

Penguin Young Readers Group

# Making Curriculum Connections



Core Curriculum Lesson Plans for the

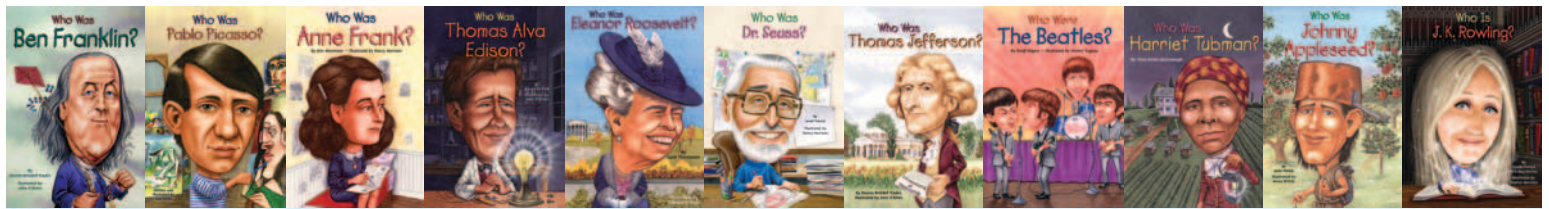
# Who Was...? series

All  
activities meet  
**Common Core**  
**State Standards**  
for grades  
3-6



Inspire • Engage • Educate





## Dear Educator,

Welcome to the *Who Was...?* Core Curriculum Lesson Plan brochure. Use the activities throughout this guide whether you are teaching a specific historical event, studying a famous figure, or covering a unit of popular biography subjects. Each group of lessons comes complete with its own set of activities, and the footnote explains how these activities align with the Common Core State Standards.

The *Who Was...?* biography series grows in popularity every year and has gained both recognition and respect in the education marketplace from your colleagues and peers. We hope you'll enjoy learning from the research-based books as much as we did assembling this tool for you to use. Additionally, we invite you to access the Who Was website at [whowasbookseries.com](http://whowasbookseries.com). The website features a complete title listing, additional downloadables, and more. Incorporate the Who Was site in your Smart Board sessions for an interactive classroom experience.

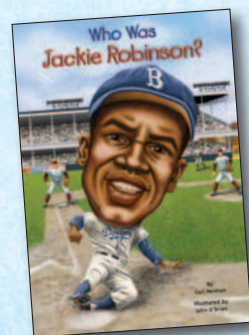
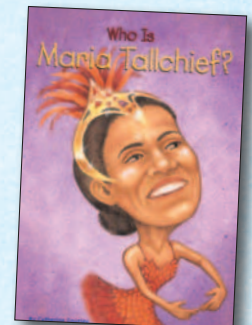
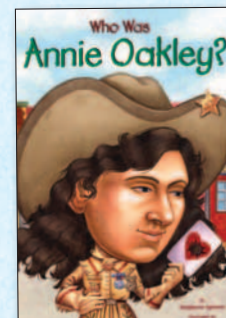
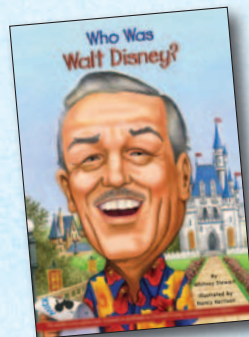
Thanks for your continued support of our books and our brand,

## Penguin School & Library Marketing

Content created by Julia Dweck, a gifted specialist for children in grades K–5 in a public school setting.

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# I. Leaders

**Teachers:** Read one of the *Who Was...?* books about a famous leader (examples: Martin Luther King Jr., Queen Elizabeth, George Washington) or assign a specific book to the class for independent reading. Once you have read the book and/or have a general understanding of the person's life, try the following activities:

**Comic Timeline (Technology):** Students will be creating a timeline of each leader's life in the form of a comic strip. Pull examples of comic strips from magazines, journals, and newspapers. Discuss the limitations of space and text and how the pictures either reiterate the words or expand upon them. Allow students to use these as a model when they are drawing and writing their own.

## Ask students to:

- o Refer to the timeline of their *Who Was...?* leader's life and the timeline of the world (found in the back of each *Who Was...?* biography)
- o Create a comic strip\* documenting the most important moments or events in their *Who Was...?* leader's life. Here are some questions to prompt your class:
  - What is the layout of your comic strip? (Will it go across or down the page?) How would this influence your timeline?
  - What are some of the events you should include? What should be left out?
  - What should be drawn, and what should be written?
  - Will the drawing be in black-and-white or color, and why?

\* This comic strip can be created online using Smart boards, Toondoo, or MakeBeliefsComix or as a hard copy using drawing paper, pencils, and markers. ([www.makebeliefscomix.com](http://www.makebeliefscomix.com))

Common Core State Standards (Technology): RI.4.7., RI.5.7., RI.6.7.

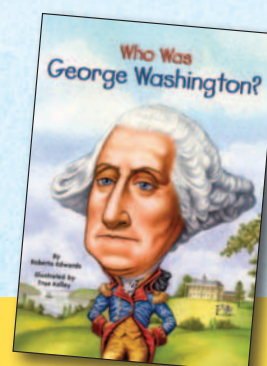
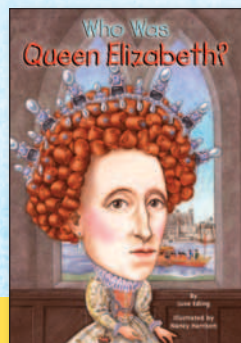
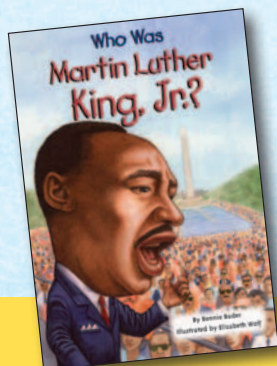
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**Who's Who Awards (Writing and Speaking):** Students will be working collaboratively in groups to present an award show for the most notable *Who Was...?* leaders. Engage the students in conversation about award shows that they watch on television, and use these shows as a model for their own.

## Ask students to:

- o Brainstorm ideas for different appropriate awards for each leader (one award might be The Leader Who Most Changed the World)
- o Play the parts of hosts and leaders:
  - Assign roles to students, or have them nominate certain classmates for specific roles
- o Create the script for the award show, including welcoming remarks, acceptance speeches, and closing remarks. Encourage the students to include the leaders' recognizable quotes when appropriate
- o Deliver the awards and the speeches, explaining why each leader is the most deserving: Cite specific events or actions from his or her life
- o Perform for another class or group, setting a "stage"
- o Integrate as much technology as possible to create an authentic award show:
  - Try GarageBand for music and sound effects
  - Film parts of the show using available handheld recorders
  - Post online feedback to one another using Wallwisher: Post two things they learned about a leader that they didn't know before the show ([www.wallwisher.com](http://www.wallwisher.com))

Common Core State Standards (Writing and Speaking): SL.4.1., SL.5.1., SL.6.1., SL.4.4., SL.5.4., SL.6.4., L.4.5., L.5.5., L.6.5.





