

The Many Roles of the President

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Elaborated Lesson Focus:

This lesson is designed to allow students to examine primary sources that reflect the many roles fulfilled by the President of the United States. Activities focus on examination of executive orders, photographs, letters, and other primary sources from the Carter administration, evaluation of these documents, and categorization of the documents according to Presidential role. By the end of the lesson, students should recognize specific Presidential actions as they relate to specific Presidential roles.

Georgia Performance Standards:

SSCG12 The student will analyze the various roles played by the President of the United States; include Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, chief executive, chief agenda setter, representative of the nation, chief of state, foreign policy leader, and party leader.

SSCG15 The student will explain the functions of the departments and agencies of the federal bureaucracy.

- a. Compare and contrast the organization and responsibilities of independent regulatory agencies, government corporations, and executive agencies.
- b. Explain the functions of the Cabinet.

Enduring Understanding / Essential Questions:

The President of the United States wears many different hats in the performance of his duties. Some presidential actions deal with foreign policy, while others require him to serve as ceremonial leader of our country. Some actions require him to lead the armed forces, while others require him to act as leader of his own political party. Balancing these roles is often challenging.

1. Why do Presidents issue executive orders?
2. What must a President consider before issuing an executive order?
3. Who must approve Presidential actions?

Performance Task:

Working in pairs, students will analyze any TEN of the documents below. As they analyze the documents, they will group them according to which role the President was performing – Commander-in-Chief, Chief Executive, Chief Agenda Setter, Representative of the Nation, Chief of State, Foreign Policy Leader, and Party Leader. For each document, the students will complete a “Presidential Role Assignment Form”, which will require them not only to describe the document but also to predict consequences of the action taken.

List of Presidential Documents

[Executive Order Relating to Proclamation of Pardon Executive Order 11967.](#)

[Letter to U.S. Congress from President Carter, August 12, 1977](#)

[Proclamation 4646 - Mother's Day, 1979](#)

[Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Remarks at the Swearing In of Joseph A. Califano, Jr.](#)

[Proclamation 4498 - Earth Week, 1977](#)

[Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 Statement on Signing H.R. 8638 Into Law.](#)
[Photo of Camp David Meeting, September 1978](#)

[Letter to Anwar al-Sadat](#)

[Photo of Signing of Camp David Accords \(Image 25\)](#)

[Farewell Address](#)

[Democratic National Committee Remarks in Conjunction With the Committee's "Get Out the Vote" Campaign](#)

[Letter to U.S. Senators from President Carter, April, 1978](#)

[United States Summer Olympic Team Remarks at the Medal Presentation Ceremony](#)

[Proclamation 4776 - National Hispanic Heritage Week](#)

[Veto of Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill Remarks on Vetoing H.R. 12928](#)

[Portola Valley, California Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraising Dinner](#)

[Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan Address to the Nation](#)

Rubric for Role Assignment Forms

- 4** Offers thorough analysis of the document, including a clear description of its contents and the events leading to it.
Offers in-depth and persuasive explanation of opinions, including the use of examples from the documents themselves.
Correctly matches and justifies which Presidential role best corresponds to the action described in each document analyzed.
- 3** Offers analysis of the document, including some description of its contents and some knowledge of events leading to it.
Offers an explanation of opinions and includes an example from the documents themselves.
Correctly matches most documents to the corresponding Presidential roles and offers some justification as to why they're matched as they are.
- 2** Offers limited analysis of the document and limited description of its contents.
Give limited explanation of student opinions with only weak links to the documents themselves.
Matches some documents to the corresponding Presidential roles but with little justification.
- 1** Offers limited description of document.
States but does not explain student opinions and does not relate them to document.
Matches few documents to the corresponding Presidential roles.

This lesson was produced through a grant from the Georgia Humanities Council.