



John Quincy Adams | Lesson Plan

Why are strong diplomats so important to a newly formed nation?

Students will explore John Quincy Adams' contributions as a diplomat, his role in developing American foreign policy, and his fight against slavery. They will understand how his integrity and dedication to public service left a lasting impact on the United States.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the key life events of John Quincy Adams.
- Explain John Quincy Adams' contributions to American foreign policy and diplomacy.
- Describe the impact of John Quincy Adams' presidency and his advocacy against slavery.
- Evaluate the significance of John Quincy Adams' leadership in promoting justice and moral governance.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Monroe Doctrine:** A U.S. foreign policy statement that opposed European colonization in the Western Hemisphere.
- **Treaty of Ghent:** The 1814 treaty that ended the War of 1812 between the United States and Great Britain.
- **Amistad Case:** A Supreme Court case in which John Quincy Adams defended the freedom of enslaved Africans who had revolted on the Spanish ship La Amistad.
- **Corrupt Bargain:** The alleged deal between John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay during the 1824 election that led to Adams becoming President.
- **Abolitionist:** A person who advocated for the ending of slavery.

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

Lesson Plan: Watch and Complete (45 minutes)

Introduction to John Quincy Adams: (5 minutes)



1. Begin with a brief discussion about American foreign policy and leadership. Ask students if they know of any U.S. Presidents who were known for their diplomatic skills or their efforts against slavery.
2. Display the John Quincy Adams digital book using an electronic device. Briefly highlight Adams' significance as the 6th President, his achievements in diplomacy, and his fight against slavery. Show images from the digital book to give a visual overview of his life and achievements.

Adams History Huddle: (25 minutes)

1. Read the "Meet John Quincy Adams" 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 Adams' 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 John Quincy, Interesting Facts* (page 3)
 - Group 2: *A Unique Education, Early Career* (pages 4)
 - Group 3: *Master Diplomat* (page 5)
 - Group 4: *The 1824 Election, President* (page 6)
 - Group 5: *Career After the Presidency* (page 7)
 - Group 6: *Legacy, A Front Row Seat to History* (pages 8-9)
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:
 - 1767 - Birth of John Quincy Adams
 - 1814 - Treaty of Ghent
 - 1825-1829 - Presidency
 - 1841 - Amistad Case
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 Quincy Adams 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 Quincy Adams 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 Quincy Adams, focusing on his life, diplomatic achievements, and his stance against slavery.
2. **Think-Pair-Share:** Ask students to recall one fact about John Quincy Adams 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 Quincy Adams?
 - How do you think Adams’ diplomacy and the Monroe Doctrine impacted the United States?
 - Can you think of a modern issue that relates to something John Quincy Adams 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 John Quincy Adams—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 *John Quincy Adams: Dedicated to America*, click [here](#).

Don’t have time for a full lesson? Quick Activity (20 minutes)

Read the *John Quincy Adams* 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.