## II. Explorers

**Teachers:** Read one of the *Who Was...?* books about a famous explorer (examples: Amelia Earhart, Neil Armstrong, Marco Polo, Ferdinand Magellan) or assign a specific book to the class for independent reading. Once you have read the book and/or have a general understanding of the person's life, try the following activities:

**Blaze a New Trail (Writing):** Students will be writing a narrative based on an actual event related to their *Who Was...?* explorer. Review the components of a narrative with the students, including tense, point of view, and dialogue, and make sure they understand how it differs from other writing styles.

**Ask students to:**

- o Write a narrative based on an actual event related to their *Who Was...?* explorer
- o Create three different possible endings that all veer from the actual outcome of the historical event
  - The narrative should be written in second-person point of view, so the reader can take on the role of the *Who Was...?* explorer
- o Each ending choice should be a fictional ending, resulting in a uniquely different plot and outcome.
  - While planning the writing process, use online mind-mapping tools such as [www.bubbl.us](http://www.bubbl.us) or [www.mywebspiration.com](http://www.mywebspiration.com) to chart out alternate endings and their outcomes
  - To present your narrative, use a presentation tool such as Keynote for Mac or PowerPoint from Microsoft Office

Example: You are Amelia Earhart and decide to fly around the world. In 1937, you fly to Hawaii to begin the adventure. You lose control of the plane and it has to be sent back for repairs. Do you:

- A. Go home and realize that this is not the right time to make a flight of this magnitude.
- B. Get back on the same plane, but decide to try and break the airspeed record instead of flying around the world.
- C. Call in Charles Lindbergh to help you inspect the plane before beginning the next leg of your journey.

Common Core State Standards (Writing): W.4.3., W.5.3., W.6.3., W.4.6., W.5.6., W.6.6.

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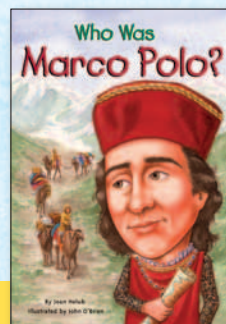
**Explorer Board Games (Research and Hands-on Project):** Students will be creating board games based on facts from their biography. Ask students to share their favorite board game, and try to get students to explain why it is their favorite/most effective. Take notes as a group on the important qualities of an effective (fun and engaging) board game.

**Ask students to:**

- o Record well- and little-known facts about their *Who Was...?* explorers
- o Create either an online\* or physical board game about these facts, integrating at least the following:
  - Researched facts based on the *Who Was...?* explorer books, related texts, and related digital sources
  - Theme-based game pieces
  - Trivia cards
  - Rules and directions (including number of people allowed to play, whether the game is scored by teams or individuals)

\*Scratch is an online program that allows students to create their own interactive stories, animations, games, music, and art and share their creations on the web.

Common Core State Standards (Research and Hands-on Project): W.4.6., W.5.6., W.6.6., W.4.7., W.5.7., W.6.7.





### III. Women

**Teachers:** Read one of the *Who Was...?* books about a famous woman (examples: Anne Frank, Amelia Earhart, Sacagawea, Helen Keller, Jane Goodall) or assign a specific book to the class for independent reading. Once you have read the book and/or have a general understanding of the person's life, try the following activities:

**How Am I Like...? (Writing):** Students will be writing paragraphs based on a prompt you provide. Look at examples of the prompts in books and newspapers to model how the students should adopt the writing style.

**Ask students to:**

- o Work in groups to analyze and determine the traits of a *Who Was...?* woman or women with a teacher-created cloze:
  - Example: If I were Queen Elizabeth, I would like to \_\_\_\_\_. I would be friends with \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

Common Core State Standards (Writing): SL.4.1., SL.5.1., SL.6.1.

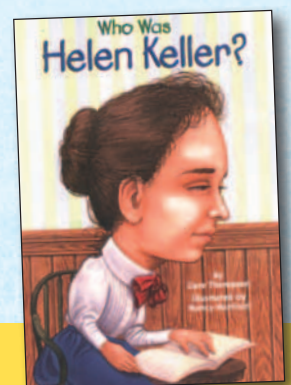
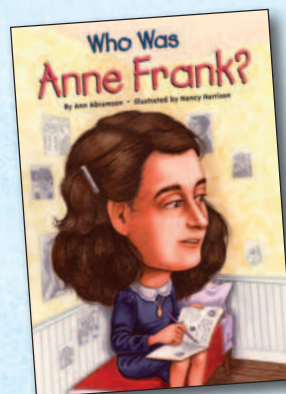
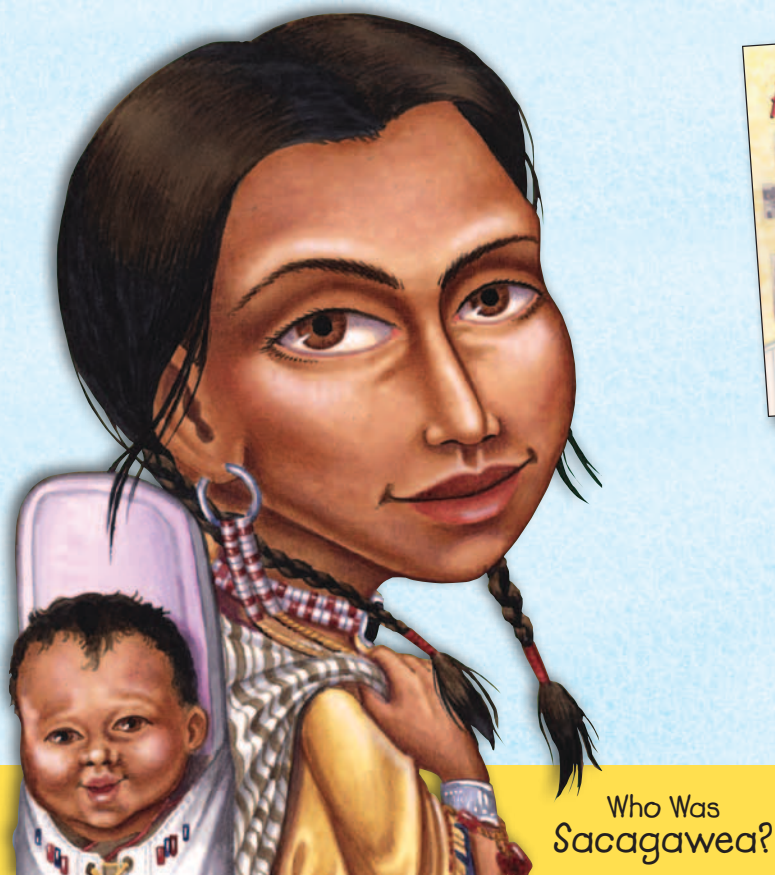
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***Who Was...? Connections (Writing, Research, and Music):*** Students will be comparing and contrasting to make sure they understand the concept. Model a compare/contrast list and keep it visible during this writing assignment so the students can refer to it.

