

# RONALD REAGAN

A P R E S I D E N T ' S V I S I O N

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES, ASSIGNMENTS, AND FURTHER RESOURCES

### POSTER PROJECT

Ask students what they would change if they could redesign the poster. Pose questions such as: What portraits or photographs of Reagan would you choose? What programs or legislation passed during Reagan's administration would you include? What paintings, drawings, or primary sources would you choose to reflect the issues central to Reagan's presidency?

Divide students into teams and have each develop a new poster on Reagan to be included in the "President's Vision" series. Use the class textbook, the President's Vision website, and other outside sources to find images and primary sources to create the new poster.

Alternative assignment: Divide students into teams and have each develop a video on Reagan to as a supplement to the "President's Vision" series. Videos of Reagan's speeches can be found at <http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail>

#### *Related standards:*

TEKS (10) History. The student understands the impact of political, economic, and social factors in the U.S. role in the world from the 1970s through 1990. The student is expected to:

- (B) describe Ronald Reagan's leadership in domestic and international policies, including Reaganomics and Peace Through Strength.
- (F) describe significant societal issues of this time period.

### DEBATE

Divide the class into two groups and have opposing sides develop arguments in anticipation of a debate over the following statement:

"Ronald Reagan's administration represented a political revolution in American society."

One side should research and argue the affirmative. The other side should research and argue the contrary. In addition to the primary sources and items on the poster, students should use the class textbook and outside resources to prepare their arguments.

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- (B) describe Ronald Reagan's leadership in domestic and international policies, including Reaganomics and Peace Through Strength
- (D) describe U.S. involvement in the Middle East such as support for Israel, the Camp David Accords, the Iran-Contra Affair, Marines in Lebanon, and the Iran Hostage Crisis.
- (E) describe the causes and key organizations of the conservative resurgence of the 1980s and 1990s, including Phyllis Schlafly, the Contract with America, the Heritage Foundation, the Moral Majority, and the National Rifle Association
- (F) describe significant societal issues of this time period.

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For related educational resources, visit [www.presidentsvision.org](http://www.presidentsvision.org)



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### **CURATING A MUSEUM EXHIBIT**

Divide class into groups of four or five students. Have each group prepare a museum exhibition using the primary sources available on the President's Vision poster, in the Humanities Texas Digital Repository, and elsewhere online.

The exhibition should focus on Reagan's time in office. It should examine the ways in which his ideas and values influenced the nation's development, using selected quotes from speeches, letters, and other sources, as well as images.

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- (B) describe Ronald Reagan's leadership in domestic and international policies, including Reaganomics and Peace Through Strength.
- (D) describe U.S. involvement in the Middle East such as support for Israel, the Camp David Accords the Iran-Contra Affair, Marines in Lebanon, and the Iran Hostage Crisis.
- (E) describe the causes, key organizations, and individuals of the conservative resurgence of the 1980s and 1990s, including Phyllis Schlafly, the Contract with America, the Heritage Foundation, the Moral Majority, and the National Rifle Association.
- (F) describe significant societal issues of this time period.

### **COMPARING AND CONTRASTING WITH OTHER POSTERS IN THE SERIES**

Have students compare and contrast the Ronald Reagan poster with other posters in the "President's Vision" series. Address these questions either in discussion or as an individual or group assignment:

- Which other president's vision do you feel most closely aligns with Reagan's? Explain.
- Which other president's vision do you feel is the most different from Reagan's? Explain. What factors might account for the difference?

#### *Related standards:*

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- (B) describe Ronald Reagan's leadership in domestic and international policies, including Reaganomics and Peace Through Strength.

### **ASSIGNMENT PROMPTS**

- Looking back at the images and text on the Reagan poster and the additional primary source documents on the President's Vision website, write a short essay explaining Reagan's definition of freedom and how he used that definition to address the economic problems the nation faced when he became president.
- As a younger man, Ronald Reagan had been an ardent supporter of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal and the president of a major labor union. Look back at the Reagan poster and the primary source documents. Write a brief essay in which you explore the impact of one of these experiences on Reagan's vision as President.
- In the 1970s, several social issues emerged that led to bitter conflicts in Americans society. Using your textbook or other reliable online and print resources, identify two of those issues. Using the Reagan poster and the primary source documents, briefly explain how Reagan's vision of the presidency allowed him to respond to those conflicts.

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Humanities Texas

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## A P R E S I D E N T ' S V I S I O N

- Barry Goldwater is considered the father of conservative movement that eventually brought Reagan to the presidency. Goldwater and Reagan both made important speeches defining that movement in the 1964 election. Watch the video of Reagan's "Time for Choosing" speech online at <http://millercenter.org/scripps/archive/speeches/detail/3405>. Also watch the video of Barry Goldwater's acceptance speech at the 1964 Republican National Convention online at <http://www.c-span.org/RNC/Events/Goldwater-1964-Acceptance-Speech/A4018-1/>. Briefly list the similar themes in the two speeches and then, using only the videos of the speeches, explain why the American public might have rejected Goldwater in 1964 but embraced Reagan in 1980 and 1984.
- Reagan's detractors argue that his vision failed to address major domestic and foreign policy issues in the 1980s. Using your textbook or other reliable online and print resources, identify one of those issues. Briefly explain whether or not you think Reagan's vision adequately addressed this issue.
- Using your textbook or other reliable online and print resources, identify one group in American society that was critical to the creation of a conservative coalition that elected Ronald Reagan for two terms. Write a brief essay that explains how Reagan's vision, as portrayed on the poster, would appeal to that group.
- In Reagan's First Inaugural Address he argued that government could not solve the economic distress of the 1970s because government was the problem, not the solution. Write a brief essay in which you agree or disagree with Reagan's argument. Cite specific examples of governmental actions that support your contention.
- Reagan began his career as a radio sportscaster and then a Hollywood actor. Using your textbook and other print and online sources, write a brief essay explaining how Reagan's experience as an actor served him as president and, in particular, helped him further his vision. Give specific examples to support your explanation.

### FURTHER RESOURCES

- The Miller Center is a nonpartisan institute based at the University of Virginia that seeks to expand understanding of the presidency, policy, and political history. The Center's website provides both text and video of all of Reagan's major speeches:  
<http://millercenter.org/president/speeches>.
- The Ronald Reagan Presidential library provides access to the Reagan archives and also provides lesson plans and teacher resources:  
<http://www.reaganfoundation.org/>

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