



## Teaching Guide

### SEGMENT 1, WEBISODE 15

Please note: Each segment in this Webisode has its own Teaching Guide



#### Segment Overview



#### Let's Discuss

President John F. Kennedy, seeking to shore up his standing in a crucial state for the coming presidential election, decided to visit Texas in November, 1963. Although some advisors tried to dissuade him, fearing disturbances or worse from foes of the president, Kennedy insisted on making the trip with his wife, Jacqueline. Meeting warm and enthusiastic crowds, Kennedy decided to dispense with security measures. He waded into crowds to shake hands with well-wishers, and had the bulletproof bubble top of his limousine removed. Near the Dallas textbook depository building, shots rang out and the president slumped into his wife's lap. He was pronounced dead shortly thereafter, and Vice President Johnson took the oath of office on Air Force One. Although Lee Harvey Oswald was arrested for assassinating the president, his murder a few days later fueled the controversy that continues to surround Kennedy's death.

#### Teacher Directions

1. Help students understand the significance of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Tell them that, even today, controversy surrounds the event; many people question why Kennedy was killed, and who the assassin or assassins actually were.

The nation—and the world—mourned his loss deeply, and images of the assassination are seared into our national psyche. Even people who disliked Kennedy and his politics wept. Those who lived through that period remember where they were at that critical moment in November, 1963. They also remember watching hours of television coverage, including the President's impressive funeral. And they will not forget the picture of the President's small son, John F. Kennedy, Jr., saluting his father from the steps of the Capitol.

2. If possible, show students some of the famous photos of this time, including the presidential motorcade in Dallas, John-John's salute, and Kennedy's funeral and burial. Ask students the following questions.
  - What is the difference between an assassination and a murder?
  - Why didn't Kennedy use the bubble top on his limousine?
  - What messages do these photos send about the assassination of a President?
  - An assassin is an individual who kills someone for social or political reasons. Murder, on the other hand, is defined as the unlawful killing of a human being with "malice aforethought." Kennedy did not use the

bulletproof “bubble top” because he wanted people to see him. Since his assassination, presidents have not ridden in open cars.

### Teacher Directions

#### Activity One

1. Tell students that people who are old enough to remember the events of November 22, 1963 (the day that President John F. Kennedy was assassinated), also remember vividly where they were when they first heard the news.
2. Distribute the Student Sheet: *A Reporter Remembers JFK's Last Day*. Merriman Smith was a White House correspondent for United Press International. He gave this testimony before the Warren Commission, a government group assembled to investigate the assassination. Working with a team partner, students read this first person account.
3. Distribute the Student Sheet: *Document Analysis Worksheet*. Working with a team partner, students analyze Smith's first person account of the assassination.
4. To extend this activity, students interview family members and neighbors about the Kennedy assassination. Where were they when he was shot? What do they remember? Students write down and share responses.

#### Activity Two

1. Explain to students that new presidents often use a particular phrase to label what they want to accomplish during their term(s) in office. President John F. Kennedy used the term “The New Frontier,” and his successor, President Lyndon B. Johnson, wanted to build “The Great Society.”
2. Distribute the Student Sheets: *The New Frontier and The Great Society* to students. Working with classmates, students read about the programs of each president to complete the web.
3. Discuss the following questions with students.
  - How were the goals of Kennedy and Johnson similar?
  - How were they different?
  - Explain that the two presidents shared many of the same goals and dreams. Some historians suggest that President Johnson pushed through reforms faster than John F. Kennedy might have, had he survived.





What do you  
Think?



Moving Toward  
Freedom



Connections

### Teacher Directions

1. Distribute the Student Sheet: *My Journal*. Ask students to respond to the quote from John F. Kennedy's inaugural address, "My fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."
2. Students share their responses with the class via a discussion or class bulletin board.

### Teacher Directions

1. Tell students that President John F. Kennedy's coffin was placed in the Rotunda of the United States Capitol for several days before the funeral. On November 24, 1963, Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Earl Warren, and Speaker of the House John W. McCormack each delivered a brief eulogy (a tribute praising someone who has died). Cardinal Cushing, a friend and priest of the Kennedy family, also delivered a eulogy in Boston.
2. Cut apart and distribute one of the cards from the Student Sheet: *In Praise of a Fallen President* to each team. Working with teammates, students interpret the quote and answer the question, "How did John F. Kennedy move our nation toward freedom?"
3. Place a copy of the Student Sheet on the overhead projector. Allow a representative from each team to report on its quote.