**Ask students to:**

- o Write down key details about their *Who Was...?* woman that they learned in the biographies
- o Research their *Who Was...?* woman on the Internet, and in available book sources
- o Use key details about their *Who Was...?* women and compare and contrast those details with related information from other texts and digital sources
- o Analyze and determine who is most like their *Who Was...?* woman today and why
- o Create a poem or song about the two individuals and how they relate
  - Encourage them to make connections with a famous person today, or someone they know personally
- o Share this information as a digital slideshow presentation ([www.animoto.com](http://www.animoto.com)) and discuss it with their peers

Common Core State Standards (Writing, Research, and Music): W.4.1., W.5.1., W.6.1.





## IV. African Americans

**Teachers:** Read one of the *Who Was...?* books about a famous African American (examples: Barack Obama, Rosa Parks, Jackie Robinson, Harriet Tubman) or assign a specific book to the class for independent reading. Once you have read the book and/or have a general understanding of the person's life, try the following activities:

**News Reporter (Writing):** Students will be referring to specific historical events in their *Who Was...?* African American's life. Talk about what defines an event. Talk collectively about certain school events or events in your specific community, so that the students understand the components of an event.

### Ask students to:

- Determine a specific historical event to recreate in your own words:
  - Determine the facts
  - Create a fictional perspective
- Imagine what it would have been like if they had been at an event related to their *Who Was...?* African American
- Offer a secondhand account of a related historical event:
  - For example: You were in the audience when Martin Luther King Jr. gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech. Who were you? How were you feeling based on your background?
- Compare and contrast different secondhand accounts from their classmates with the factual summary of this same event
- Use Keynote on a Mac or PowerPoint from Microsoft Office to create a presentation and share it with the entire class

Common Core State Standards (Writing): RI.4.6., RI.5.6., RI.6.6., W.4.5., W.5.5., W.6.5., L.5.2., L.4.2., L.6.2.

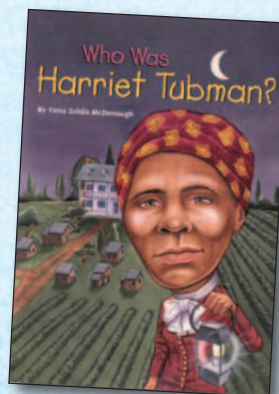
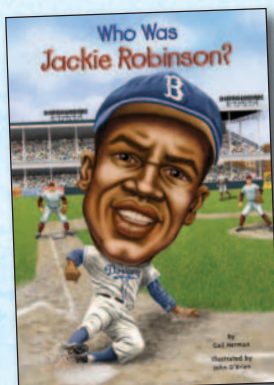
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**Who's the Real Historical Figure? (Performance):** The students will be performing a game show. Ask them to talk about what they know about game shows, establishing their background knowledge. Build upon this knowledge with a few new facts about the setup and performance aspects of it.

### Ask students to:

- Choose a *Who Was...?* African American and research information about his or her childhood, adolescence, adulthood and notable quotes using the *Who Was...?* biography and related digital sources
- Set up a game show!
  - Game Show Setup: Four students claim to be the real \_\_\_\_\_, but only one is telling the truth. The students playing the impostors must create false, but plausible, answers based on research from their historical figure's time. For example, Rosa Parks would not be discussing her Skype with Harriet Tubman for two reasons: A.) The technology was not invented yet and B.) They lived in two separate time periods. One student acts as the game-show host as peers question the panelists to figure out who is the real historical figure.

Common Core State Standards (Performance): W.4.4., W.5.4., W.6.4., SL.4.1., SL.5.1., SL.6.1.



Who Is  
Barack Obama?



## V. Presidents

**Teachers:** Read one of the *Who Was...?* books about a famous president (examples: Barack Obama, Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, John F. Kennedy, Franklin Roosevelt, Ronald Reagan) or assign a specific book to the class for independent reading. Once you have read the book and/or have a general understanding of the person's life, try the following activities:

**Who Was Presidential Election (Writing, Technology, and Performance):** Students will be writing speeches for their *Who Was...?* president. Review a few recent speeches from presidents, CEOs, and community leaders to establish the important components of an effective speech. Keep these components visible (examples: engages the audience, gives real examples, addresses an issue, makes jokes, etc.) so that students can use them when drafting their own speech.

### Ask students to:

- o Become the persona of their *Who Was...?* President
- o Write a speech based on key details and the main idea of the text of the book
  - Include references to key concerns and beliefs of their *Who Was...?* president
- o Present their speech to their peers in a *Who Was...?* presidential election
  - Alternative: Present a digital version of the speech using Blabberize. Students download an image of their *Who Was...?* president from Google or a related website and upload it into Blabberize ([www.blabberize.com](http://www.blabberize.com)), where they can animate it. Students record their voices as the voice of their *Who Was...?* presidents, reading their speech. Students' voices will synchronize with the movement of the Blabberized version of the *Who Was...?* president's mouth as he speaks
- o Classmates vote for the most powerful speech based on their teacher's preset criteria

Common Core State Standards (Writing, Technology, and Performances): RI.4.10., RI.5.10., RI.6.10., SL.4.4., SL.5.4., SL.6.4.

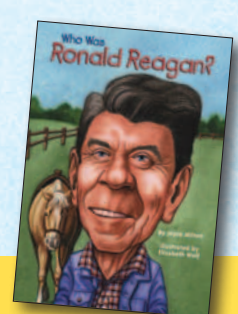
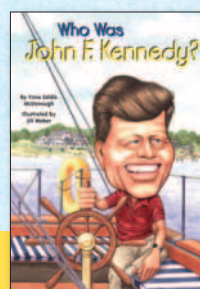
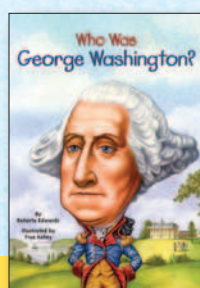
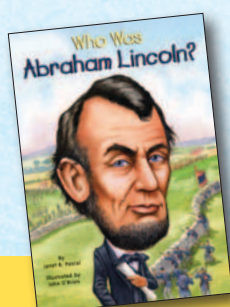
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**Presidential Commentator (Writing, Technology, and Performances):** After the speeches are delivered, students will be analyzing the speeches for one another in groups, highlighting the main argument, key ideas, and details throughout the speech. Before beginning this exercise, review a news, sports, or other commentator that the students might know and understand. Talk about what a commentator does and how commentators help their audiences better understand the story, game, or facts.

