



James Monroe | Lesson Plan

How did James Monroe contribute to the expansion and security of the United States, and how did his leadership shape American foreign policy?

Students will explore James Monroe's pivotal role in expanding U.S. territory, maintaining national unity, and establishing long-lasting foreign policy principles. They will understand how Monroe's leadership during the "Era of Good Feelings" helped the young nation grow and secure its place in the world.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the key life events of James Monroe.
- Explain James Monroe's contributions to the expansion of U.S. territory and the development of American foreign policy.
- Evaluate the impact of James Monroe's leadership on national unity and his role in the "Era of Good Feelings."
- Describe the significance of the Monroe Doctrine and its lasting effect on U.S. foreign policy.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Louisiana Purchase:** The acquisition of territory from France in 1803 that doubled the size of the United States.
- **Monroe Doctrine:** A foreign policy statement that warned European powers against further colonization in the Western Hemisphere.
- **Era of Good Feelings:** A period of political unity and national pride during Monroe's presidency.
- **Missouri Compromise:** A legislative agreement in 1820 that temporarily resolved conflicts over the expansion of slavery.
- **Foreign Policy:** Actions and strategies that a government uses to deal with other countries.

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



Lesson Plan: Read and Discuss (60 minutes)

Introduction to Monroe: (5 minutes)

1. Begin with a brief discussion about U.S. presidents and their roles in shaping the nation. Ask students if they know of any presidents who played key roles in expanding U.S. territory or creating important foreign policies.
2. Display the James Monroe digital book using an electronic device. Briefly highlight Monroe's significance as the 5th president, his role in the Louisiana Purchase, and his introduction of the Monroe Doctrine. Show images from the digital book to give a visual overview of his life and achievements.

Monroe History Huddle: (25 minutes)

1. Read the "Meet James Monroe" 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 Monroe'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 James, Interesting Facts* (page 3)
 - Group 2: *Soldier, Crossing the Delaware* (page 4)
 - Group 3: *Rise to Power, The Louisiana Purchase* (page 5)
 - Group 4: *President, Retirement* (page 6)
 - Group 5: *Life During Monroe's Time* (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 other dates mentioned in the book:
 - 1758 - Birth of James Monroe
 - 1803 - Louisiana Purchase
 - 1817-1825 - Presidency
 - 1823 - Monroe Doctrine

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 James Monroe 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 James Monroe 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 James Monroe, focusing on his life, contributions to U.S. territorial expansion, and his influence on foreign policy.
2. **Think-Pair-Share:** Ask students to recall one fact about James Monroe 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 James Monroe?
 - How do you think the Monroe Doctrine impacted the United States?
 - Can you think of a modern issue that relates to something Monroe dealt with?
4. **Bonus Activities:** If time allows, let students complete the puzzle on page 2 by finding hidden letters throughout the book. They can also explore and engage with 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 James Monroe—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, which provide students with a deeper dive into the lives and legacies of America’s leaders. To view *James Monroe: The Last Founding Father*, click [here](#).

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

Read the *James Monroe* 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.