



USING

# THIS DAY IN HISTORY

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IN THE CLASSROOM

The HISTORY® This Day in History content ([history.com/tdih](https://history.com/tdih)) offers an excellent opportunity for educators to inspire students to learn more about the past and its connections to the present by interacting with historical events of global, national, local and personal significance. Each day, we feature articles and videos about turning points in history in categories ranging from military to cultural history.

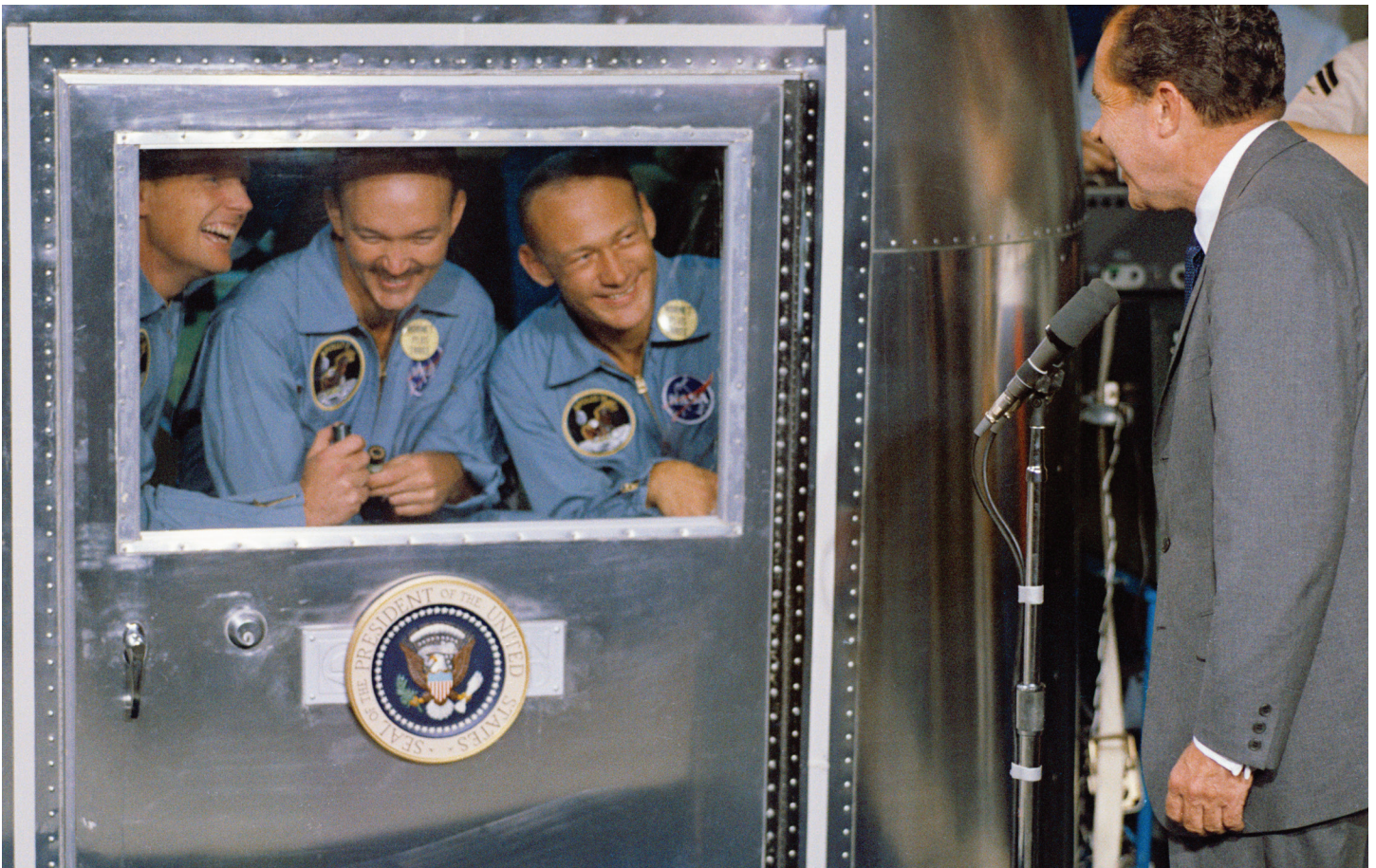
HISTORY® Classroom has created a variety of lesson plans and in-depth resources related to pivotal events highlighted in This Day in History. Check out [history.com/study-guides](https://history.com/study-guides) for our “10 Events That Shook the World” and “10 Events That Shook America” study guides featuring This Day in History articles; contextual background of the given time period; biographies of key players involved in each event; and information about concurrent events, as well as images, maps and fun “Did You Know?” facts.