### Ask students to:

- o Work collaboratively in groups to analyze the speeches
- o Identify the main argument, key ideas, and details of the speech and make notes on each, highlighting opinions as well
- o Create commentary based on the notes and insert your opinions and additional insights when appropriate
- o Record your commentary or perform the commentary directly after the speech is delivered.
  - Alternative: Students work collaboratively to create a presentation in which they commentate a famous *Who Was...?* presidential address, using VoiceThread. Students may upload video (if one is available) or upload still digital images from the Internet on related websites. Students analyze the speech for key details and the main idea. VoiceThread is a collaborative multimedia slide show that contains images, documents, and videos and allows students to commentate slides using voice, text, audio files, or video (via a webcam). ([www.voicethread.com/about/features](http://www.voicethread.com/about/features))

Common Core State Standards (Writing, Technology, and Performances): RI.4.2., RI.5.2., RI.6.2., W.4.1., W.5.1., W.6.1.





## VI. Heroes of the American Revolution

**Teachers:** Read one of the *Who Was...?* books about a famous Revolutionary War hero (examples: George Washington, Ben Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Paul Revere) or assign a specific book to the class for independent reading. Once you have read the book and/or have a general understanding of the person's life, try the following activities:

**Revolutionary War Avatar (Technology):** Students will be creating an avatar of their *Who Was...?* Revolutionary War hero. Talk about what avatars are and what they have come to mean in today's digitally-focused society. Ask the students if they have used avatars before, whether online (games) or in the classroom (assignments). Talk about the movie *Avatar* and how popular it was in our country. Make sure students understand the meaning of "avatar."

**Ask students to:**

- o Pair up and select a *Who Was...?* Heroes of the American Revolution biography to read
- o Read the biography together, and use the reference biographies in the back of the book to learn more about the Revolutionary War hero from a different source
- o Collaborate with your partner using an online sharing document (Google Docs, for example) to share notes about each source and facts learned about the particular historical figure
- o Create a digital avatar of the historical figure using Voki ([www.voki.com](http://www.voki.com)). Animate the avatar and record the information, so that the avatar is speaking his/her own words

Common Core State Standards (Technology): RI.4.9., RI.5.9., RI.6.9., SL.4.5., SL.5.5., SL.6.5.

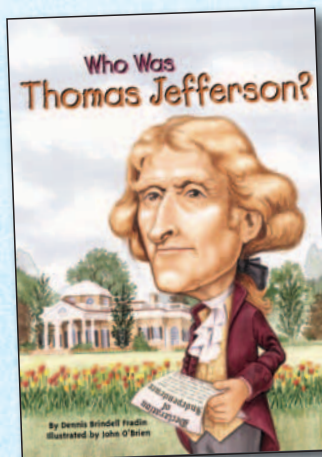
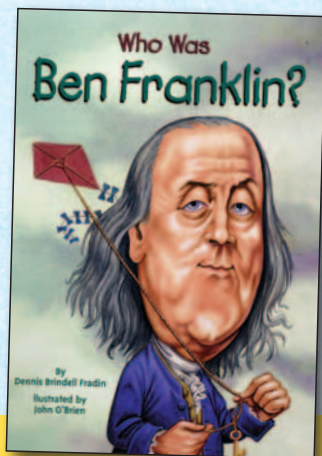
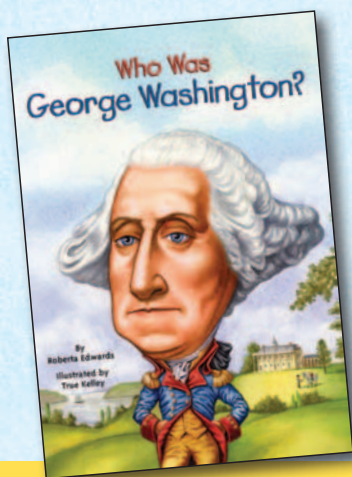
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**American Revolution Slide Show (Writing and Research):** Students will be looking at a variety of sources and reviewing the reliability of each source. Hold a discussion about the word "reliable"—what does it mean to be reliable for a person and for a book or website? Encourage students to bring in clips of both reliable and unreliable sources. Keep these examples visible during the project.

**Ask students to:**

- o Work in pairs or small groups to compare a *Who Was...?* biography of an American Revolution hero with related digital resources online about the same person
- o Here are some questions to prompt the students:
  - What type of source is found online?
  - Is it a reliable or unreliable source? How can you tell?
  - How do the points of view compare based on the different sources and authors? Provide evidence from the text to support the particular points of view about the character or life of the *Who Was...?* hero.
- o Analyze and summarize their findings of the combined sources and present them as a multimedia slide show for the class (Mixbook or Keynote for Mac or PowerPoint from Microsoft Office ([www.mixbook.com](http://www.mixbook.com)))

Common Core State Standards (Writing and Research): RI.4.8., RI.5.8., RI.6.8., W.4.6., W.5.6., W.6.6., W.4.7., W.5.7., W.6.7.





## VII. Writers

**Teachers:** Read one of the *Who Was...?* books about a famous writer (examples: Anne Frank, Roald Dahl, William Shakespeare, J. K. Rowling, Mark Twain, Dr. Seuss) or assign a specific book to the class for independent reading. Once you have read the book and/or have a general understanding of the person's life, try the following activities:

**Whose News (Writing):** Students will be creating newspaper articles—both news stories and op-eds. Talk about the two differing forms of “reporting.” Make sure students understand the purpose of both forms and can identify both. If possible, talk about the way in which even news stories can demonstrate opinions and how that affects how we learn about the world.

### Ask students to:

- o Work with a partner to create two newspaper articles about their *Who Was...?* writer, based on an event from their *Who Was...?* biography: one article should be factual and one article will be opinion
- o “Publish” the articles on a class blog or in a class newsletter. (The articles can be published individually in Microsoft Publisher or on a Mac using pages from iWork, if available.)
- o As a class, discuss how different the events are perceived when told from opinion vs. fact

Common Core State Standards (Writing): RI.4.6., RI.5.6., RI.6.6., W.4.5., W.5.5., W.6.5., L.5.2., L.4.2., L.6.2.