### Teacher Directions

Use the following activities with your students.

**Math** — President Kennedy increased the minimum wage to \$1.25. How many hours would you have to work to make \$100? If you were working an 8-hour day, how many days would it have taken you in the 1960s to make \$100?

**Art** — Students analyze 1960s political cartoons dealing with issues that concerned John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. Students create their own political cartoons about issues affecting America today.

**Art** — Students visit the web site John F. Kennedy @ <http://www.geocities.com/~newgeneration/index.html> to view famous photographs connected with his life and death. Students respond to these photographs by creating a collage or a pen-and-ink version of a photograph.

# A Reporter Remembers JFK's Last Day



President John F. Kennedy  
National Archives

Merriman Smith, a White House correspondent for United Press International, was in Dallas, Texas on November 22, 1963. He gave the following testimony before the Warren Commission, which investigated the assassination.

*It was a balmy, sunny noon as we motored through downtown Dallas behind President Kennedy...I was riding in the so-called White House press "pool" car...in the front seat.*

*Suddenly we heard three loud, almost painfully loud cracks. The first sounded as if it might have been a large firecracker. But the second and third blasts were unmistakable. Gunfire.*

*The President's car, possibly as much as 150 or 200 yards ahead, seemed to falter briefly. We saw a flurry of activity in the Secret Service follow-up car behind the Chief-Executive's bubble-top limousine.*

*Next in line was the car bearing Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson...Our car stood still for probably only a few seconds, but it seemed like a lifetime. One sees history explode before one's eyes and for even the most trained observer, there is a limit to what one can comprehend.*

*I looked ahead at the President's car, but could not see him or his companion, Gov. John B. Connally of Texas. Both men had been riding on the right side...I thought I saw a flash of pink which would have been Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy.*

*Everybody in our car began shouting at the driver to pull up closer to the President's car. But at this moment, we saw the {limousine} and a motorcycle escort roar away at high speed.*

*We screamed at our driver, "Get going, get going." {The President's limousine} vanished around a curve. When we cleared the same curve, we could see where we were heading — Parkland Hospital...I ran to the side of the {car}.*

*The President was face down on the back seat. Mrs. Kennedy made a cradle of her arms around the President's head and bent over him as if she were whispering to him.*

*Gov. Connally was on his back on the floor of the car, his head and shoulders resting in the arms of his wife, Nellie, who kept shaking her head and shaking with dry sobs. From {my} car, I had radioed the Dallas bureau of UPI that three shots had been fired at the Kennedy motorcade. Seeing the...scene in the rear of the {President's} car, I knew I had to get to a telephone immediately.*

*Clint Hill, the Secret Service agent in charge of the detail assigned to Mrs. Kennedy, was leaning over the rear of the car.*

*“How badly was he hit, Clint?” I asked.*

*“He’s dead,” Hill replied curtly*

*I have no further memory of the scene...I recall a babble of anxious voices, tense voices...’Get a doctor out here...’ and from somewhere, nervous sobbing.*

*I raced down a short stretch of sidewalk into a hospital corridor....It took two tries before I successfully dialed the Dallas UPI number. Quickly, I dictated a bulletin saying the President had been seriously, perhaps fatally, injured by an assassin’s bullets while driving through the streets of Dallas.*

*As I stood in the drab buff hallway leading into the emergency ward, trying to reconstruct the shooting for the UPI...I watched a swift and confused panorama sweep before me.*

*Kilduff of the White House press staff raced up and down the hall. Police captains barked at each other “Clear this area.” Two priests hurried in behind a Secret Service agent, their narrow purple stoles rolled up tightly in their hands.*

*The priests came out and said the President had received the last sacrament of the Roman Catholic church. They said he was still alive...*

# Written Document Analysis Worksheet

1. TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Check one):

- Newspaper       Letter       Map       Telegram  
 Press release       Report       Advertisement       Other

2. UNIQUE PHYSICAL QUALITIES OF THE DOCUMENT (Check one or more):

- Interesting letterhead       Handwritten       Typed  
 Seals       Notations       Other

3. DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

4. AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT:

\_\_\_\_\_

5. FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. DOCUMENT INFORMATION

A. List three things the author said that you think are important:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

B. Why do you think this document was written?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

C. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? Quote from the document.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

D. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from a design by the National Archives and Records Administration



John F. Kennedy  
National Archives

## The New Frontier and The Great Society

Both John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Baines Johnson searched for just the right phrase to represent the goals of their presidential terms.

