



## Millard Fillmore | Lesson Plan

How did Millard Fillmore attempt to keep the United States united during a time of division?

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Students will understand how Millard Fillmore, the 13th president, sought to maintain national unity through the Compromise of 1850 and made significant foreign policy decisions. They will explore his challenges in addressing the issue of slavery and his complex political legacy.

### Learning Objectives:

- Identify the key life events of Millard Fillmore.
- Explain how the Compromise of 1850 aimed to keep the United States united and discuss its effectiveness.
- Discuss Fillmore's foreign policy achievements, including opening trade with Japan.
- Evaluate Millard Fillmore's presidency and his impact on the nation during a time of division.

### Key Vocabulary:

- **Compromise of 1850:** A series of laws passed to address the expansion of slavery and resolve sectional conflicts.
- **Fugitive Slave Law:** A law requiring escaped enslaved individuals to be returned to their owners.
- **Know-Nothing Party:** A political party that opposed immigration and was suspicious of Catholics, especially Irish Catholics.
- **Masons:** A secretive organization with origins in medieval stone-working guilds, which was viewed with suspicion in the 19th century.
- **Apprentice:** A person learning a trade from someone more experienced.

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



## Lesson Plan: Watch and Complete (45 minutes)

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

1. Begin with a brief discussion about the challenges U.S. presidents face when the nation is divided. Ask students if they know any presidents who faced such challenges.
2. Display the *Millard Fillmore* digital book using an electronic device. Briefly highlight Fillmore's role in the Compromise of 1850, his efforts to maintain national unity, and his foreign policy initiatives.

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

1. Read the "Meet Millard Fillmore" 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 Millard, Interesting Facts* (page 3)
  - Group 2: *Early Career* (page 4)
  - Group 3: *1848 Presidential Election, Vice President* (page 5)
  - Group 4: *President* (page 6)
  - Group 5: *Retirement* (page 7)
  - Group 6: *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:
  - 1800 - Birth of Millard Fillmore
  - 1850 - Becomes President
  - 1850 - Signs the Compromise of 1850
  - 1874 - Death of Fillmore
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 Millard Fillmore 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 Millard Fillmore 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 Millard Fillmore, focusing on his life, presidency, and legacy.
2. **Think-Pair-Share:** Ask students to recall one fact about Millard Fillmore 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 Millard Fillmore?
  - How do you think his presidency impacted the United States?
  - Can you think of a modern issue that relates to something Fillmore 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 Millard Fillmore—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 deeper dive into the lives and legacies of America’s leaders. Watch *Millard Fillmore: The Last Whig President* [here](#).

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

Read the *Millard Fillmore* 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.