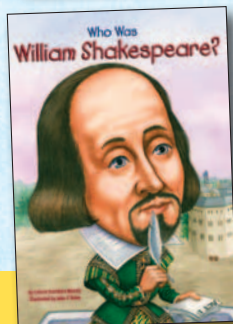
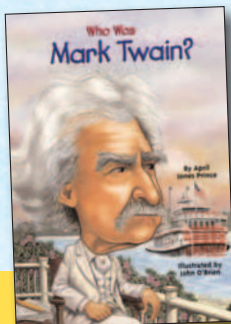
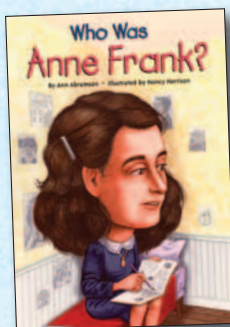
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**History-Twistery (Writing):** Help students use their imagination in this activity by playing “What if...?” as a class. For example, what if we could talk to Dr. Seuss? What questions would we ask him? What suggestions would we make for him? This warm-up exercise will help the students think outside the box and create an alternate ending for each writer's life.

### Ask students to:

- o Use inference skills to “twist” an important element of a historical event. Here are some examples:
  - What if famous *Who Was...?* writer Anne Frank had escaped the Holocaust and was able to write the prologue to her diary? What would she write?
- o Draft this alternate version of history as a narrative and include the consequences of the “twist”
- o Compare and contrast the actual event with the “History-Twistery” version, including the problem and solution and the cause and effect
- o If possible, publish a hard-copy version of the twisted story or a pop-up book version using ZooBurst ([www.zooburst.com](http://www.zooburst.com))

Common Core State Standards (Writing): W.4.3., W.5.3., W.6.3., L.5.2., L.4.2., L.6.2.



Who Was  
Dr. Seuss?



## VIII. Scientists

**Teachers:** Read one of the *Who Was...?* books about a famous scientist (examples: Albert Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Alva Edison, Charles Darwin) or assign a specific book to the class for independent reading. Once you have read the book and/or have a general understanding of the person's life, try the following activities:

**Scientist's Laboratory (Science Project):** Students will be experimenting with science! Include the science teacher in this particular project for a more "authentic" feel. Have the students seen science experiments demonstrated before? Is there a science fair you can attend or pictures you can look at? Encourage students to try their experiments at home with a parent or guardian present and prepare notes for their presentation to the class.

### Ask students to:

- o Research scientific principles explored by their *Who Was...?* scientist. Here are some questions:
  - What did you know about your famous scientist before reading the biography?
  - What do you know now?
  - What is he/she most remembered for?
- o Create an experiment to test the principles involved
- o Create a presentation for the class, with notes and a poster for students to reference during your demonstration
- o Lead the classmates in the demonstration, and classmates will record their observations and conclusions.

Common Core State Standards (Science Project): RI.4.7., RI.5.7., RI.6.7.

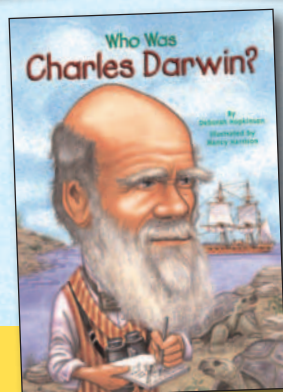
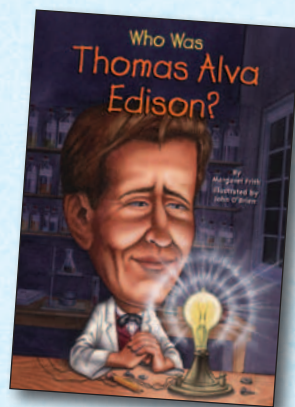
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**Science Infomercial (Science and Performance):** Students will be creating infomercials. Review the main criteria of an infomercial, and ask students if they have seen or heard infomercials on TV, online, or on the radio. What are some of the most memorable infomercials and why? Where does the word "infomercial" come from?

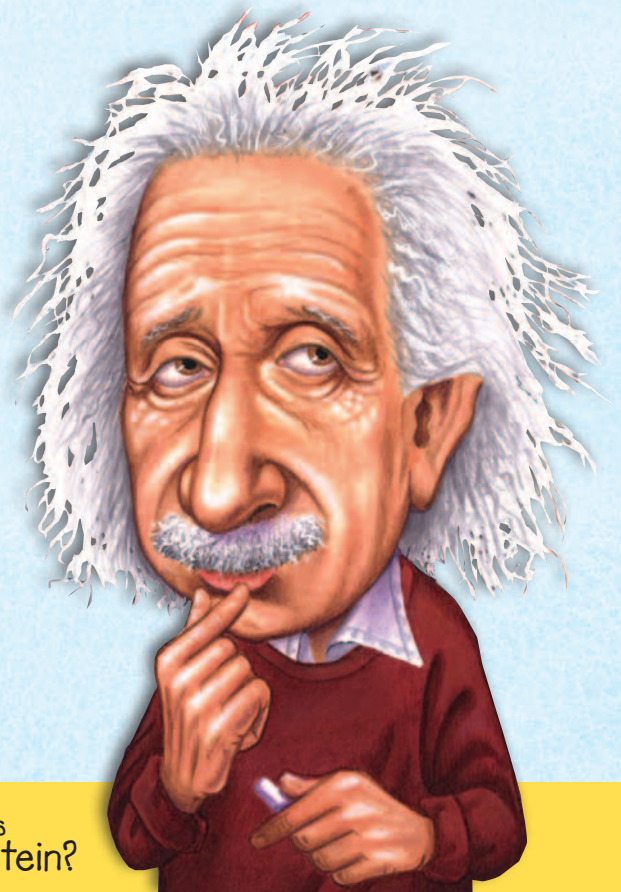
### Ask students to:

- o Improve upon a scientist's invention or create a whole new invention based on the same scientific principles
- o Write a persuasive script for an infomercial, trying to "sell" their invention to their classmates
- o If possible, use a recording device to film the infomercials, and review all of them collectively

Common Core State Standards (Science and Performance): SL.4.4., SL.5.4., SL.6.4.



Who Was  
Albert Einstein?