**John F. Kennedy chose “The New Frontier.”** His programs would go beyond FDR’s New Deal. He increased the minimum wage, created the Manpower Act to help unemployed citizens, promoted civil rights legislation, and encouraged equal opportunity and affirmative action. Kennedy established the Peace Corps to help developing nations and signed the first Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. He encouraged the space program and challenged the nation to put a man on the moon by the end of the decade. Because he wanted to stop the spread of Communism, he sent troops to Vietnam. On the day before he was assassinated in 1963, he asked his economic advisers to prepare a “War on Poverty” program. His successor, Lyndon Johnson inherited that task.

**President Lyndon. B. Johnson chose “The Great Society” as his presidential theme.** Johnson took the oath of office following the assassination of John F. Kennedy. He inherited many problems plaguing the country. But he held fast to his dream: to transform the United States into the Great Society. Johnson believed that the United States must take care of its own people—especially the poor. Johnson pushed through massive amounts of legislation aimed at improving life for all Americans.

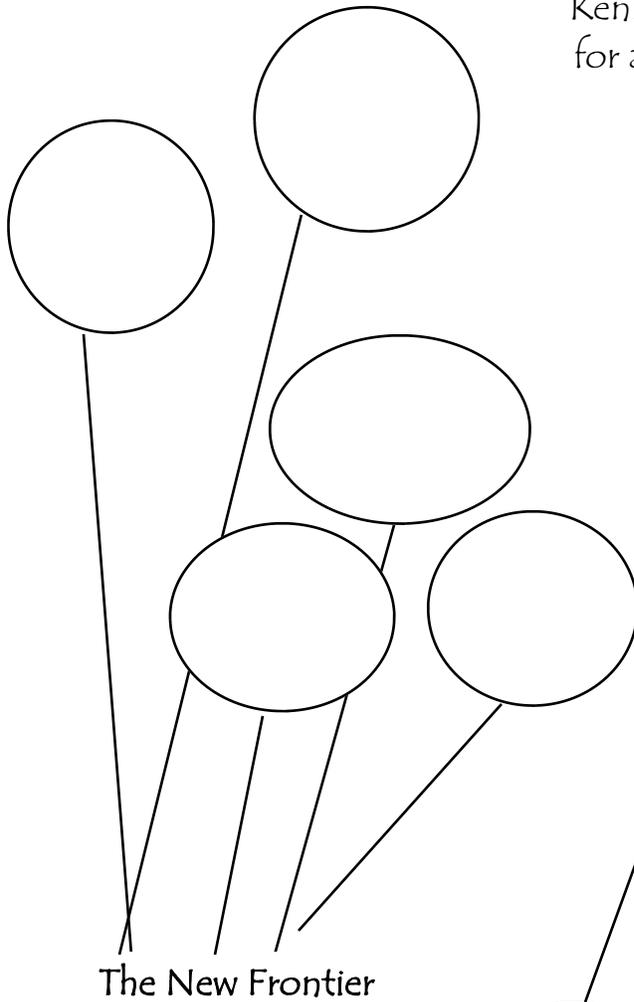
Johnson urged Congress to pass the landmark Civil Rights Bill of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act. Medicare helped the elderly with medical expenses and Medicaid helped the poor get medical care. The Job Corps helped train high school dropouts for jobs. Operation Headstart helped prepare low-income children for kindergarten, and Upward Bound helped poor children go to college. The Equal Opportunity Act of 1964 outlawed job discrimination.



Lyndon Baines Johnson  
National Archives

# The New Frontier and the Great Society

Kennedy and Johnson each had dreams for a better America. What were they?  
Fill in the balloons.

