



Lyndon B. Johnson | Lesson Plan

How does power shape a leader's decisions, and what are the long-term consequences of those choices?

Students will understand how Lyndon B. Johnson's use of power shaped American society through civil rights legislation, social programs, and military decisions, and how these choices continue to influence government and policy today.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify key life events and leadership milestones in Lyndon B. Johnson's career, from his early years to his presidency.
- Explain how Lyndon B. Johnson worked to expand civil rights, fight poverty, and unite the nation during times of social and political change.
- Compare the key hardships and achievements of Lyndon B. Johnson, including his leadership in civil rights, the Great Society, and the Vietnam War, to analyze their impact on the United States.
- Evaluate Lyndon B. Johnson's leadership style and decisions, considering both his successes and controversies, to assess his long-term influence on American society.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Great Society** – A set of social programs launched by LBJ aimed at eliminating poverty and racial injustice.
- **Civil Rights Act (1964)** – Landmark legislation signed by LBJ that outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, or national origin.
- **Voting Rights Act (1965)** – A law signed by LBJ that protected the right to vote, especially for African Americans facing voter suppression.
- **Vietnam War** – A military conflict in which the U.S. became heavily involved under LBJ's leadership, leading to national controversy and protests.
- **Welfare** – Government assistance programs designed to provide financial aid and social support to those in need, expanded under LBJ's presidency.
- **Persuasion** – A key leadership skill used by LBJ, often called "The Johnson Treatment," where he used personal influence to push policies through Congress.

Educational Standards: CCRA.R.1, CCRA.R.2, CCRA.R.7, CCRA.W.2, CCRA.W.4, CCRA.W.9, CCRA.L.1, CCRA.L.2, CCRA.L.4, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2

Academic Subject Areas: Biography, U.S. Presidents, Vietnam War, U.S. History

What You'll Need

- Video: *Guess or Mess: Lyndon B. Johnson* (Watch [Here](#))



Scan to watch episode:

- Worksheet: *Guess or Mess: Lyndon B. Johnson* (Click [Here](#))
- PragerU Kids biographical book: *Lyndon B. Johnson* (Download [Here](#))
- Large paper or poster board for each group, along with markers

Lesson Plan: Read and Discuss (60 minutes)

Introduction to Johnson: (5 minutes)

1. Begin with a brief discussion about U.S. presidents and the qualities that make a great leader. Ask students if they know any presidents who were known for their leadership during challenging times.
2. Display the Lyndon B. Johnson digital book using an electronic device. Briefly highlight Johnson's significance as the 36th president, his leadership in civil rights, and his role in expanding social programs and U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War.

Johnson History Huddle: (25 minutes)

1. Read the "Meet Lyndon B. Johnson" section on page 2 together as a class, with the teacher leading this page to model fluent reading and set the tone for the lesson.
2. After completing the teacher-led reading, explain that students will now explore other key aspects of Johnson's life in small groups.
3. Split the class into small groups and assign each group a different section of the digital book to explore. The following are recommendations:
 - Group 1: *Young Lyndon, Early Career, Entering Congress* (pages 3-4)
 - Group 2: *Boss of the Senate, The Johnson Treatment, A Miserable Vice President, Tragedy in Dallas* (pages 5-6)
 - Group 3: *President, Lady Bird the Businesswoman, Retirement* (pages 7-8)
 - Group 4: *Legacy* (page 9)
4. Allow time for each group to read their assigned section, taking turns reading aloud. As students read, they should discuss the main ideas.
5. Provide each group with a large piece of paper or a poster board and markers to write down key points and any interesting facts or quotes they find.
6. Allow each group one to two minutes to present their findings to the class. After each presentation, provide time for classmates to ask questions and discuss the content.

Worksheet Workshop: (15 minutes)

1. Hand out individual copies of the worksheet to each student. Explain how to fill out each section of the worksheet with these instructions:
2. **Timeline:** Students should select key dates and events mentioned throughout the digital book. The following are recommendations, but the teacher and students can use many other dates mentioned in the book:
 - 1908 – Birth of Lyndon Johnson
 - November 22, 1963 – Becomes 36th President following JFK's assassination
 - July 2, 1964 – Signs the Civil Rights Act
 - March 31, 1968 – Announces he will not seek re-election

3. **Interesting Quote:** Have students choose a meaningful quote from the book to fill in the quote section on their worksheet.
4. **Interesting Fact:** Ask students to select an interesting fact about Lyndon Johnson that stood out to them and write it in the space provided.
5. **Vocabulary Builder:** Instruct students to choose a word from the Glossary on page 10 that they find interesting and use it in a sentence that conveys its meaning.
6. **Multiple Choice:** Instruct students to complete the multiple-choice section of the worksheet independently. (*Note: The multiple-choice section corresponds to the Guess or Mess episode about Lyndon B. Johnson. Students may complete it before or after watching, using it as a play-along activity. See "Extension Activity" below.*)

Reflection Round-Up: (10 minutes)

1. Briefly summarize the key points covered about Lyndon Johnson, focusing on his life, presidency, and legacy.
2. **Think-Pair-Share:** Ask students to recall one fact about Lyndon Johnson and share it with a partner. Encourage them to discuss why that fact was significant.
3. Give each student a sticky note or index card and ask them to answer one of these three sample reflection questions:
 - What did you find most interesting about Lyndon Johnson?
 - How do you think his presidency impacted the United States?
 - Can you think of a modern issue that relates to something Johnson dealt with?
4. **Bonus Activities:** If time allows, allow students to complete the puzzle on page 2 by finding hidden letters throughout the book. They can also explore and engage with the other interactive activities included in the book.

Extension Activity: (20 minutes)

Guess or Mess Trivia Show: After the lesson, students can participate in the *Guess or Mess* trivia show for Lyndon B. Johnson—direct students to the multiple-choice section of the worksheet. Students can play along with the contestants to see if they can answer the trivia questions correctly.

PragerU 5-Minute Videos:

Did you know that PragerU has a comprehensive video catalog of U.S. Presidents in an easy-to-watch 5-minute format? Enhance this lesson plan with one of our insightful, engaging, and educational videos, which provide students with a deep dive into the lives and legacies of America's leaders.

- To view *Lyndon B. Johnson and the Vietnam War*, click [here](#).
- To view *Lyndon B. Johnson: The Not-So-Great Society*, click [here](#).

Don't have time for a full lesson? Quick Activity (30 minutes)

Read the *Lyndon B. Johnson* book together as a class, with students taking turns reading aloud. Then, watch the *Guess or Mess* video and play along with the trivia questions.