Social Studies

American Political Figures – 3-in-3 Mini-Research Project

Hello, political scientists!

Your task, should you choose to accept it (actually, forget I said that: you have no choice!), is to become an expert on an American political figure who has had an impact on this year's U.S. election cycle, and then to share your knowledge with the class.

Your research should delve into the following areas:

1. Who is this person (or what is this movement)? What position do/did they hold in government? What party do/did they represent?

2. What contribution(s) have they made to American politics or history? What are they best known for? What did they stand for most passionately?

3. What have they done that is considered controversial?

4. How has their past affected their effectiveness as a politician? Did their place of birth have an effect on their political beliefs? What was they education? What was their job before entering into politics? How, specifically, did this help shape their political career?

5. What is their oratory (speaking) style? How would you describe it? What makes them distinctive (stand out)? You will need to find and watch some video footage in order to explore this. Think about how observed the body language and use of language by the journalists on the NewsHour.

6. How are they or their legacy important to the current political cycle? What connections can you make between your figure and their ideas, ideals, policy decisions, and advocacy to the battle for the House and Senate?

You will give a short presentation to share your findings. This should be **no longer than three minute**s. You presentation needs to contain **three** slides presented in Powerpoint. These images should help in our understanding of this person or movement. These images can be pictures, charts, tables, drawings – whatever you think would be most effective.

This is a play on the "Ignite Talks" presentation style. Visit **http://www.ignitetalks.io/** to see examples and to gain inspiration.

Think about what we have explored so far in depth and complexity: big ideas, details, and rules, etc. How can you apply that thinking to this project?

You will be assessed on your content and on your oral language skills – see assessment sheet and oral language rubric for details.

CHECKLIST

Research

- ☐ Political party
- ☐ Place of birth
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Family (if relevant to an understanding of their political impact)
- ☐ Career before entering politics
- ☐ Geographic area(s) represented while in government
- ☐ Important policy decisions and advocacy
- ☐ Contributions to American history
- ☐ Controversial aspects of legacy
- ☐ Connections to current election cycle – directly or indirectly; explicit and/or implicit

Preparing for Presentation

- ☐ Write draft of script – focusing on depth and complexity
- ☐ Incorporate vocabulary specific to this content area (judiciary, incumbent, etc.)
- ☐ Find or create three images that will help heighten understanding of material
- ☐ Read draft aloud and listen for errors and areas that can be strengthened
- ☐ Write final draft of script
- ☐ Create Powerpoint with images
- ☐ Save Powerpoint onto USB stick
- ☐ Practice delivering presentation
- ☐ Make adjustments to script and images
- ☐ Practice delivering presentation
  Check for:
  - volume
  - eye contact
  - clarity
  - confidence
- ☐ Practice delivering presentation
- ☐ Make last adjustments to script (think about clarity and focus)
- ☐ Make sure USB stick works
- ☐ Practice delivering presentation
- ☐ Do something nice for yourself