

JOHN F KENNEDY ASSASSINATION

LESSON 1

THE 1960 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

<p>Objectives/learning outcomes</p> <p>Pupils will:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about Kennedy’s early life. • Understand the reasons why Kennedy won the 1960 presidential election. • Analyse Kennedy’s inaugural speech. 	<p>Starter</p> <p>Ask students what they know about President John F Kennedy. If students need help getting started, suggest the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The youngest president ever elected • The first Roman Catholic president • A charismatic leader who inspired the people • Initiated the space program • Presided over difficult times with Cuba and the Soviet Union during the Cold War • Assassinated in 1963
<p>Activities and homework</p> <p><u>Activity 1</u></p> <p>KENNEDY: The Early Years</p> <p><u>Activity 2</u></p> <p>The Presidential Election [<i>Download a copy of the Nixon/Kennedy debates</i>]</p> <p><u>Activity 3</u></p> <p>John F Kennedy's Inaugural Address</p> <p><u>Homework</u></p> <p>Homework 1 Did you understand Kennedy’s Inaugural Address? [Advanced]</p> <p>Homework 2 J F Kennedy Biography [Standard]</p>	<p>Plenary</p> <p>Discuss with pupils the importance of the inaugural address. Historically, the address is important. It refers to optimism and hope. It shows Kennedy's awareness of the international situation with the Cold War and fear of communism. He was aware of the threat of nuclear weapons. However, he may have over-committed the U.S.A.</p> <p>Explain the tension with the USSR.</p> <p>Having won the election by one of the smallest popular vote margins in history, Kennedy captured the mood of the nation. People who heard the speech were enthused by it. Even school children wrote to him with their reactions to his ideas. Following his inaugural address, 70% of Americans expressed approval of President Kennedy.</p>

ACTIVITY 1

KENNEDY: The Early Years

John F Kennedy was born in Brookline, Massachusetts. He grew up in comfort and was one of eight children in the Kennedy family. From 1931 to 1935, he attended the Choate Academy, where he was an average student. He was known as Jack Kennedy. He graduated from high school. His classmates voted him "most likely to succeed". From 1936-1940, Kennedy attended Harvard University.

During World War Two, Kennedy served in the navy. He commanded a patrol boat which, while on duty in August 1943, was rammed by a Japanese destroyer. Two members of his crew were killed. He managed to swim for four hours while helping his surviving crew members. He was discovered by island dwellers and was rescued by the Navy a few days later. In college, he had a serious attack of jaundice, which is a symptom of disease. The common sign of jaundice is when your skin turns yellow because yellow fluids build up in your liver. Luckily, he recovered from this attack. Kennedy also had a serious back injury caused by his action in the war.

In 1946, Kennedy ran for the U.S. House of Representatives. He won easily. He earned a reputation while in the House for firmly standing up for his beliefs. In 1952 he sought and won a seat in the United States Senate and became Senator Kennedy. He married Jacqueline Bouvier. She was known as "Jackie". They had two children. In 1956, Kennedy wrote *Profiles of Courage*, a biography of a group of politicians who took courageous but unpopular stands.

When he became the President of the United States of America in 1960, he was the youngest president in history at age 42. He was also the first Irish Catholic president. He was the thirty-fifth president.

TASKS

1. Read the account of Kennedy's early life and complete the grid.
2. Why do you think Kennedy was able to achieve so much by the time he reached the age of 42?

JOHN F KENNEDY: THE EARLY YEARS



Born:

Religion:

Married:

Number of Children:

Political Party:

Elected President:

Age when elected:

His early education [1931-1940]

His war record [1941-1945]

His health record

His progress in politics [1946-1960]

ACTIVITY 2

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

The United States presidential election of 1960 was between the Republican Richard Nixon, and the Democrat Senator John F Kennedy. During the televised presidential debates, foreign affairs and the economy were key issues. Kennedy gave very polished and vigorous performances. Richard Nixon looked uncomfortable.

The election vote was the closest in any presidential election since 1916. In the popular vote, Kennedy's margin of victory was among the closest ever in American history. It was also the first election in which both candidates for president were born in the 20th century.