## IX. Artists

**Teachers:** Read one of the *Who Was...?* books about a famous artist (examples: Walt Disney, Claude Monet, Leonardo da Vinci, Jim Henson, Pablo Picasso) or assign a specific book to the class for independent reading. Once you have read the book and/or have a general understanding of the person's life, try the following activity:

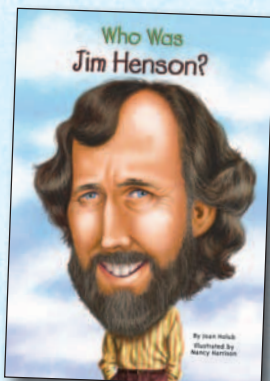
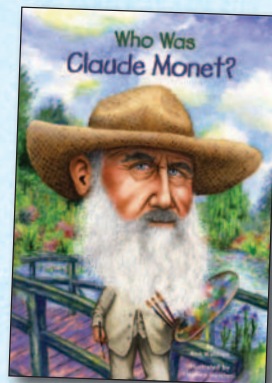
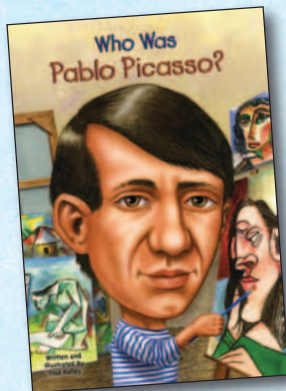
**Step into a Portrait (Art and Technology):** Students will be recreating the artists' work! Be sure to encourage students to talk about this project with their art teacher or include the art teacher in the project from the beginning. This exercise is a great opportunity for students to combine literature and the arts and improve upon both disciplines.

**Ask students to:**

- o Analyze the artistic work of a *Who Was...?* artist to get a sense of the artist's style and taste
- o Recreate a scene from a famous piece of art as a movie set, with a student or students stepping into the painting to pose as the subjects
  - Consider recreating the scene of a painting in terms of the style, tone, and mood of the painting
- o Write narratives that interpret the visual information of the painting as an imagined story or simply explain the style of the painting as well as its importance in the life of the artist
- o If possible, use green-screen technology to recreate the backdrop and a digital camera to record a still image of their recreated portrait. This digital image can be printed on printable canvas available in most office supply stores. Students can paint over the canvas print to make it appear like a real painting using oil or acrylic paints

**Bonus Activity:** Students compare and contrast the different artistic styles of *Who Was...?* artists using Tux Paint. Students can use the online painting tools to recreate the different styles of art relevant to their *Who Was...?* artist (e.g., Cubism, Abstract, Pop, etc.) ([www.tuxpaint.org](http://www.tuxpaint.org))

Common Core State Standards (Art and Technology): RI.4.7., RI.5.7., RI.6.7.



Who Was  
Walt Disney?



## X. Musicians

**Teachers:** Read one of the *Who Was...?* books about a famous musician (examples: *The Beatles*, *Elvis Presley*, *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*, *Louis Armstrong*) or assign a specific book to the class for independent reading. Once you have read the book and/or have a general understanding of the person's life, try the following activities:

**Music Video (Music and Technology):** Students will be integrating their reading and research with technology to create songs and music videos! Preview the activity by asking the students what songs and music videos they enjoy. If they are school-appropriate, listen to or watch a few on YouTube or SchoolTube. If available, consult the media or A/V specialist at your school for assistance and support with this project.

### Ask students to:

- o Brainstorm key details, examples, and quotes in pairs or small groups in order to analyze and summarize how their *Who Was...?* musician impacted society. Here are some leading questions:
  - In what time period did your musician live? What was going on in the world? (Was there a war, was there an economic boom, or were there a lot of people out of work?)
  - What type of music did he/she play? Who did it appeal to? Men or women? Adults or young adults?
- o Take the summary, and transform it into a song!
- o If possible, use GarageBand to create the music and record it
  - The selected music should match the tone and mood of the particular musician's life
- o If possible, produce a music video about the musician using iMovie

Common Core State Standards (Music and Technology): RI.4.1., RI.5.1., RI.6.1., W.4.6., W.5.6., W.6.6., SL.4.5., SL.5.5., SL.6.5.

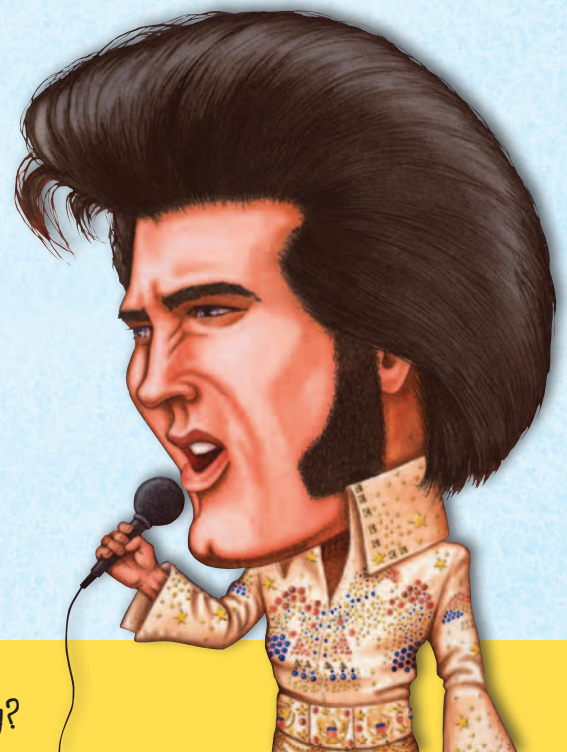
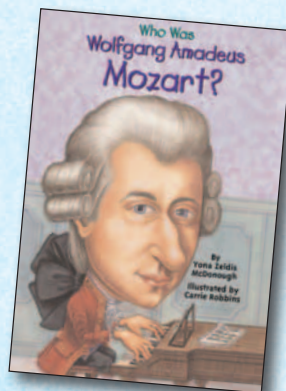
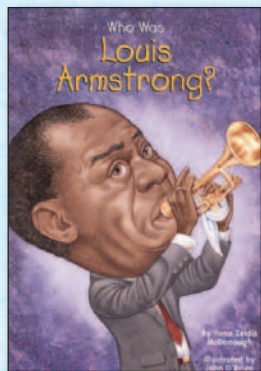
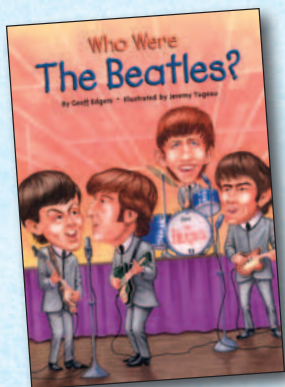
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### Music Poster (Technology):

#### Ask students to:

- o Determine the main idea of the biography and record these ideas on note cards or in a collaborate word document (Google Docs, for example)
- o Translate their writing into an online multimedia poster using Glogster ([www.glogster.com](http://www.glogster.com)) that expresses the main idea of the biography:
  - Use Google images, music, and Glogster sound and visual effects
- o The project can also be completed using traditional poster paper or tri-fold poster board

Common Core State Standards (Technology): RI.4.2., RI.5.2., RI.6.2., W.4.8., W.5.8., W.6.8.



