Penguin Young Readers Group

series

Core Curriculum Lesson Plans

whowasbookseries.com

All activities meet COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS
for grades 3–6

MAKING CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

INSPIRE · ENGAGE · EDUCATE

7. WRITERS

Teachers: Read one of the *Who Was...?* books about a famous writer (examples: Anne Frank, Roald Dahl, William Shakespeare, J. K. Rowling, Maurice Sendak, Mark Twain, Dr. Seuss) or assign a specific book to the class for independent reading. Once you have read the book and/or have a general understanding of the person's life, try the following activities:

WHOSE NEWS (WRITING): Students will be creating newspaper articles—both news stories and op-eds. Talk about the two differing forms of "reporting." Make sure students understand the purpose of both forms and can identify both. If possible, talk about the way in which even news stories can demonstrate opinions and how that affects how we learn about the world.

ASK STUDENTS TO:

- Work with a partner to create two newspaper articles about their *Who Was...?* writer, based on an event from their *Who Was...?* biography: one article should be factual and one article will be opinion
- "Publish" the articles on a class blog or in a class newsletter. (The articles can be published individually in Microsoft Publisher or on a Mac using pages from iWork, if available.)
- As a class, discuss how the events are perceived differently when told from opinion vs. fact

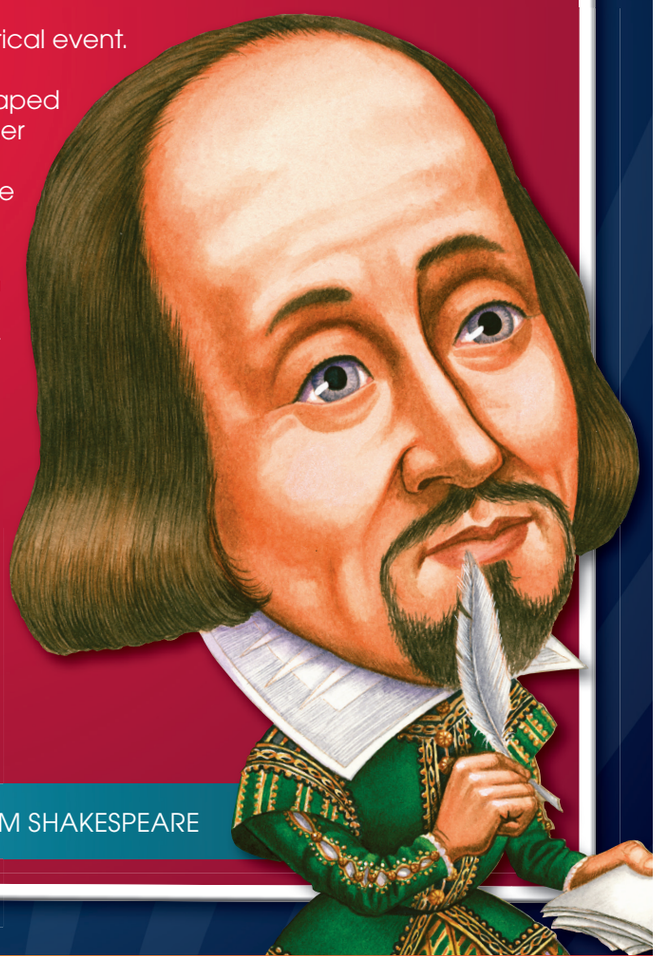
Common Core State Standards (Writing): RI.4.6., RI.5.6., RI.6.6., W.4.5., W.5.5., W.6.5., L.5.2., L.4.2., L.6.2.

HISTORY-TWISTERY (WRITING): Help students use their imagination in this activity by playing "What if...?" as a class. For example, what if we could talk to Dr. Seuss? What questions would we ask him? What suggestions would we make for him? This warm-up exercise will help the students think outside the box and create an alternate ending for each writer's life.

ASK STUDENTS TO:

- Use inference skills to "twist" an important element of a historical event. Here are some examples:
  - What if famous *Who Was...?* writer Anne Frank had escaped the Holocaust and was able to write the prologue to her diary? What would she write?
- Draft this alternate version of history as a narrative and include the consequences of the "twist"
- Compare and contrast the actual event with the "History-Twistery" version, including the problem and solution and the cause and effect
- If possible, publish a hard-copy version of the twisted story or a pop-up book version using ZooBurst (www.zooburst.com)

Common Core State Standards (Writing): W.4.3., W.5.3., W.6.3., L.5.2., L.4.2., L.6.2.