In addition to these guides, we have developed some tips for incorporating This Day in History into the classroom on a daily or weekly basis.

**[HISTORY.COM/TDIH](https://history.com/tdih)**

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PRESIDENT NIXON GREETES THE QUARANTINED APOLLO 11 ASTRONAUTS ABOARD THE USS HORNET RECOVERY SHIP

# **PART 1:**

## **IDEAS FOR CHOOSING AN EVENT TO STUDY**

### **ON TOPIC**

Students can use This Day in History on History.com ([history.com/tdih](http://history.com/tdih)) to compile a list of significant events related to a unit or period of time you are studying in class. Then, assign or let students choose specific events to study, as individuals or in small groups. Pay special attention to the This Day in History themed categories, which include specific stories for the American Revolution, Civil War, World War I, World War II, Vietnam War and Presidential history, among other topics.

### **CURRENT EVENT CONNECTIONS**

Ask students to research and compile a list of recent big news stories spanning the last 6-12 months. Then come together as a class to discuss the stories the students found. Which of these events will have a lasting impact? Have similar events occurred in the past? Which will be important to understand and study later? Individually or in groups, ask students to choose specific events to study further.

### **BIRTHDAY CONNECTIONS**

Ask students to use This Day in History to research events that occurred throughout history on their birthday, choosing one event to delve into further.

### **THIS DAY IN MY FAMILY**

Ask students to talk to their parents, grandparents and other family members about dates and time periods that are significant to their family. Dates can include birthdays of important family members, anniversaries of significant family events or other dates that resonate with the family. Examples might include the birthday of first family member born in the United States or the anniversary of the date a family member joined the military or moved across the country. Students can then compile This Day in History stories related to these personal events and explore connections between the two.

### **THIS DAY IN OUR HISTORY**

Either online or at the local library, ask students to research local history and choose a day of significance to their school, town or region to further explore.

### **THIS DAY IN MY HISTORY**

Students can choose an event of historical significance that occurred during their lifetime. What will they one day be telling their children and grandchildren about?

# **PART 2:**

## **SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR CHOSEN EVENTS**

### **WRITING HISTORY**

After choosing an event, ask students to research and write an original This Day in History article. Articles should open with a brief description of the event; followed by a paragraph or two of context and backstory; more information about the event; and an explanation of the event's historical significance.

### **WELCOME TO THIS DAY IN HISTORY**

In small teams, ask students to create their own This Day in History videos. Roles can include researcher; script writer; director; host; and camera operator. Videos can focus on one event or span several that occurred on the same day.

### **REPORTING LIVE FROM HISTORY**

Ask students to create a news broadcast as if they were reporting live from a This Day in History event. In addition to researching and writing a script about the event, students can research period dress and language, and include "interviews" with eyewitnesses. The "broadcast" can be acted out live in front of the class, or made into a video.

### **DRAWING HISTORY**

Ask students to create a visualization of an event from This Day in History. This visualization can take a variety of forms, both low-tech and high-tech. Options include a traditional drawing; the creation of an infographic, either using software or by hand; or a cartoon or comic strip.

### **VOICES FROM HISTORY**

Ask small groups of students to record a podcast or radio show about the event. Students can research the event; familiarizing themselves with what happened and its impact; and discuss what it would have been like to have been a part of the event. Each group member can take on a different role: director, host and interviewees. The host can set the stage by giving the audience an introduction to the event and then interviewing the "eyewitnesses." Rather than following a script, challenge students to put themselves in the participants' shoes and engage in a spontaneous dialogue.





