

# Andrew Jackson Lesson Plan

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## Summary

In this lesson, students will learn about Andrew Jackson, the seventh president of the United States. They will explore his early life on the frontier, his rise as a military hero, his fiery political career, and his controversial policies such as the Indian Removal Act. The lesson will also cover Jackson's role in expanding presidential powers, his appearance on the \$20 bill, and the divided opinions about his legacy.

Full episode link: <https://www.youtube.com/live/76TB8dIT4R0?si=u9kJWUKsls1iumsR>

## Objective

Students will be able to describe Andrew Jackson's early life, political and military career, lasting policies, controversies, and legacy. They will analyze how his actions shaped the presidency and American history, and evaluate the ongoing debates surrounding his place on U.S. currency.

## Standards

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2: Determine the central ideas of a primary or secondary source.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.9: Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- C3.D2.His.5.9-12: Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people's perspectives.
- NGSS.HS-LS2-8: Evaluate evidence for the role of group behavior on individual and species' chances to survive and reproduce (applied here to social and political groups).

## Materials

- Copies of the 9 Fun Facts: Andrew Jackson
- Whiteboard or chalkboard for group notes
- Projector or printed images of U.S. currency (optional)
- Access to historical documents on Indian Removal, veto messages, or Jackson's speeches (optional)

## Introduction

Begin with a discussion about U.S. presidents who appear on currency. Ask students why they think certain figures are honored this way. Introduce Andrew Jackson as a president whose legacy is both celebrated and condemned. Highlight that he remains a divisive figure in history, making him an important case study for critical thinking.

## Activity

1. Provide students with the 9 Fun Facts about Andrew Jackson.
2. Divide the class into small groups, assigning each group one or two Fun Facts to analyze in detail.
3. Have groups create a short presentation connecting their assigned fact to Jackson's broader impact on the presidency and the nation.
4. As a class, discuss the reasons Jackson was placed on the \$20 bill and the current debate about replacing him with Harriet Tubman.
5. Conclude with a writing exercise where students reflect on whether Jackson's legacy is more positive or negative and why.

## Assessment

- Participation in group discussion and presentations
- Completion of worksheet with short-answer questions
- Written reflection evaluating Jackson's legacy

## Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)
Content Understanding	Demonstrates thorough knowledge of Jackson's life, policies, and legacy	Shows good understanding with minor gaps	Basic recall with limited analysis	Minimal understanding
Discussion Participation	Actively contributes with insightful points	Participates with relevant comments	Rarely contributes	Does not participate
Worksheet Completion	All sections complete with detailed answers from the Fun Facts	Most sections complete with accurate answers from the Fun Facts	Some sections incomplete or vague	Few or no answers provided
Reflection & Analysis	Clear, well-supported evaluation of Jackson's legacy	Reasonable evaluation with some support	Limited evaluation, weak support	No evaluation or off-topic

## 9 Fun Facts: Andrew Jackson

### 1. **Andrew Jackson was the seventh president of the United States.**

He served from 1829 to 1837 and is remembered as a founder of the Democratic Party. His presidency became known for “Jacksonian democracy,” a movement that expanded political power for ordinary white men.

Source: <https://millercenter.org/president/jackson/life-in-brief>

### 2. **Jackson grew up on the American frontier.** Born in 1767 in the Waxhaws, a border region between North and South Carolina, he was orphaned by age 14 and raised in a rough backcountry environment that shaped his tough persona.

Source: <https://www.loc.gov/collections/andrew-jackson-papers/articles-and-essays/andrew-jackson-timeline-1767-1845/family-life-the-law-business-and-politics-1767-1811>

### 3. **He was not a famous writer, but his letters and speeches stirred controversy.** Unlike Jefferson or Madison, Jackson did not leave behind scholarly works. His influence came through proclamations, fiery correspondence, and blunt veto messages.

Source: <https://guides.loc.gov/andrew-jackson/digital-collections>

### 4. **Before the presidency, Jackson held several political roles in Tennessee.** He served as a U.S. Representative, Senator, and judge. His reputation for plain speech and loyalty to the “common man” built his political base.

Source: <https://dos.fl.gov/florida-facts/florida-history/florida-governors/andrew-jackson>

### 5. **Jackson rose to national fame as a military hero.** He earned the nickname “Old Hickory” for his toughness. His victory at the Battle of New Orleans in 1815 during the War of 1812 made him a household name.

Source: <https://www.history.com/topics/us-presidents/andrew-jackson>

**6. Jackson reshaped the presidency with bold policies.** He expanded the use of the veto, dismantled the Second Bank of the United States, and introduced the spoils system, which gave government jobs to loyal supporters.

Source: <https://www.federalreservehistory.org/essays/second-bank-of-the-us>

**7. His presidency was filled with controversy.** The Indian Removal Act of 1830 forced Native American tribes from their lands, leading to the Trail of Tears. He also defended slavery and engaged in personal duels.

Source: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1830-1860/indian-treaties>

**8. Jackson's face has been on the \$20 bill since 1928.** He replaced Grover Cleveland as part of a Treasury redesign honoring presidents and American icons. His place on the bill has been debated in recent years.

Source: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2015/03/06/why-is-andrew-jackson-on-the-20-bill-the-answer-may-be-lost-to-history>

**9. Today, Jackson's legacy divides opinion.** Some historians view him as a defender of democracy and ordinary citizens, while others condemn his role in Native American removal and support for slavery.

Source: <https://millercenter.org/president/jackson/impact-and-legacy>

## Worksheet

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Review

1. Andrew Jackson was the \_\_\_\_ president of the United States.
2. Where did Jackson grow up and what happened to him by age 14?

### Discussion

3. What nickname did Jackson earn for his toughness and military victories?
4. According to the Fun Facts, what did Jackson expand in his role as president?

### Data Analysis

5. What law did Jackson sign in 1830 that forced Native American tribes from their lands?

### Reflection

6. What year did Jackson first appear on the \$20 bill, and who did he replace?