



Leadership and Legacy

2016 Theme Book

**This theme book was taken largely from
History Comes Alive at Knight's 2015*

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Introduction to Theme: Leadership and Legacy

During the 2015-2016 school year, History Comes Alive at Knight (HCAK), invites students to research topics related to the theme Leadership and Legacy in History. Examples of leadership can be found almost anywhere—in the military, politics, government, communities, social movements, or in fields such as science, the arts, education, religion and economics. Topics can come from any geographic area or time period. Local history and world history make equally good sources of HCAK topics, and you can explore your interests from ancient history to more recent events. Try browsing your textbooks, flipping through TV channels, talking with teachers and parents, or even scrolling through Facebook or Twitter for topics that interest you. Just remember, your topic must relate to Leadership and Legacy. And do not forget the “in history” part of the theme—your topic must be historical, not a current event.

What is leadership and what is legacy? In broad terms, leadership is the act of leading: providing motivation, guidance or direction, usually from a position of authority. Leadership also implies the ability to lead—possessing the skills necessary to articulate a shared vision and inspire others to embrace and achieve that vision. Leaders often personify other admirable values such as courage, selflessness, ingenuity and patriotism. Certain traits like ego and confidence are important in a leader; however, such traits may be seen as negative qualities if he or she becomes overzealous or too headstrong. How do you evaluate the legacy of overzealous leaders like Saddam Hussein or Joseph Stalin? Were they leaders or tyrants? Is balance an important aspect to good leadership?

Leadership takes many forms. You might immediately think about presidents and kings as leaders, but what about local community representatives and organizers? How about religious leaders, governors, mayors, or business owners? Some leaders are elected, others are appointed, and some seize a position of authority. When it comes to monarchies, some leaders inherit their positions. Of course, leadership requires followers, who follow either by choice or due to coercion.

Leadership is not limited to the political sphere. Often leadership can begin on a much smaller scale. Consider the leadership that it takes for a small group of people to come together to accomplish a common goal. Students might consider the impact of Lech Walesa and Poland’s Solidarity movement, fighting for workers’ rights, social change, and ultimately political control in the 1980s and 1990s. Other examples could include Emmeline Pankhurst’s leadership of the Women’s Social and Political Union in Great Britain, Cesar Chavez’s National Farm Workers Association, or Mother Theresa’s Missionaries of Charity.

The impact of a leader does not have to be global. You can find examples of great leadership in one neighborhood, one school, or one city. Consider the history of your state, hometown, or family. You might consider the leadership of those who built schools or founded universities—everyone from John Harvard to Booker T. Washington to Leland Stanford. You

also could examine leadership in a small event within the larger context of the whole, greater event. Many people have heard of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Alice Paul, but what about Bayard Rustin or Mary Church Terrell? World War II brought leadership opportunities for Bernard Montgomery and Dwight D. Eisenhower, but what about the war experiences of Charity Adams, King George VI, or Anna Mae Hayes?

Sometimes a leader emerges because he or she happens to be in the right place at the right time. Local circumstances and background context offer important clues when we examine why a leader chose to act when and how he or she did. Who and what were his or her influences, and in turn, who and what did he or she influence? What experiences led abolitionists like Sarah and Angelina Grimké to oppose slavery? In what ways did the European leader Charlemagne influence art and architecture in Europe? Why did George Washington choose to step down after two terms as president of the United States? What was he attempting to model about leadership in a democracy?

Sometimes people are active agents, but other times individuals are thrust into situations where they are obligated to make choices and act. Reactions to a social event, a natural disaster, an oppressive government, or other situations often show leadership. In wartime, many people find themselves forced by circumstances to do things they could never have imagined. Consider British, French, German, and American soldiers on the front lines of World War I. There are many examples where leaders have emerged unexpectedly. During the Normandy campaign in World War II, General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. (the son of the president) landed with his infantry battalion on Utah Beach, more than a mile away from his intended location. He is famously quoted as saying, “We’ll start the war from right here!” How did his leadership make a difference?

Leaders often arise because they have new ideas about how something should be done or redone, built or rebuilt. They see a situation and want to change it, convinced that their vision will improve an element of life or change their community for the better. Consider the great American entrepreneurs that historian H.W. Brands labeled “masters of enterprise”—leaders such as Roy Kroc, Bill Gates, Mary Kay Ash, Cornelius Vanderbilt, or John Rockefeller. Leaders dare to ask difficult questions and are passionate about resolving issues.