IMMIGRANT CHILDREN AT ELLIS ISLAND, 1908

## **“SOCIAL” HISTORY**

In the past, news of history-making events could take weeks or months to make its way around the globe. Today, history unfolds before the world’s eyes in real time on social media. Ask students to tell the story of a This Day in History event through a social media platform as if they were witnessing it first-hand. This could include telling the story through a series of Instagram posts, tweets or Facebook or blog posts in the voice of a well-known participant in an event or a historically relevant persona created by the student. Imagery can be hand-drawn or researched through sources like the Library of Congress, National Archives and Wikimedia. Captions and tweets can stay true to the format but provide information in a breaking-news style.

## **WITNESS TO HISTORY**

Ask students to research a This Day in History event and then tell the story in a series of letters between two historic personalities or student-created personas related to the event. Letters should include a factual account of the event; atmospheric details, like how things smelled or sounded; and the letter writer’s thoughts and feelings about what they witnessed. To bring a more modern context, this activity could also take the form of an email or text conversation.

## **OLD NEWS**

In teams or as a whole-class activity, ask students to create a newspaper (or website) about a This Day in History event. The newspaper can include relevant headlines; factual articles about what happened; articles about the important people involved in the event; op-ed columns written by people with differing opinions about the event; drawings or researched photos; and political cartoons. Students can also look through a current or historical newspapers and brainstorm and pitch their own content ideas, with either the teacher or fellow students serving as “editor-in-chief.”

# **PART 3:**

## **TIPS FOR USING THIS DAY IN HISTORY DOCUMENTARY CLIPS IN THE CLASSROOM**

- 1** Before viewing a documentary, survey students on their background knowledge. While showing a video segment in class, you may want to pause the program to encourage discussion and debate. These clips can be incorporated into existing lesson plans, or can jumpstart a new one.
- 2** As they are watching these clips, ask students to take notes and jot down questions, observations and new vocabulary words. These notes can provide a framework for your class discussions.
- 3** Consider using these video segments as a basis for cross-disciplinary projects. These clips can connect with a wide range of subjects including science and technology, literature, the arts and civics.
- 4** Are there historic sites or people in your community related to a particular This Day in History fact? You may want to design a related field trip or invite a guest speaker to attend your class.
- 5** Don't forget: there are many more video segments online at [history.com/tdih](http://history.com/tdih) and many more tips available on The History Channel Classroom® site at [history.com/classroom](http://history.com/classroom).



# PART 4:

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



WRITING THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, 1776,  
BY JEAN LEON GEROME FERRIS.

### AMERICAN HISTORY BOOKS

Block, Sharon, Ruth M. Alexander and Mary Beth Norton. *Major Problems in American Women's History*, 5th edition. (Cengage Learning, 2013).

Brands, H.W. and T.H. Breen. *American Stories: A History of the United States*. Volumes 1, 2 and 3. (Pearson, 2011-2014).

Davidson, James West. *A Little History of the United States*. (Yale University Press, reprint, 2016.)

Foner, Eric. *Give Me Liberty!: An American History*, Volumes 1, 2, and Sourcebook (WW Norton, 2006).

Foner, Eric and John Arthur Garraty, editors. *The Reader's Companion to American History* (Houghton Mifflin, 1991).

Franklin, John Hope and Alfred Moss Jr. *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans* (Knopf, 2000).

Gonzalez, Juan. *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America* (Penguin, 2001).

Hakim, Joy. *A History of US: Book One: The First Americans* (Oxford University Press, 2002).

Nash, Gary and Carter Smith, editors. *Atlas of American History* (Facts on File, 2006).

Okihiro, Gary. *The Columbia Guide to Asian American History* (Columbia University Press, 2001).

Takaki, Ronald. *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*. (Back Bay Books, 2008).

Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States*. (Harper, reissue edition, 2015).

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

(CONTINUED)

## WORLD HISTORY BOOKS

Bauer, Susan Wise. *The History of the Ancient World: From the Earliest Accounts to the Fall of Rome*. (W.W. Norton & Company, 2007.)

Cha, Victor. *The Impossible State: North Korea Past and Future*. (Ecco, 2012.)

