

Rebecca Sitton's APPLESEED



PLANT THE SEEDS TO GROW SPELLING AND WORD-SKILL LITERACY.

Presidential Word Work for Primary Grades

Holidays present a wonderful opportunity to interest students in some new and fresh word skills activities. For President's Day, younger students are likely to be ready to discuss something other than the familiar stories of George Washington chopping down the cherry tree and Abraham Lincoln's assassination at Ford's Theatre.

President-Themed Word Skills

- How many syllables does the word Washington have? Can you think of any other presidents' names that have three syllables? (Madison, Jefferson, Harrison, Buchanan, Roosevelt, and Kennedy). Younger students may need a list of presidents' names for reference. The list will provide additional decoding practice as well.
- Make letter cards for each letter in President Lincoln's and President Washington's last names using the Make Letter Cards Blackline Master in your Sourcebook. Post the individual letters on the chalkboard or someplace where all students can see them. The letters will serve as visual cues for making new words.

Then ask students:

- to use each letter (only once) to make a word with a long vowel sound. Some examples might be:
 - Lincoln (like, ice, nine, cute, old, late, note)
 - Washington (wake, ate, soap, hate, ivy, neat, gate, time, oak, nice)Students can either write their words on individual cards or pieces of paper.
- to use each letter (only once) to make a word with a short vowel sound. Some examples might be:
 - Lincoln (lot, ink, net, cap, odd, lip, not)
 - Washington (wet, at, sit, hop, it, nut, get, tax, on, nap)Students can either write their words on individual cards or pieces of paper.
- in small groups of three or four, ask students to sort their words according to the vowel sound they hear in each word. Words can be sorted for either a short or long vowel sound (easy activity), or by the individual short a, e, i, o, u sounds or long a, e, i, o, u sounds (more challenging activity).

Writing Activity

Lead an interactive discussion with students about what they think the responsibilities of the President of the United States are. Then ask them to write a paragraph stating what they would do if they were President of the United States.

Remind students that their written responses will need to include a beginning, middle, and end and to proofread their writing. You may also want to provide time for students to share their ideas.