

## Let's Visit Mount Rushmore | Lesson Plan

Why is Mount Rushmore an important symbol in American history?

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Students will learn about Mount Rushmore, discuss its significance as a national memorial, and understand why it is considered an important symbol in American history.

### Learning Objectives:

- Understand the significance of Mount Rushmore as a national landmark.
- Identify the presidents on Mount Rushmore and why they were chosen to be depicted.
- Explain basic facts about Mount Rushmore's history and construction.

### Key Vocabulary:

- **Mount Rushmore:** An iconic monument featuring carved faces of four U.S. Presidents.
- **Granite:** Hard, durable rock often used in construction and sculptures.
- **Preservation:** The act of maintaining something in its original state.
- **Development:** To grow.
- **Hall of Records:** A chamber behind Mount Rushmore containing historical information and artifacts.

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

**Academic Topics:** American Values, U.S. Presidents, History

### What You'll Need

- Video: *Otto's Tales: Let's Visit Mount Rushmore* (Watch [Here](#))
- Book (Optional): *Otto's Tales: Let's Visit the Statue of Liberty* (Purchase [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Let's Visit Mount Rushmore Worksheet* (Click [Here](#))
- Images of Mount Rushmore
- Images of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt

### Lesson Plan (45 mins.)

Warm-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Begin by showing pictures or drawings of Mount Rushmore to the students. Have them describe what they see.
2. Ask them if they recognize any of the faces carved in the mountain. Call on students to share their thinking.
3. Next, show images of the four presidents carved into the mountain: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt.
4. Ask the students why these particular presidents were chosen to be depicted on Mount Rushmore (e.g., their important contributions to American history).



5. Introduce Mount Rushmore as a national memorial, an important symbol of American history and democracy. Explain that they will learn more about its history and significance as a national landmark.

Watch and Discuss: (25 mins.)

1. Play the video *Otto's Tales: Let's Visit Mount Rushmore* for the students.
2. Pause at opportune moments in the video to ask questions and check for understanding of key vocabulary words and objectives from the lesson:
  - What material is the monument made of?
  - What does it mean if something is durable?
  - Why were these particular presidents chosen to be honored on Mount Rushmore?
  - Why does Washington represent the birth of our country?
  - Why does Jefferson represent the growth of our country?
  - Why does Lincoln represent the preservation of our country?
  - Why does Roosevelt represent the development of our country?
  - How long did it take for Mount Rushmore to be constructed?
  - What is the secret room located behind Lincoln's head called? What does it contain?

Wrap-Up: (15 mins.)

1. Have students complete the *Let's Visit Mount Rushmore Worksheet*.
2. Give students time to color in the picture and either write or dictate 1-2 sentences explaining what they learned about Mount Rushmore (its significance, which presidents are depicted, etc.) This may be collected as a formative assessment.
3. Wrap up the lesson by asking students to share what they have written on their worksheets. Call on a few students to explain why they think Mount Rushmore is an important symbol in American history and explain that the presidents depicted represent our country's progress, from its founding to its continuous development.

Extension Activity: Role-Play as Builders

Divide the students into small groups and assign each group a role, such as sculptors, engineers, or workers. Provide building blocks, playdough, clay, or other construction materials and encourage them to work together to build their version of Mount Rushmore. This collaborative activity will reinforce teamwork and problem-solving skills while also teaching about the construction process of the monument.

**Don't have time for the full lesson? Quick Activity (15 mins.)**

Have the students watch the video and complete the worksheet all together or as a take-home assignment.