Who Was  
Elvis Presley?



# XI. Performers

**Teachers:** Read one of the *Who Was...?* books about a famous performer (examples: Maria Tallchief, Elvis Presley, Harry Houdini, Jim Henson, Annie Oakley) or assign a specific book to the class for independent reading. Once you have read the book and/or have a general understanding of the person's life, try the following activities:

***Who Was...? Buzz Show (Writing, Technology, and Performance):*** Students will be performing a talk show! Hold a discussion about popular talk shows today. Ask the students to think about what makes them so popular, who they appeal to, and why. When they have a general understanding of the assignment, make sure they keep in mind their particular audience when creating their show.

## Ask students to:

- o Compile facts and key details about the performer's life to prepare for an interview with the performer
- o In groups, assign students to the role of interviewee, host, and participating audience members
- o Create the interview script for a radio or TV talk show using an online collaborative document (Google Docs, for example)
- o Create an appropriate theme and tone for the talk show, based on the performer's time period, background, and life story
- o Perform the talk show live and, if possible, record the show with a handheld device

Common Core State Standards (Writing, Technology, and Performance): W.4.8., W.5.8., W.6.8., SL.4.4., SL.5.4., SL.6.4.

**Bonus Activity: Stargazer's Wax Museum (Writing, Technology, and Performance):** Students present a collaborative living museum of performers.

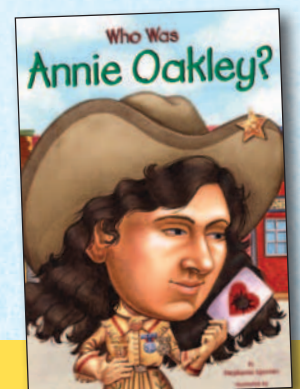
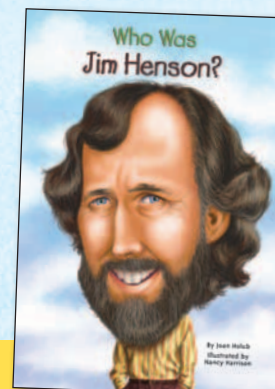
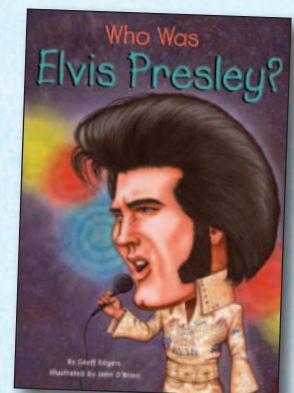
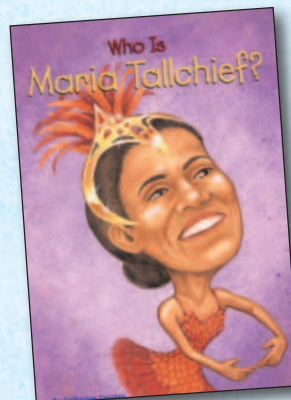
## Ask students to:

- o Integrate technology, creating presentations about their performers' lives based on their *Who Was...?* biographies as well as at least one other text and digital source
- o Include at least 2–3 key quotes from their *Who Was...?* performer and explain their meanings

Common Core State Standards (Writing, Technology, and Performance): W.4.7., W.5.7., W.6.7., W.4.8., W.5.8., W.6.8., W.4.9., W.5.9., W.6.9.



Who Was  
Harry Houdini?





## XII. Miscellaneous General Activities

**Teachers:** Here are some miscellaneous general activities that apply to any and all of the books in the *Who Was...?* series.

### **Who Was Reality Show (Writing and Performance):**

- o Students compare and contrast the *Who Was...?* biography with an autobiography of their historical figures (if available)
- o Work in groups to write a script for a reality-style TV show and include highlighted moments from the lives of their figures
- o Produce and edit the TV show

Common Core State Standards (Writing and Performance): W.4.4., W.5.4., W.6.4., W. 4.6., W.5.6., W.6.6, SL.4.4., SL.5.4., SL.6.4.

### **You Were There (Writing):**

- o Students imagine what it would have been like if they had been at an event related to their *Who Was...?* figure
- o Determine the main idea of the event, summarize key details based on their unique perspectives, and offer a secondhand account of a historical event in narrative form. Example: You were in the audience when Abraham Lincoln gave his famous Gettysburg Address. Who were you? How were you feeling based on your background? Compare and contrast with a factual summary of this event

Common Core State Standards (Writing): RI.4.2., RI.5.2., W.4.4., W.5.4., W.6.4.

### **Who Am I? (Writing):**

- o Teacher creates a bank of historical figures that all students must research
- o Each student is assigned (secretly) a historical figure to play
- o Classmates ask yes/no questions in order to reveal the identity of the historical figure

Common Core State Standards (Writing): W.4.9., W.5.9., W.6.9., SL.4.1., SL.5.1., SL.6.1.

### **Timeline Technology (Writing and Technology):**

- o Students use xtimeline ([www.xtimeline.com](http://www.xtimeline.com)) to recreate the timelines of their *Who Was...?* biographies

Common Core State Standards (Writing and Technology): RI.4.7., RI.5.7., RI.6.7.

### **Research Technology Project (Writing and Technology):**

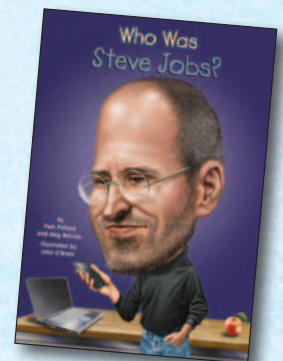
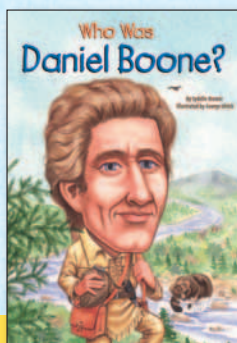
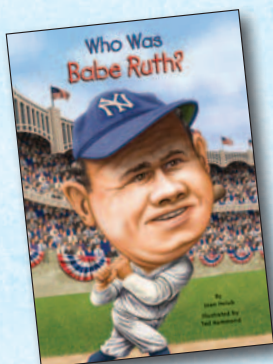
- o Students present research on their *Who Was...?* figures, using Prezi ([www.prezi.com](http://www.prezi.com))
- o Add sound, music, video, and clip art to create a dynamic presentation for the class

Common Core State Standards (Writing and Technology): W.4.7., W.5.7., W.6.7., W.4.6., W.5.6., W.6.6.

