



Ronald Reagan | Lesson Plan

What can we learn from Reagan's approach to leadership when faced with both domestic and international challenges?

Students will understand how Ronald Reagan's leadership, personal values, and policies influenced America's economy, society, and role in the world during a pivotal time in history.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify key events and achievements in Ronald Reagan's life that shaped his journey to becoming the 40th President of the United States.
- Explain the significance of Ronald Reagan's leadership during the Cold War and its impact on American history and global relations.
- Analyze how Reagan's personal values and experiences influenced his policies and decision-making as president.
- Evaluate Ronald Reagan's legacy by considering his contributions to American society, economy, and international diplomacy.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Cold War** – Central to Reagan's leadership and global impact.
- **Communism** – Key to understanding the ideological conflict Reagan opposed.
- **Peace Through Strength** – Highlights his approach to defense and diplomacy.
- **Berlin Wall** – Symbolizes the success of Reagan's Cold War policies.
- **Economic Recovery Tax Act** – Represents his domestic economic strategies.
- **Conservative** – Captures his political philosophy and its influence on his presidency.

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, Cold War

What You'll Need

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

Lesson Plan: Read and Discuss (60 minutes)

Introduction to Reagan: (5 minutes)



1. Begin with a brief discussion about U.S. presidents and the qualities that make a great leader. Ask students if they can name any presidents who were known for inspiring confidence and guiding the nation through times of challenge.
2. Display the Ronald Reagan digital book using an electronic device. Briefly highlight Reagan's significance as the 40th president, his role in restoring American confidence during economic struggles, and his efforts to end the Cold War. Show images from the digital book to provide a visual overview of Reagan's life and achievements.

Reagan History Huddle: (25 minutes)

1. Read the "Meet Ronald Reagan" 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 Reagan'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. The following are recommendations:
 - Group 1: *Young Ronald, Early Career* (pages 3-4)
 - Group 2: *Hollywood, Union President, Anti-Communist* (pages 5-6)
 - Group 3: *Switching Teams, A Life-Changing Speech, Governor, Running for President* (pages 7-8)
 - Group 4: *President, Assassination Attempt, Sense of Humor* (pages 9-10)
 - Group 5: *Retirement, Legacy* (pages 11, 13)
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:
 - 1911 - Birth of Ronald Reagan
 - 1980 - Elected as the 40th President of the United States
 - 1981 - Assassination attempt on Reagan
 - 1987 - Reagan delivers "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!" speech
 - 2004 - Passes away at the age of 93
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 Ronald Reagan 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 14 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 Ronald Reagan 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 Ronald Reagan, focusing on his life, presidency, and legacy.
2. **Think-Pair-Share:** Ask students to recall one fact about Ronald Reagan 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 Ronald Reagan?
 - How do you think his presidency impacted the United States?
 - Can you think of a modern issue that relates to something Reagan 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 Ronald Reagan—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 *Ronald Reagan: The Great Communicator*, click [here](#).

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

Read the *Ronald Reagan* 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.