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

12. MISCELLANEOUS GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Teachers: Here are some miscellaneous general activities that apply to any and all of the books in the *Who Was…?* series.

WHO WAS GUESSING GAME:

- Make this game interactive and FUN by photocopying book covers for your students. Keep them **face down** and each student will have a turn picking up the book cover and taping it to their forehead (without seeing who their famous figure is). Classmates will then provide clues for the person until they have enough information to guess who they are.

Common Core State Standards (Writing and Performance): W.4.4., W.5.4., W.6.4., W. 4.6., W.5.6., W6.6, SL.4.4., SL.5.4., SL.6.4.

YOU WERE THERE (WRITING):

- Students imagine what it would have been like if they had been at an event related to their *Who Was...?* figure
- Determine the main idea of the event, summarize key details based on their unique perspectives, and offer a secondhand account of a historical event in narrative form. Example: You were in the audience when Abraham Lincoln gave his famous Gettysburg Address. Who were you? How were you feeling based on your background? Compare and contrast with a factual summary of this event

Common Core State Standards (Writing): RI.4.2., RI.5.2., W.4.4., W.5.4., W.6.4.

WHO AM I? (WRITING):

- Teacher creates a bank of historical figures that all students must research
- Each student is assigned (secretly) a historical figure to play
- Classmates ask yes/no questions in order to reveal the identity of the historical figure

Common Core State Standards (Writing): W.4.9., W.5.9., W.6.9., SL.4.1., SL.5.1., SL.6.1.

TIMELINE TECHNOLOGY (WRITING AND TECHNOLOGY):

- Students use xtimeline (www.xtimeline.com) to re-create the timelines of their *Who Was...?* biographies

Common Core State Standards (Writing and Technology): RI.4.7., RI.5.7., RI.6.7.

RESEARCH TECHNOLOGY PROJECT (WRITING AND TECHNOLOGY):

- Students present research on their *Who Was...?* figures, using Prezi (www.prezi.com)
- Add sound, music, video, and clip art to create a dynamic presentation for the class

Common Core State Standards (Writing and Technology): W.4.7., W.5.7., W.6.7., W.4.6., W.5.6., W.6.6.

WORD JUMBLE TECHNOLOGY (WRITING AND TECHNOLOGY):

- Students brainstorm words that describe their *Who Was...?* figures and create a master list
- Upload the lists to Wordle (www.wordle.net) to create interesting word art

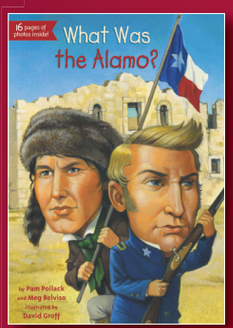
Common Core State Standards (Writing and Technology): W.4.6., W.5.6., W.6.6.

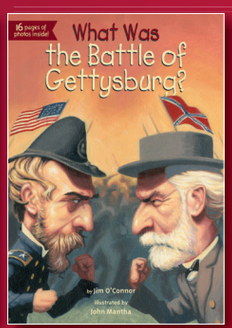
COLLECT THEM ALL!

