book to explore:
  - Group 1: *Young Tyler, Interesting Facts* (page 3)
  - Group 2: *Early Career, Trying to Fit In* (page 4)
  - Group 3: *Presidential Politics, A Major Precedent* (page 5)
  - Group 4: *President, Tragedy and Love* (page 6)
  - Group 5: *Retirement, Kids, Kids, and More Kids* (page 7)
  - Group 6: *Legacy* (page 8)
4. Allow time for each group to read their assigned section, taking turns reading aloud. As students read, they should discuss the main ideas.
5. 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.
6. 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 of the worksheet with these instructions:
2. **Timeline:** Students should select key dates and events mentioned throughout the digital book. The following are recommendations, but the teacher and students can use many other dates mentioned in the book:
  - 1809 - Birth of John Tyler
  - 1861-1865 - Presidency and the Civil War
  - 1863 - Emancipation Proclamation
  - 1865 - Assassination of Tyler
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 John Tyler that stood out to them and write it in the space provided.
5. **Vocabulary Builder:** Instruct students to choose a word from the Glossary on page 10 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 John Tyler 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 John Tyler, focusing on his life, presidency, and legacy.
2. **Think-Pair-Share:** Ask students to recall one fact about John Tyler 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 three sample reflection questions:
  - What did you find most interesting about John Tyler?
  - How do you think his presidency impacted the United States?
  - Can you think of a modern issue that relates to something Tyler dealt with?
4. **Bonus Activities:** If time allows, allow students to complete the puzzle on page 2 by finding hidden letters throughout the book. They can also explore and engage with the 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 John Tyler—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 *John Tyler: President without a Party*, click [here](#).

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

Read the *John Tyler* 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.