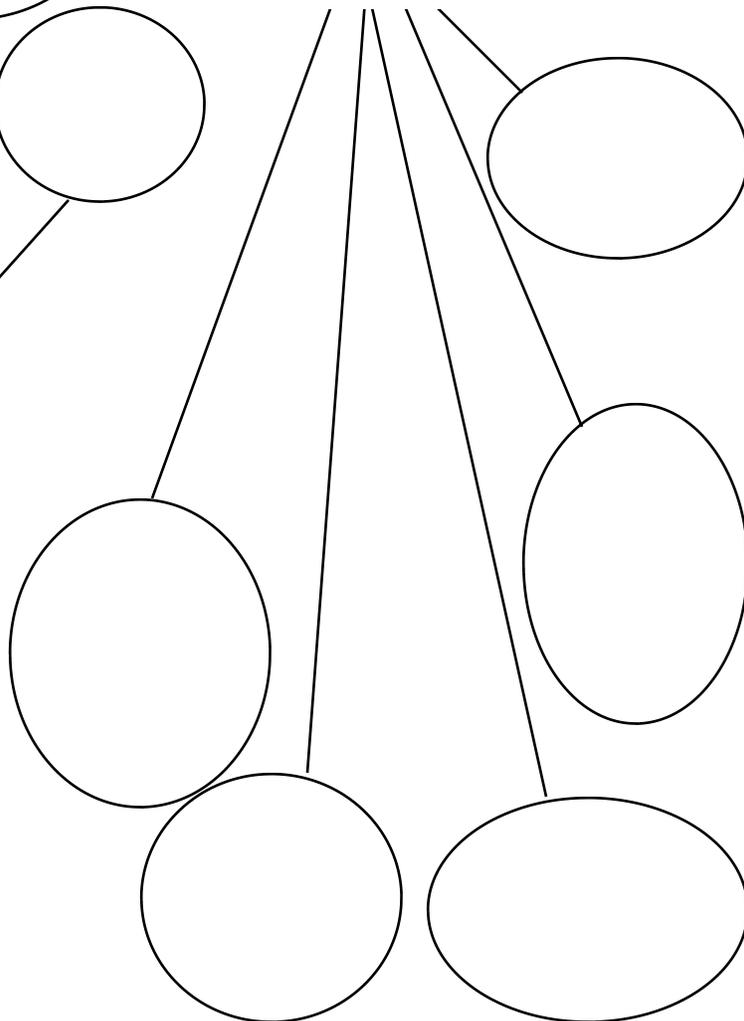


National Archives

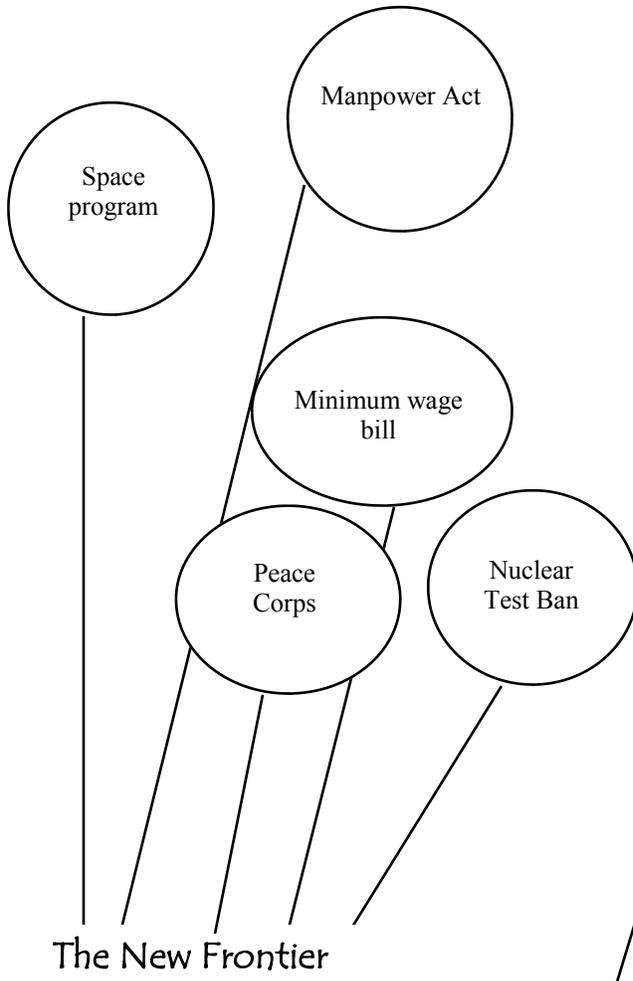


National Archives

The Great Society



Kennedy and Johnson Each Had Their Own Dreams for a Better America. What were they? Fill in the balloons.



