

SO YOU WANT TO BE PRESIDENT?

So You Want To Be President?

by Judith St. George, illustrated by David Small

Themes: History, Holidays, Humor

Grade Level: 2–6 (ages 6–12)

Running Time: 27 minutes

SUMMARY

What are the good things and bad things about being President of the United States, and what kind of person does the job need? This witty and sometimes irreverent book introduces the Presidency and the men who have filled that office, from George Washington to George W. Bush. The book is not organized chronologically. Instead the Presidents are grouped and compared in original and amusing ways. One page organizes the Presidents by first names: your best chance at the Presidency is to be named James! Other pages compare Presidents by physical size, spending habits, previous occupations, leisure pursuits and marital status. The comparisons show the Presidents as real, sometimes flawed, human beings. The illustrations, which are in the style of political cartoons, capture both the personal quirks of the Presidents and the colorful style of American political life.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will watch and listen to a multiple biography of U.S. Presidents.
- Children will identify and appreciate the qualities of good leadership.

- Children will appreciate the use of humor in both words and pictures.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Introduce the title of the program and ask children the title question. Ask them to share the reasons they do or do not want to be President. Make a chalkboard or notebook list of Presidents, along with any details children know about each president. Encourage them to check this list as they watch the program.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Review your chalkboard list of Presidents, adding more Presidential names from the program, as well as new details about the Presidents that were learned from the program. Have students identify and discuss the personal qualities that helped people get elected or re-elected, as well as the qualities that distinguish the best Presidents.

To connect the movie to history, divide the class into two teams. Have one team make a timeline of all the Presidents. Ask the other team to fill in the timeline with important events from American history. Use the timeline to discuss the kinds of important decisions Presidents must make.

To connect the movie to geography, challenge students to play a Presidential map game. Divide the class into teams, and have each team prepare questions about places associated with the Presidents. Teams can then take turns asking each other questions. To answer the questions, students must find the locations on

the map. Use a stopwatch or timer to keep the game moving.

Connect the movie to art by having students draw portraits of their favorite Presidents. Ask the artists to research facts about the Presidents and to include some of those facts in their pictures. Have students review the illustrations in the movie for inspiration.

Connect the program to writing by asking students to write poems, plays, and songs about their favorite Presidents. Encourage students to look at the Presidents from unusual points of view. For example, they might write stories from the viewpoints of Presidential pets, the Presidents' children, or the White House janitors and waiters.

Other related videos and films available from Weston Woods include:

JUST A FEW WORDS, MR. LINCOLN, by Jean Fritz, illustrated by Charles Robinson
GEORGE WASHINGTON'S MOTHER, by Jean Fritz, illustrated by DyAnne DiSalvo-Ryan

CALL 1-800-243-5020 TO ORDER THESE AND OTHER WESTON WOODS VIDEOS!

This guide may be photocopied for free distribution without restriction