With the strong support of his family, Kennedy was elected to the presidency in 1960 defeating Richard Nixon by a very narrow margin of popular votes, but Kennedy gained 303 electoral votes compared to 219 for Nixon. At the age 42 he was the youngest man ever elected president.

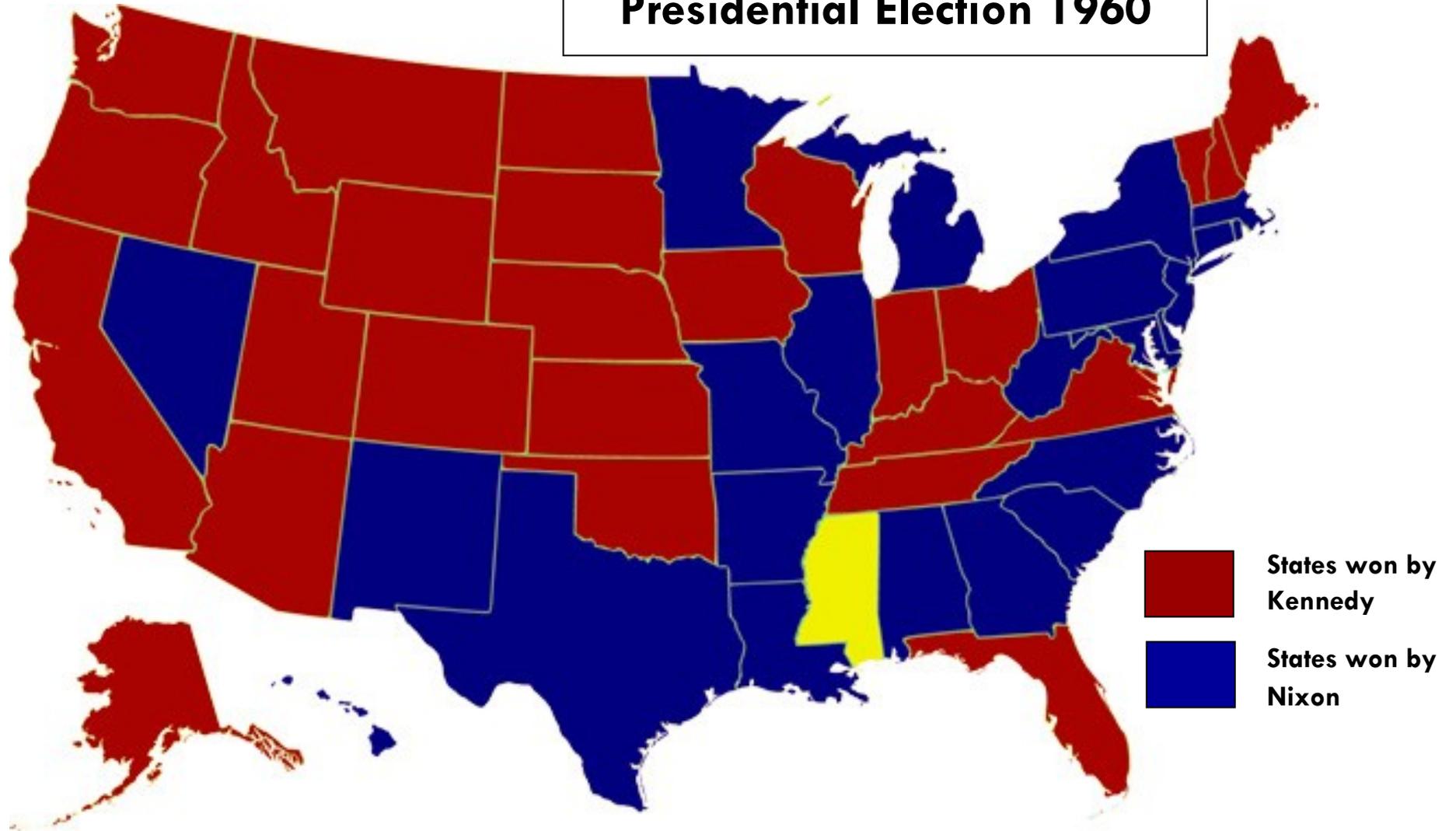
United States presidential election, 1960