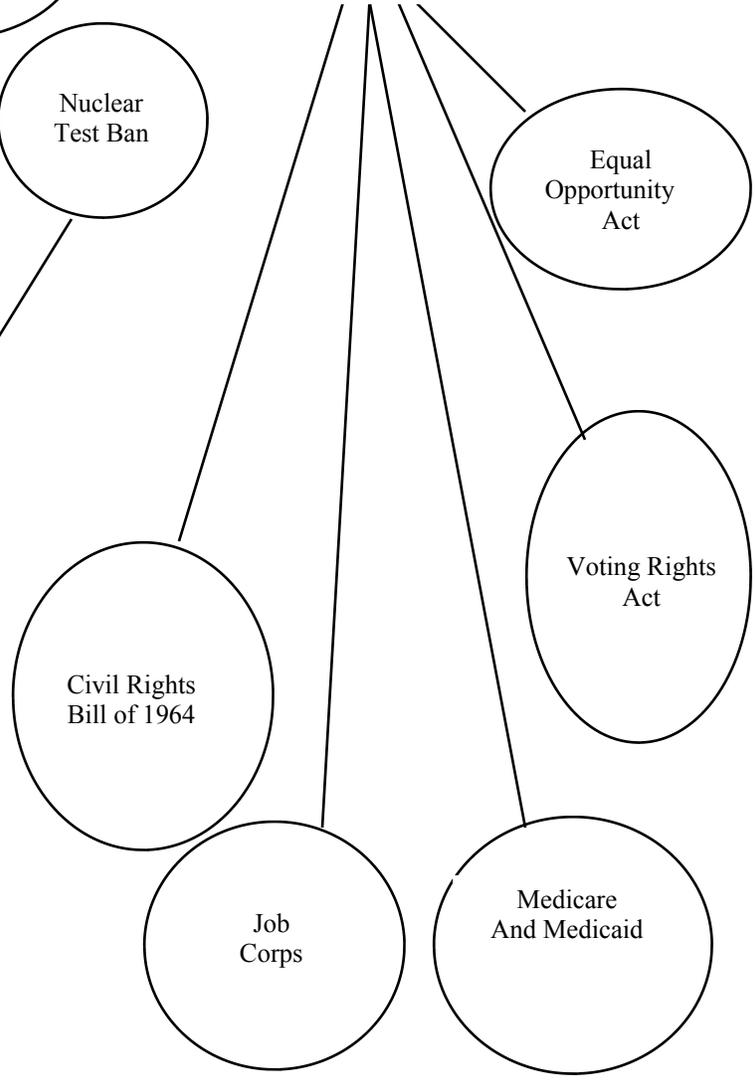
National Archives

Suggested Responses



National Archives

The Great Society



# In Praise of a Fallen President

*A piece of each of us died at that moment....He gave us of his love that we, too, in turn, might give. He gave that we might give of ourselves, that we might give to one another until there would be no room, no room at all, for the bigotry, the hatred, prejudice, and the arrogance which converged in that moment of horror to strike him down.*

Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield

*If we really love this country, if we truly love justice and mercy, if we fervently want to make this Nation better for those who are to follow us, we can at least abjure\* the hatred that consumes people, the false accusations that divide us, and the bitterness that begets violence.*

*Our nation is bereaved. The whole world is poorer because of his loss.*

Chief Justice Earl Warren

Abjure—to reject

Bereaved—deprived; made destitute

Begets—leads to, causes

*...(He) possessed all the qualities of greatness. He had deep faith, complete confidence, human sympathy, and broad vision which recognized the true values of freedom, equality, and the brotherhood which have always been the marks of American political dreams.*

*While this is an occasion of deep sorrow, it should be also one of dedication. We must have the determination to unite and carry on the spirit of John Fitzgerald Kennedy for a strengthened America and a future world of peace.*

Speaker of the House  
John McCormack

*John F. Kennedy... has fought the good fight for the God-given rights of his fellow man and for a world where peace and freedom shall prevail.*

*He has fulfilled unto death a privilege he made on the day of his inauguration--a privilege in the form of a pledge--I shall not shrink from my responsibilities.*

*Far more would he have accomplished for America and the world if it were not for his assassination here in the land that he loved and for which he dedicated and gave his life.*

Richard Cardinal Cushing

# My Journal

John F. Kennedy once said: "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."  
What can YOU do for your country today?