

Lesson Plan

(ROLES PLAYED BY SENATOR TRUMAN)

Teacher Name: Mike Quigley  
Course: U.S. History

Grade level(s): Junior

Describe the classroom or homework activity to be performed (individual assignment, cooperative learning, cross curricular, technology based, using artifacts and/or primary sources, etc.)

- Using primary sources from the Harry Truman Library, the students will develop an understanding of some of the requests made of a United States Senator and how the senator and his staff handle these requests.
- The students will be divided into three groups. Each group will be given a set of letters between Senator Truman and various constituents and political figures. They are all asking for Senator Truman's assistance with an issue.
- The students will read the letters and debate whether Mr. Truman's actions were correct. Each group will then report on their letters and Mr. Truman's actions.

Rationale (why are you doing this?)

- To develop the student's ability to read and analyze primary sources
- To demonstrate some of the requests made to a United States Senator and what they do about these requests

Required time frame: One and a half class periods

Where in the teacher conference did you get the idea for this activity or assignment (speaker, document, photograph, activity, audio recording, other)?

- Looking at some documents on line, reading The Pickwick Papers, discussing Mr. Truman's alleged anti-Semitism and how World War One changed his views

Lesson objectives - the student will:

- Demonstrate the ability to analyze primary sources
- Evaluate the performance of Mr. Truman regarding constituent and

party officials request

- Develop critical reading, thinking, and writing skills

District, state, or national performance and knowledge standards/goals/skills met (be specific when referencing):  
(NOTE: Bishop Hendricken is a parochial high school and is not required to follow said standards. However, in looking at our curriculum, this lesson would

- Read and analyze primary sources
- Read, think, and write critical
- Critique historical figures performance
- Understand the concept of realpolitik

Secondary materials (book, article, video documentary, etc.) needed - cite title and other detailed information:

- PBS video on Mr. Truman
- Newspaper article regarding Mr. Truman's anti-Semitic writings
- Pickwick Paper transcription

Primary sources (document, photograph, artifact, diary or letter, audio or visual recording, etc.) needed - cite detailed information:

- March 4, 1935            Harry Truman and James Farley letters
- March 14, 1935        Julien Friant to Harry Truman
- June 30, 1937            Harry Truman and Tom Pendergast letters
- January 5, 1939, May 4, 1939        Samuel Honaker and Harry Truman letters

Fully describe the activity or assignment in detail. What will both you and the students do?

- Before doing this, the students would have watched part of the PBS Truman video and I would have discussed his role in the Pendergast machine and as a senator
- Divide the students into three groups.
- Group 1 would get the letters between Mr. Truman and James Farley and Julien Friant. They will read them, discuss what patronage is and how it is used by politicians and debate Mr. Truman's actions
- Group 2 would get the letters between Mr. Truman and Tom Pendergast as well as the Pickwick papers reading. They will read the letters, discuss Mr. Truman's role with Pendergast, how that would impact his decisions and

debate his actions

- Group 3 would get the letters between Mr. Truman and Samuel Honaker and the reading about Mr. Truman's anti-Semitism. They will discuss and debate Mr. Truman's actions on this constituent request.
- I would go from group to group providing some background and asking them additional questions such as, "Did Mr. Truman owe Tom Pendergast? Might that impact his decision?" "Would the rise of Nazism influence his actions regarding the rabbi for a congregation in Missouri?"

Each group will report to the entire class and discussion would follow

Assessment: fully explain your assessment method in detail or create and attach your scoring guide:

- As a homework assignment, each student would write a letter to Senator Truman with a request similar to the one that that group performed.
- These letters would be written in the same time period
- They will be graded on a scale of 1-10 based upon the written expression of each student.