	<i>Political Party</i>	Presidential Nomination	Vice President Nomination	Number of seats	Percent of the vote
	<i>Democratic</i>	John F. Kennedy	Lyndon B. Johnson	303	56.4
	<i>Republican</i>	Richard M. Nixon	Henry Cabot Lodge	219	40.8

TASKS

1. How did the televised presidential debates help Kennedy?
2. What was the result of the 1960 presidential election?
3. What made this election different from previous elections?
4. Should Kennedy have told the public about his various illnesses? If he had, do you think he would have been elected president of the United States?
5. Watch a short clip of the Presidential Debates of 1960? How far did image help Kennedy win the election?

Presidential Election 1960





TASKS

1. Colour the outline map according to the states won by Kennedy and Nixon.
2. What do you notice about the 1960 election results?
3. What patterns do you notice?
4. How many states did Nixon win? How many states did Kennedy win?

For further research:

5. There is a third colour, yellow, on the map. Which candidate is represented by the yellow?

ACTIVITY 3

JOHN F KENNEDY'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Download the speech from You Tube.

Explain to the pupils that they are about to listen to an extract from John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address.

Play only this section

“Let the word go forth...That the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans... The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavour will light our country and all who serve it...And so, my fellow Americans- ask not what your country can do for you- ask what you can do for your country.”

Explain to the pupils that John F. Kennedy is considered one of the outstanding presidents in United States' history. He inspired hope in not only the citizens of the United States, but also in citizens of the world. Despite the many controversies surrounding President Kennedy, his message of hope and belief in the future remains inspiring.

Introduce pupils to the transcript of his Inaugural Address in January 1961.

Divide the class into groups so that the 3 sections of the speech can be analysed. Ask pupils to read their section and interpret it using the word bank. They should write a summary of up to 50 words that interprets their section of the Address. They should then share their interpretation with the rest of the class.

Pupils then complete the speech analysis grid.

JOHN F KENNEDY'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS - 1961

Section 1

We **observe** today not a victory of party but a celebration of freedom. . . symbolizing an end as well as a beginning. . .signifying renewal as well as change for I have **sworn** before you and Almighty God the same **solemn oath** our **forebears** prescribed nearly a century and three-quarters ago.

The world is very different now, for man holds in his mortal hands the power to **abolish** all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life. And yet the same revolutionary beliefs for which our **forebears** fought are still at issue around the globe...the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state but from the hand of God. We **dare** not forget today that we are the **heirs** of that first revolution.

Word Bank Section 1	
Word	Definition
abolish	<i>to eliminate</i>
dare	<i>to try something difficult</i>
forebears	<i>ancestors</i>
heirs	<i>people who inherit something</i>
observe	<i>to watch</i>
solemn oath	<i>serious promise</i>
sworn	<i>promised</i>

JOHN F KENNEDY'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS - 1961

Section 2

Let the word **go forth** from this time and place. . .to friend and **foe** alike. . . that **the torch has been passed** to a new generation of Americans. . . born in this century, **tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage.** . .and unwilling to witness or permit the slow **undoing** of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today. . .at home and around the world.

Let every nation know. . .whether it **wishes us well or ill.** . . that we shall pay any price, **bear any burden**, meet any hardship, support any friend, **oppose any foe**, to **assure** the survival and the success of liberty. This much we **pledge.** ..and more...

Word Bank Section 2	
Word	Definition
assure	<i>to make sure of something</i>
bear any burden	<i>to make any sacrifice</i>
disciplined by a hard and bitter peace	<i>made strong by the cold war</i>
foe	<i>enemy</i>
go forth	<i>to enter the world</i>
oppose any foe	<i>confront any enemy</i>
pledge	<i>to promise</i>
proud of our ancient heritage	<i>proud of our past</i>
tempered by war	<i>made strong by war</i>
torch has been passed	<i>responsibilities given to the younger generation</i>
undoing	<i>destruction of something made</i>
wishes us well or ill	<i>wants good or bad for us</i>

JOHN F KENNEDY'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS - 1961

Section 3

...In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been **granted** the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger; I do not shrink from this responsibility. . .I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would **exchange** places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the **faith**, the **devotion** which we bring to this **endeavour** will light our country and all who serve it. . .and the **glow** from that fire can truly light the world...