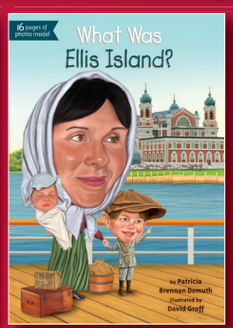
- ☐ Who Was Abigail Adams?
- ☐ Who Was Abraham Lincoln?
- ☐ Who Was Albert Einstein?
- ☐ Who Was Alexander Graham Bell?
- ☐ Who Was Amelia Earhart?
- ☐ Who Was Anne Frank?
- ☐ Who Was Annie Oakley?
- ☐ Who Was Babe Ruth?
- ☐ Who Is Barack Obama?
- ☐ Who Were the Beatles?
- ☐ Who Was Ben Franklin?
- ☐ Who Is Bill Gates?
- ☐ Who Is Bob Dylan?
- ☐ Who Was Bruce Lee?
- ☐ Who Was Charles Darwin?
- ☐ Who Was Christopher Columbus?
- ☐ Who Was Clara Barton?
- ☐ Who Was Claude Monet?
- ☐ Who Was Daniel Boone?
- ☐ Who Was Davy Crockett?
- ☐ Who Is Dolly Parton?
- ☐ Who Was Dr. Seuss?
- ☐ Who Was Eleanor Roosevelt?
- ☐ Who Was Elvis Presley?
- ☐ Who Was Ernest Shackleton?
- ☐ Who Was Ferdinand Magellan?
- ☐ Who Was Franklin Roosevelt?
- ☐ Who Was Frida Kahlo?
- ☐ Who Is George Lucas?
- ☐ Who Was George Washington?
- ☐ Who Was Harriet Tubman?
- ☐ Who Was Harry Houdini?
- ☐ Who Was Helen Keller?
- ☐ Who Is J.K. Rowling?
- ☐ Who Was Jackie Robinson?
- ☐ Who Is Jane Goodall?
- ☐ Who Was Jim Henson?
- ☐ Who Was John F. Kennedy?
- ☐ Who Was Johnny Appleseed?
- ☐ Who Was King Tut?
- ☐ Who Was Laura Ingalls Wilder?
- ☐ Who Was Leonardo da Vinci?
- ☐ Who Was Louis Armstrong?
- ☐ Who Was Louis Braille?
- ☐ Who Was Marco Polo?
- ☐ Who Was Maria Tallchief?
- ☐ Who Was Marie Curie?
- ☐ Who Was Mark Twain?
- ☐ Who Was Martin Luther King, Jr.?
- ☐ Who Was Maurice Sendak?
- ☐ Who Is Michelle Obama?
- ☐ Who Was Milton Hershey?
- ☐ Who Is Muhammad Ali?
- ☐ Who Was Neil Armstrong?
- ☐ Who Was Nelson Mandela?
- ☐ Who Was Pablo Picasso?
- ☐ Who Was Paul Revere?
- ☐ Who Was Queen Elizabeth?
- ☐ Who Was Queen Victoria?
- ☐ Who Was Roald Dahl?
- ☐ Who Was Robert E. Lee?
- ☐ Who Was Ronald Reagan?
- ☐ Who Was Rosa Parks?
- ☐ Who Was Sacagawea?
- ☐ Who Was Sally Ride?
- ☐ Who Was Steve Jobs?
- ☐ Who Is Steven Spielberg?
- ☐ Who Was Theodore Roosevelt?
- ☐ Who Was Thomas Alva Edison?
- ☐ Who Was Thomas Jefferson?
- ☐ Who Was Ulysses S. Grant?
- ☐ Who Was Walt Disney?
- ☐ Who Was William Shakespeare?
- ☐ Who Was Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart?
- ☐ Who Were the Wright Brothers?

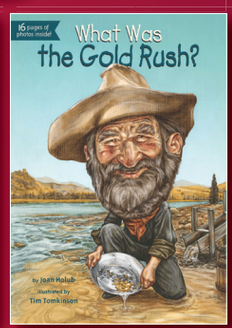
What Was?

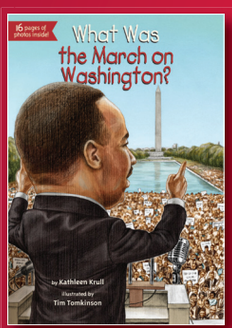
DETAILED ACCOUNTS OF IMPORTANT HISTORICAL EVENTS

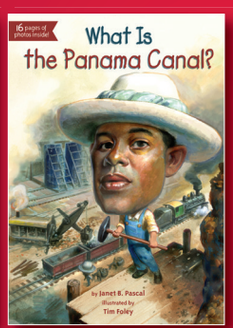


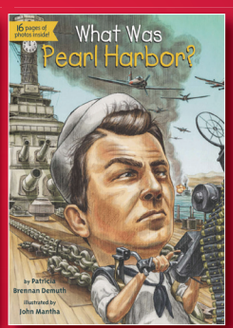


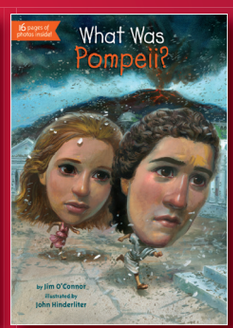


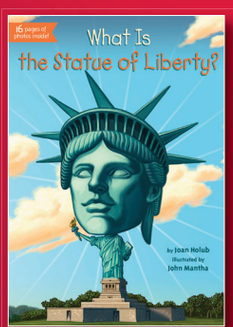


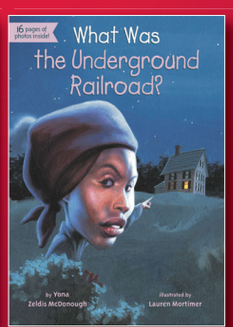












THE COMPANION SERIES TO

Who Was?

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