Of course, not all first ideas are good ones. A leader and his or her supporters may revise and change ideas in the process of moving toward a goal. This is particularly evident when they run into obstacles. Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf were forced to make adjustments on their path to leadership. As leaders, they pushed through challenging situations and found solutions to overcome hurdles. Can other leaders, or even followers, become obstacles?

Looking carefully at the impact on society and change over time, you will also need to think about the leader's legacy. Legacy is what is handed down to us from our ancestors or predecessors. More broadly, legacy is what is left behind for future generations—such as ideas and accomplishments.

Sometimes legacies cannot be understood until long after a leader has passed away. Often reformers were considered radicals in their time. Abolitionists, socialists, anarchists, and civil rights activists around the world have seen changes in the world. What change or objective did they set in motion? How did they set out to change the world? Did they succeed? What are the legacies of John Brown, Guy Fawkes, or Karl Marx? Sometimes a legacy depends on perspective. Not all legacies are positive ones. What happens when leadership goes awry? Legacies also can be controversial. Events can lead one group of people to feel that a leader was a great and moral influence who facilitated a positive outcome, while a different group of people believe exactly the opposite. Consider the history of Martin Luther, Sir Thomas More, Francisco Franco, the Irish Republican Army, or the Palestine Liberation Organization. Examining both sides of the story is important to understanding your topic.

It often happens that new leaders pick up where previous leaders left off, which also adds to the legacy. Followers and supporters will frequently carry the torch, moving forward and working together to maintain the pursuit or accomplish the goal. What role did Bella Abzug, Gloria Steinem, and Lilly Ledbetter play in the twentieth century feminist movement? How can the tragic death of a leader like Mahatma Gandhi, Robert Kennedy, or Benazir Bhutto inspire others to continue the fight for their political, social, or economic goals?

How important is the relationship between a leader and supporters or followers? Great leaders typically have a great network of supporters. These people agree with what the leader stands for and play a part in helping him or her succeed. Mao Zedong led a massive revolution in China. Why did it succeed? How did he use his leadership to convince people to follow him? Followers are inspired by the leader and feel a sense of duty to the cause. Some supporters, of course, are faithful to a leader no matter what questionable actions he may take. Do you see examples of followers turning a blind eye to certain events because of their extreme loyalty?

When leadership goes awry, leaders can become destroyers. There are instances throughout history where leaders abused their power. Are there differences in leadership strategies for a destroyer? And can a follower or supporter influence the destruction? Consider the leadership of Nero in ancient Rome, Mobutu Sese Seko in the Congo, or Mohammad Reza Pahlavi in Iran. Are other nations responsible for removing leaders from power?

Just because something happened and someone did something, however, it does not necessarily mean a legacy was created. The key is to think about a leader's significance in

history. So what? Does this person really matter? Was there real change that occurred because of his or her leadership? What was the impact on people, society, economics, or government? How did it affect what people thought or did, or maybe how people think or act today? Consider both the short-term and long-term impact. Remember that examining the context and historical significance of your topic is a crucial part of the research process that also will help you strengthen and support your thesis.

In considering the theme Leadership and Legacy in History, keep in mind that it is important to address both elements. Highlighting both the leadership and the legacy of your chosen subject will help you clearly explain the relation of your topic to the theme. Successful researchers look at available primary and secondary sources and draw conclusions from the information. Your analysis of the evidence and presentation of the information to support your thesis is a critical part of your project. Use these primary sources and let the individuals speak for themselves. In thinking about your topic, ask yourself, “what is so important about my topic and what do I want people to understand after viewing my project?” Your answers to these key questions will help guide you as you decide how to present your information.

(Please read on for an important note from the National History Day director.)

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

At first glance, the 2016 HCAK theme, Leadership & Legacy in History, seems fairly easy and straightforward. However, it is not as easy as one would think. We chose the wording of this theme very carefully. The first word is “leadership.” It is not “leader” or “lead” or “leading.” Although all these words share the same root, each means something slightly different. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online defines these words as follows:

Lead: To guide on a way especially by going in advance; to direct on a course or in a direction; to serve as a channel for (a pipe leads water to the house); to go through : (lead a quiet life).