...And so, my fellow Americans. . .ask not what your country can do for you. . .ask what you can do for your country. My fellow citizens of the world. . .ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the Freedom of Man.

Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask of us here the same high standards of strength and **sacrifice** which we ask of you. With a good **conscience** our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our **deeds**; let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own.

Word Bank Section 3	
Word	Definition
conscience	<i>a person's feeling of right and wrong</i>
deeds	<i>actions</i>
devotion	<i>commitment to something</i>
endeavour	<i>attempt to do something</i>
exchange places	<i>to trade positions with someone</i>
foe	<i>enemy</i>
glow	<i>shine of light</i>
granted	<i>given the opportunity</i>
sacrifice	<i>to give up something</i>

John F Kennedy's Inaugural Address - 1961

We observe today not a victory of party but a celebration of freedom...signifying renewal as well as change. The world is very different now. For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life. And yet the same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears fought are still at issue around the globe...that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state but from the hand of God.

We dare not forget today that we are the heirs of that first revolution. Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans-born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage-and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed....

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to assure the survival and the success of liberty. This much we pledge-and more.

To those peoples in the huts and villages across the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves....If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich.

To our sister republics south of our border, we offer...to assist free men and free governments in casting off the chains of poverty....Let all our neighbours know that we shall join with them to oppose aggression or subversion anywhere in the Americas....

Finally, to those nations who would make themselves our adversary, we offer not a pledge but a request: that both sides begin anew the quest for peace, before the dark powers of destruction unleashed by science engulf all humanity in...self-destruction.

Let both sides seek to invoke the wonders of science instead of its terrors.

All this will not be finished in the first one hundred days...nor in the life of this administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But let us begin.

And so, my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you: Ask what you can do for your country.

My fellow citizens of the world: Ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask of us here the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which we ask of you. With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own.

Analysing Kennedy's Speech Grid

<p>What emotions do you think this speech tried to evoke from the audience?</p>	<p>Which specific people, groups, or countries might the speech be referring to?</p>
<p>What are the main points or topics that the speech centres around?</p>	<p>Based on these main points what was the purpose of the speech?</p>
<p>What does the speech tell you about how John F Kennedy wanted to govern America?</p>	



TASKS

1. Why do you think Kennedy impressed so many people on that day?
2. Do you find the content of the speech to be relevant today?

HOMWORK 1 [Advanced]

Did you understand Kennedy's Inaugural Address?

TASK

Read the statements in the table from Kennedy's Inaugural Address. Choose which option, a-c, best fits what Kennedy was saying?

Statements	Your answer
1. President Kennedy said the people were celebrating... a) a party b) freedom c) the victory of the democratic party	
2. How is the world different today (in 1961)? a) we can destroy each other b) we can travel quickly c) we can get rid of hunger	
3. What should Americans not forget? a) to vote for Kennedy b) to pay taxes c) what their ancestors created	
4. What should friends and foes know? a) that the United States is powerful b) that a new generation of Americans are responsible for their government c) that the United States is governed by liberals	
5. What is Kennedy's promise to the world? a) to support liberty b) to provide money to developing countries c) to visit each country at least once	
6. What do you think that the "maximum danger" is in Kennedy's opinion? (remember it is 1961) a) China b) Restricted Trade c) Communism	
7. What should Americans ask of America? a) how much their taxes will be b) what they can do for The United States c) what the government will do for them	
8. What should citizens of the world ask of America? a) How America can help them b) If America plans to invade their country c) What they can do for freedom	

HOMEWORK 2 [Standard]

J. F. KENNEDY BIOGRAPHY

TASK

Do some internet research and find out the answers to the questions below.

1. In what city and state was President Kennedy born?
2. When was his birthday?
3. What were the names of his parents?
4. How many brothers did he have?
5. How many sisters did he have?
6. What was his wife's name?
7. What were his children's names?
8. What jobs did he have before he became President of the United States?
9. List THREE important facts about President Kennedy's life before he became President.
10. What are THREE important achievements of President John F. Kennedy in government?