### **Word Jumble Technology (Writing and Technology):**

- o Students brainstorm words that describe their *Who Was...?* figures and create a master list
- o Upload the lists to Wordle ([www.wordle.net](http://www.wordle.net)) to create interesting word art

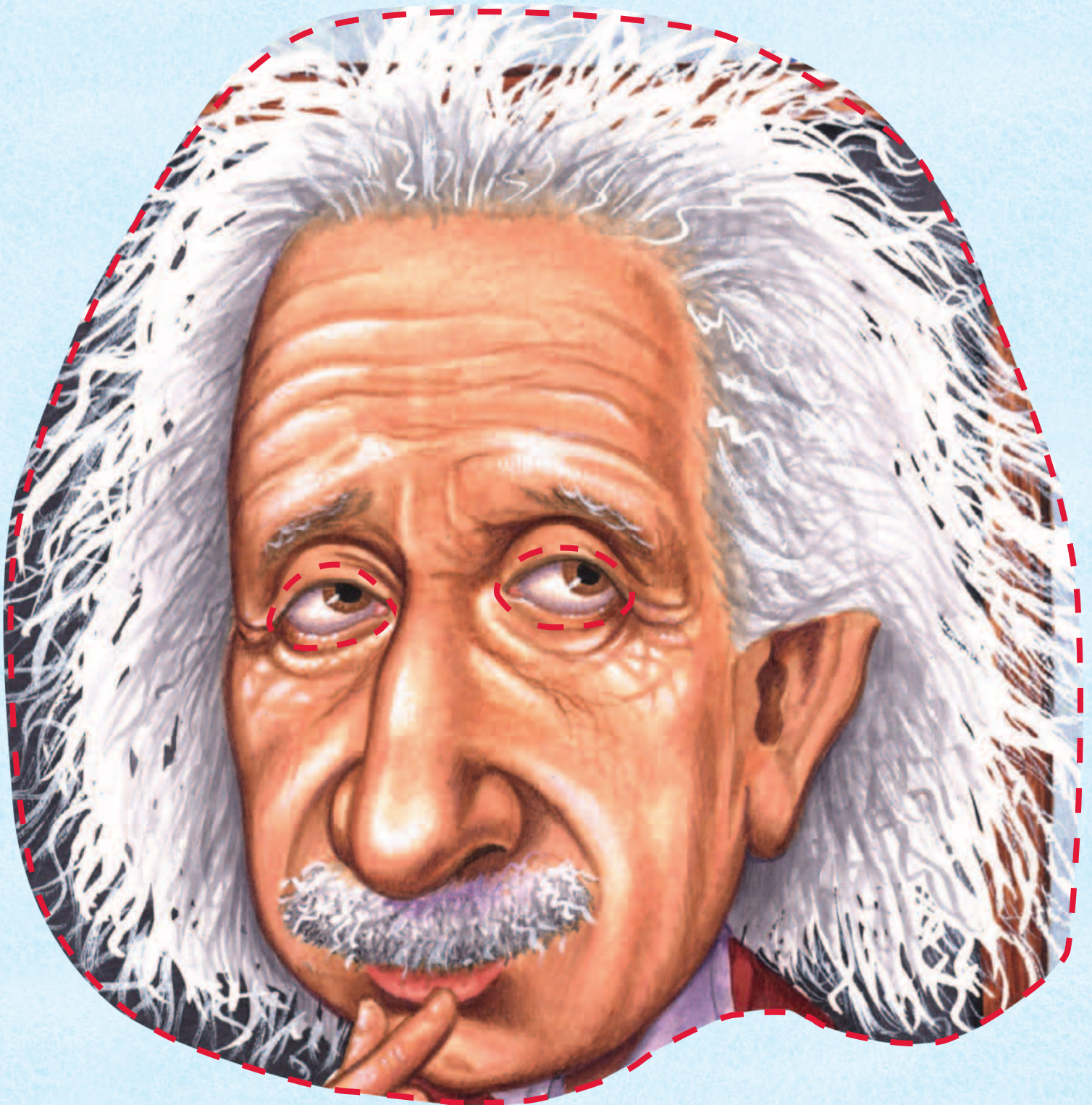
Common Core State Standards (Writing and Technology): W.4.6., W.5.6., W.6.6.





## Pretend to be a historical figure!

Invite your students to cut out the image of Albert Einstein. Help them cut out a hole for eyes and tape a popsicle stick to the back of the paper so you can hold the face with one hand. Use your mask to participate in any number of the activities in this brochure, or make up you own.



For more paper masks of your favorite *Who Was* figures, visit  
[whowasbookseries.com](http://whowasbookseries.com)



# The **Who Was...?** series includes:

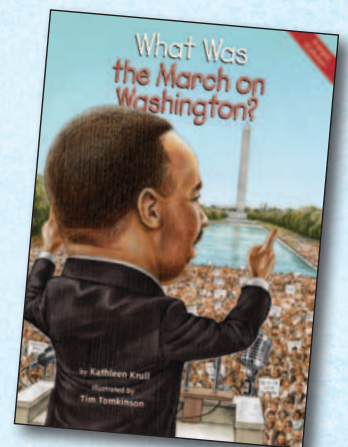
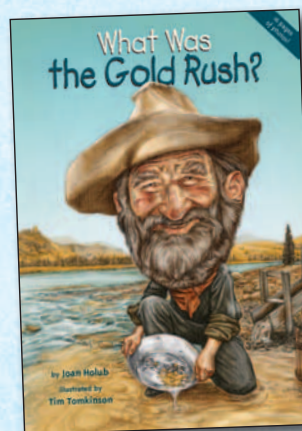
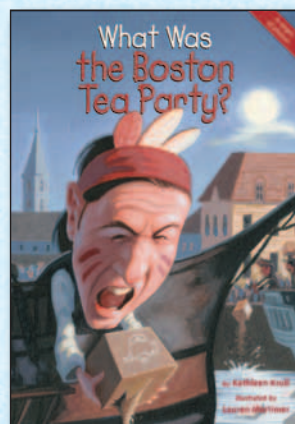
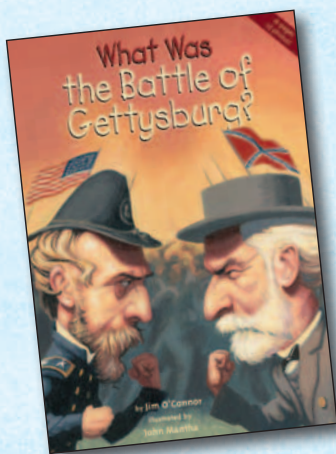
Leaders  
Explorers  
Women  
African Americans  
Presidents  
Heroes of the American  
Revolution

Writers  
Scientists  
Artists  
Musicians  
Performers  
... and more!

**Don't miss:**

# What Was?

The companion series of *Who Was...?*, available February 2013 from Grosset & Dunlap and Penguin Young Readers Group!



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