Leader: To direct the operations, activity, or performance of (lead an orchestra); to have charge of (lead a campaign); to go at the head of (lead a parade) to be first in or among (lead the league); to have a margin over (led his opponent); a person who directs a military force or unit; a person who has commanding authority or influence.

Leadership: Position as a leader of a group, organization, etc.; the time when a person holds the position of leader; the power or ability to lead other people.

The second word in the theme is “legacy.” The dictionary defines legacy as:

Legacy: Something that happened in the past or that comes from someone in the past; something transmitted by or received from an ancestor or predecessor or from the past (the legacy of the ancient philosophers).

Watch out!

Looking at the definitions above, we see how the word “leadership” differs from “lead” and “leader.” For “leadership,” the key here is the last phrase of the definition: “the power or ability to lead other people.” For “leader,” the key phrase is “A person who has commanding authority or influence.” An individual who demonstrates leadership is someone who has influence, who can make things happen, who can inspire others to follow. Can someone “lead the way” without displaying leadership? Of course.

Take note!

The theme is not “Leadership in History.” It is Leadership & Legacy in History. So if an individual has the ability to inspire others to follow, legacy is the impact that results. What was the historical significance of George Washington’s leadership on the course of events? What was the significance of his leadership in history? Can someone be a leader without providing a legacy? Certainly. But does that, then, constitute leadership? Probably not; thus, it would not fit the theme of Leadership and Legacy in History.

Look out!

Because someone does something extraordinary, do they display leadership? Not necessarily. Is a scientist a leader? Does a scientist display leadership because he or she

invents something that is historically significant? Not necessarily. But if that scientist inspires others to follow him or her, in searching for a cure to cancer for example, is that leadership? Seems more likely. American paratroopers were among the first of the Allies to begin the Normandy Invasion on D-Day. Does that mean that they displayed leadership? No, they were brave and heroic, but going first is not leadership.

Uh oh!

Can an organization provide leadership? Perhaps. Did the Southern Christian Leadership Conference provide leadership for the Civil Rights Movement? Usually, an individual at the head of the organization provides the leadership that moves an organization in a certain direction, at least in the beginning. What was its legacy?

Follow my lead!

If someone provides leadership and inspires others to follow, what about those followers? Some tend to think of “follower” as something negative or less than important, but its meaning is quite straightforward:

Follower: Someone who supports and is guided by another person or by a group, religion, etc.

That definition is not negative, and neither is being a follower. How can an individual provide leadership without having followers? Followers are critical to helping a leader reach his or her goal. When the Allies invaded Normandy, were they displaying leadership? No, they were following orders. It was an extraordinary feat that they accomplished, and they did it because General Dwight D. Eisenhower inspired them with his leadership. Leadership does not have to come from the very top, however. Sometimes it is a commander of a unit who inspires his men to follow, or an individual soldier who takes charge when others could not and inspires his fellow soldiers to follow.

The bottom line!

Leadership begins with an individual. Whether a particular individual leads effectively and makes an impact in history is for you to determine. Good luck!

Sample Topics

(Topics highlighted in blue are acceptable for students who have either Ms. Simon or Ms. Kramer.)

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- Benjamin Franklin and the Library Company of Philadelphia: A New Intellectual Nation
 - Charlemagne's Conquest and its Impact on European Architecture
 - Mikhail Gorbachev: Leading a Struggling Nation out of the Cold War
 - The Euro: How the European Union Led the Movement for Economic Integration
 - William Howard Taft and Dollar Diplomacy
 - The World Health Organization: Leading the Fight to Eradicate Communicable Disease
 - Yoga Bonita: How Brazil Led a Soccer Revolution
 - Globalization of McDonalds: American Corporations Leading the World's Economy
 - Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev: Leading the World Out of the Cold War
 - The Legacy of King Leopold's Vision in the Congo
 - Pierre de Coubertin and the Rebirth of the International Olympic Committee
 - Eleanor Roosevelt and the UN Declaration of Human Rights
 - Drawing Boundaries: Thomas Jefferson's Land Ordinances and the Settling of the American West
 - Pancho Villa: Leading Northern Mexico
 - Toussaint L'Overture: Leading the World's Only Successful Slave Rebellion
 - Nelson Mandela and the Fight for Equality in South Africa
 - Eva and Juan Peron: Leaders of the Argentinian People
 - Woodrow Wilson and the Organic Act: Creating the National Park Service to Protect America's National Land
 - Nora Zeale Hurston and the Harlem Renaissance
 - Simon Bolivar and Gran Columbia: Leading the Fight for Independence from Spain
 - Lilly Ledbetter: Leading the Charge for Equal Pay
 - Emiliano Zapata: Leadership for "Reforma, Libertad Ley y Justicia"
 - Olaudah Equiano: Exposing the Horrors of the Middle Passage
 - Emmeline Pankhurst: Leading a Militant Struggle for Suffrage in Great Britain
 - Alexander Dubček: Leading the Prague Spring

