

Social Studies
Civics
Grade 4
Biography in a Pocket

Lesson Components:

Civics Strand: Grade 4

Benchmarks

- C-1A-E4 describing the many ways that citizens can participate in and contribute to their communities and to American society.
- C-1D-E5 discussing issues related to citizenship and public service

(See pages E-17 & E-18 Teachers Guide to Statewide Assessment)

Key Concepts

Citizen, citizenship, patriotism, public service, rights and responsibilities

History Strand: Grade 4

Time, Continuity, and Change

- H-1A-E1 demonstrating an understanding of the concepts of time and chronology
- H-1A-E3 identifying and using primary and secondary historical sources to learn about the past

(See pages E-25 & E-26 Teachers Guide to Statewide Assessment)

Key Concepts

Time and chronology, primary source, secondary source, biography, point of view, continuity and change

Lesson Duration

1 week

Purpose/Introduction

Students present biographies of famous Americans by gathering representative items or pictures and placing them in a "pocket," also representative of the person.

Objectives

1. Identify examples of citizen participation in community. (C-1A-E4)
2. Discuss issues related to citizenship and participation. (C-1D-E5)
3. Demonstrate an understanding of time and change over time. (H-1A-E1)
4. Identify and use primary and secondary historical sources to learn about the past. (H-1A-E3)

Prior Knowledge/Pre-requisites

Basic knowledge of citizenship, time, and primary and secondary sources.

Materials/Resources

- assorted biographies of famous Americans
- art supplies

Body of the Lesson

1. Introduce a biographical character using the "Biography in a Pocket" presentation method (see item 3 below).
2. A team of 4 students selects a biography to read and keeps an ongoing record of pertinent facts and milestones about the character. For peer tutoring, one student reads or uses an assist read technique with the other student.
3. Using information learned about the character, students create a pocket that could be associated with their character. Example: To demonstrate Mary Anna Robertson, Grandma Moses, the teacher wears an apron, a symbol of Grandma Moses's life as a farm housewife. In the apron pocket are placed:

- **a paintbrush**, to symbolize her artist's career
- **embroidery wool**, for her early stitchery projects
- **a blue ribbon**, for her prize-winning preserves
- **an art exhibit notice**
- **a 100th birthday card**
- **a map of New English**, where she lived
- **a photo or painting** showing her community involvement

4. Students work together to list and create between 5 and 7 items which represent milestones, events, etc. of the person's life. These items are placed in the pocket.

- There are 2 required pocket items: a map to show the area(s) in which the character lived and traveled, and something to show the character's demonstration of citizenship at the community, state, or national level.
- Each student is responsible for creating 1 pocket item and the group works collaboratively on the map and any extra items. A peer or cross-age tutor may assist students in developing the materials for the pocket.

5. Students present the pocket and information to classmates. As each item is withdrawn from the pocket, the student explains its significance.

Assessment

See the attached scoring rubric.

Applications Across the Curriculum

- **Art:** preparation of displays
- **Language Arts:** reading, summarizing, and interpreting a biography

Biography in a Pocket Assessment

1. All work turned in on time.	yes		no	
2. Biography Sheet turned in.	yes		no	
3. Introduced the character: gave birth/death dates.	1	2	3	4 5
	less than satisfactory			outstanding
4. Explained the type of pocket and how it represents the character.	1	2	3	4 5
	less than satisfactory			outstanding
5. Pocket has 5 items related to the character's life, including a map and an example of the character's civic responsibility.	1	2	3	4 5
	less than satisfactory			outstanding
6. The significance of each item was explained.	1	2	3	4 5
	less than satisfactory			outstanding
7. Items represent a broad span in the character's life.	1	2	3	4 5
	less than satisfactory			outstanding
8. The presentation was fluent.	1	2	3	4 5
	less than satisfactory			outstanding
9. Artistic impression and neatness.	1	2	3	4 5
	less than satisfactory			outstanding

Total points: _____

Grade: _____

Scoring: O=biography sheet turned in on time, 31-31 points; S+=biography sheet turned in on time, 26-30 points; S=biography sheet turned in on time, 21-25 points; S-=biography sheet missing or late, 17-20 points; U=biography sheet missing or late, 0-16 points.