Chasteen, John Charles. *Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America*, 4th ed. (W.W. Norton & Company, 2016.)

Davis, Norman. *Europe: A History*. (Harper Perennial, 1998).

Diamond, Jared. *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*. (W.W. Norton & Company, 1 edition, 2017.)

Doyle, William. *The Oxford History of the French Revolution*. (Oxford University Press, 2nd edition, 2003.)

Ebrey, Patricia Buckley, ed. *Chinese History: A Sourcebook*, 2nd edition. (The Free Press, 1993.)

Engel, Barbara Alpert and Janet Martin. *Russia in World History*. (Oxford University Press, 2015.)

Fitzpatrick, Sheila. *The Russian Revolution*, 4th edition. (Oxford University Press, 2017.)

Gilbert, Marc Jason. *South Asia in World History*. (Oxford University Press, 2017.)

Gombrich, E.H. *A Little History of the World*. (Yale University Press, 2008.)

Keay, John. *China: A History*. (Basic Books, reprint. 2011.)

Khan, Yasmin, *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan*, New Edition. (Yale University Press, 2017).

MacFarquhar, Roderick. *Mao's Last Revolution*. (Belknap Press, later edition, 2008.)

Marshall, Tim. *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps that Explain Everything About the World*. (Scribner, reprint edition, 2016.)

Meredith, Martin. *The Fate of Africa: The History of the Continent Since Independence*. (Public Affairs, Revised, Updated Edition, 2011.)

Reader, John. *Africa: A Biography of the Continent*. (Vintage, 1999.)

Reid, Michael. *Forgotten Continent: A History of the New Latin America*. (Yale University Press, 2017.)



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## (CONTINUED)

Seager, Joni. *The Penguin Atlas of Women in the World*, Fourth Edition. (Penguin Books, revised edition, 2008.)

Shillington, Kevin. *History of Africa*, 3rd edition. (Palgrave Macmillan, 3rd ed., 2012.)

Simms, Brendan. *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy, from 1453 to the Present*. (Basic Books, 2014).

Smith, Bonnie G., ed. *Women's History: In Global Perspective, Volume 2*. (University of Illinois Press, 2005).

Sixsmith, Martin. *Russia: A 1,000 Year Chronicle of the Wild East*. (The Overlook Press, 2013.)

Starr, Chester G. *A History of the Ancient World*. (Oxford University Press, 4th edition, 1991.)

Stearns, Peter N., ed. *World History in Documents: A Comparative Reader*, 2nd edition. (NYU Press, 2008.)

Thompson, Leonard. *A History of South Africa*, Fourth Edition. (Yale University Press, revised edition, 2014.)

Tombs, Robert. *The English and Their History*. (Vintage, reprint edition, 2016.)

Walker, Brett. *A Concise History of Japan*. (Cambridge Concise Histories, 2015.)

## DIGITAL RESOURCES

Articles, videos and audio clips from The History Channel's topical database:

<http://www.history.com/topics>

Online exhibitions, primary sources, and background from the Gilder Lehrman Institute:

<http://www.gilderlehrman.org>

Milestone documents from the National Archives, with teaching tools: <http://www.ourdocuments.gov>

Excellent resources and lesson plans from EDSITEment: <http://www.edsiteмент.neh.gov>

Resources and background information from ABC-CLIO: <http://www.abc-clio.com/schools/>

Teaching tips and history education resources from the National Council for History Education:

<http://www.nche.net>

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

(CONTINUED)

The American Memory Project from The Library of Congress, with a searchable database of documents, images, and essays: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/updatedList.html>

Calisphere – digital resources and primary sources for K-12 educators from the University of California libraries: <http://www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu>

Helpful lesson plans from the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy: <http://www.ncdemocracy.org>

Digitized artifacts and related information from the collections of the National Museum of African American History and Culture: <https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/collection>

Primary sources, lesson plans and activities focusing on media literacy and the First Amendment from the Newseum: <https://newseumed.org/>

Episodes of the Backstory podcast with the American History Guys, a program of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities: <http://backstoryradio.org/episodes>