- Vladimir Lenin: Leading the Russian Revolution
- The Three Leaders: Mazzini, Garibaldi, Cavour and the Unification of Italy
- The International Space Station: Leading an International Effort to Unite Space
- The Iran Hostage Crisis: Defining the Leadership of a Presidency
- Thomas Paine's Revolutionary Writings
- Bacon's Rebellion and the Growth of Slavery in Colonial Virginia
- The Bloodless Revolution of 1800: John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and the Legacy of a Peaceful Transition of Power
- Andrew Jackson: The Legacy of the People's President
- Invoking the Power of the Federal Government: Grover Cleveland and the Pullman Strike of 1894
- Alice Paul: Leading the Movement for Equal Rights
- Leading the Charge to Legislate Equality: Lyndon B. Johnson and the Voting Rights Act
- A. Philip Randolph: Leading the Way to Integrate America's World War II Labor Force
- Steve Jobs and the Apple II: Bringing Silicon Valley to America's Homes
- Hammurabi's Code: The Legacy of the World's First Legal Code and the Man who Made It
- Linking Europe, Africa, and Asia: Ferdinand de Lesseps and the Construction of the Suez Canal
- Otto von Bismarck and the Unification of Germany
- The Napoleonic Code: The Legacy of Napoleon Bonaparte's Remarkable Leadership
- The Congress of Vienna: Legacy of Napoleon's Downfall
- Eugene V. Debs' Leadership of the American Socialist Movement
- Realpolitik : A New Form of Leadership
- The Marshall Plan: The Economic Legacy of World War II
- The Truman Doctrine: Setting American Foreign Policy in the Cold War
- The Veterans Administration: Leading the Fight for Veterans Rights
- Finland and Norway: Leading the Resistance to the Soviet Invasion in World War II
- Charles V and the Peace of Augsburg: Leading to a New Map of Europe
- Leading a Communist Island: Marshal Tito and Yugoslavia
- Confucianism: Leading the Way to a Chinese Civil Service

- Ravi Shankar: Blending Eastern and Western Music
- The Mercator Projection: Leading How We View the World
- Theodore Roosevelt: Leading the Charge to Build the Panama Canal
- Ulysses S. Grant: Leading the Campaign to Take the Mississippi River
- George Washington: Leading the US to Independence
- Leading Higher Education in America: Harvard, Yale, and William & Mary
- Using Television to Promote Religious Ideals: The Legacy of Billy Graham
- Cato and the Legacy of the Stono Rebellion
- Opha Mae Johnson: Leading the Way for Women in the Marine Corps
- China's Terracotta Army: The Legacy of Qin Shi Huang
- General Anna Mae Hayes: Leading the Army Nurse Corps
- Leading the Fight Against Communism: Matthew Ridgway and the Korean War
- Following the Catholic Church's Lead: The Crusades
- Isabella, Ferdinand, and the Spanish Reconquista
- Roger Bacon: A Renaissance Man in Medieval Times
- Alfred Nobel and the Nobel Prize
- St. Thomas More: Resisting King Henry VIII
- Tecumseh and the Western Confederacy: Leading the Battle Against Westward Expansion
- George Whitefield and the Great Awakening: Preaching Christianity to America's Slaves
- Robert Wapole and the Legacy of Salutary Neglect
- The Hudson River School: Leading an American School of Art
- Elizabeth Bisland and Nelly Bly: Leading the Way for Female Journalists by Racing Around the World
- The Southern Christian Leadership Conference: Leading the Civil Rights Movement
- General Billy Mitchell and the Development of the American Air Force
- Berry Gordy and Motown: Creating the Sound of America and a Legacy of Opportunity
- George Crile, Harvey Cushing, and the Ambula