

### **Jacksonian Era Museum Assignment**

The Hermitage, the home of Andrew Jackson, wants to create a new museum that will include up to five different perspectives on Andrew Jackson and his presidential legacy. Your team has been hired by the Hermitage Board of Directors to present a virtual tour for a possible exhibit. Your exhibit will depict the beliefs of an assigned group from the Jacksonian Era, particularly whether Jackson and his legacy diminished or improved American life.

You will use power point to create the virtual tour and will have 3 walls and floor space within the museum to persuade museumgoers of your point of view. To create the most persuasive museum exhibit you must include the following: a simple drawing of your exhibit layout, a curator script for leading the tour, an interpretation of at least two strategically chosen historical artifacts that support your view, and an authentic historical reenactment that will portray a pivotal event in Jackson's career. Together these elements must address your assigned group's view on whether Andrew Jackson should be honored as a great president. Groups will include:

1. Anti-slavery Coalition (slaves, freemen including Frederick Douglass, abolitionists)
2. Businessmen (bankers including Nicholas Biddle, merchants, & corporate leaders)
3. Southeastern Indians (including Chief John Ross and Alexander McGillivray)
4. Yeoman Farmer
5. Southern Planter Elite (large land owners & slave holders)
6. Women's Rights Advocates (including Elizabeth Cady Stanton)

Following the exhibit presentations, the class, acting as the Hermitage Board of Directors, will deliberate about whether Andrew Jackson should be honored as a great president and will make a final recommendation about the exhibits that should be chosen for the new museum. Be prepared to defend your exhibit and answer questions about the artifacts you chose to highlight.

#### **Museum Exhibit Content:**

Your museum exhibit should address these issues. You have one exhibit wall for each issue. You must provide sufficient historical evidence to thoroughly support your view on each issue.

1. Explain the basic views of your assigned group, especially your goals for Jacksonian society.
2. Explain whether Andrew Jackson and/or his legacy has diminished or improved life for people living in the United States.
3. Clearly present your client's views as to whether Andrew Jackson should be considered a great president.

The virtual tour of your museum exhibit should last approximately 8-10 minutes and contain the following components:

1. An explanation of at least 2 *significant* historical artifacts (pictures, paintings, documents, speeches, political cartoons, etc.) that support your view of Andrew Jackson. These may be placed on the wall or anywhere in your exhibit hall but must be explained well.
2. An interpretation of at least one quote from Andrew Jackson.
3. An interpretation of at least one quote from an additional key historical actor.
4. A 2-3 minute "live" historical reenactment of a key event from your assigned perspective.

In addition to the above components, your museum exhibit must include your client's views on at least 5 of the following topics<sup>1</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> Potential topics adapted from list prepared by PBS for Andrew Jackson: Good, Evil & the Presidency. <http://www.pbs.org/kcet/andrewjackson/>

1. Jackson's Leadership Style
2. Battle of New Orleans
3. 1824 election
4. 1828 election
5. The Veto
6. Democratic Party
7. Spoils System
8. Indian Removal
9. Bank War
10. Rise of Corporations
11. Decline of Southern Plantations
12. Nullification
13. Slavery
14. Suffrage / Political Participation
15. Internal Improvements

Remember that your museum exhibit presentation will compete against others like it and therefore must gain attention, be professional, and be persuasive. It should stay faithful to the experiences and beliefs of your assigned group. As you plan your exhibit, consider how you may use images, physical artifacts, documents, and historical quotations to convey humor, fear, sympathy, etc. Consult the model that your teacher has presented to help you plan the exhibit. Remember to explain the legacy of Jackson you feel the American public should know.

### **Museum Exhibit Presentation Construction Process:**

#### **A. Group Roles**

Each student will be assigned one of the following roles in the presentation process:

**Curator:** Primary responsibilities for narrating and leading exhibit presentation. Leads group to ensure conceptual unity. Writes narrative explaining each exhibit wall. Assists historian in placing artifacts in exhibit. Assists Technician in sketching museum layout.

**Historian:** Primary responsibility for finding, interpreting and presenting historical artifacts in support of client's view. Creates narrative for historian portions virtual tour. Decides if any artifacts should be given as a handout to audience. Works with curator to place artifacts within exhibit. Assists reenactors in writing script and locating quotes.

**Re-enactor:** Primary responsibility for scripting, organizing, and leading "live" reenactment of key historical event. Creates narrative for reenactment portion of script. Locates historical quotes for group and assists curator and historian in interpreting them.

**Technician:** Primary responsibility for producing and running technology supporting presentation and for drawing museum exhibit layout sketches. Locates the visual images, and any other digital media the group will use. Assists with reenactments.

#### **B. Project Checklist**

Have your teacher review your ideas and initial your Checklist at each stage indicated below:

1. Examine resources for your group on the Museum Exhibit Planning Resource Page. These will provide you with helpful links for learning more and finding artifacts.
2. Use the Brainstorming Guide to help you plan for information, arguments, and media to be used in the virtual tour of your museum exhibit. Discuss the questions carefully with your group. Take clear notes and document your sources.
3. Use the Exhibit Layout Scaffold to complete a rough “bird’s eye view” of your exhibit hall.
4. Use the individual Wall Layout Scaffolds to complete a rough draft of each exhibit wall.
5. Fully script your presentation. Complete power point “virtual tour.”
6. Rehearse the actual presentation including all technical elements.

### **C. Brainstorming Guide for Planning Your Museum Exhibit**

- Based on all of the information at your disposal, consider the following questions:
  - What are the views of your group? What is their goal for society? What would your group want others to know about Jackson or this time period?
  - What are your group’s experiences with Andrew Jackson? If they do not have direct experience with him, what is your group’s view of Andrew Jackson? Would they like or dislike his policies? If your group seems to have different views of Jackson, what do they all agree on?
  - Which five historical events should you weave into your exhibit? Consider the events that best help you make your case about Andrew Jackson.
  - What quotes might be used to support your arguments? Are there quotes from opponents or Jackson himself that could be used to make him look good or bad?
  - What images, documents, or artifacts could be interpreted to support your argument? Should any of these be given out as handouts?
  - Should Andrew Jackson be remembered as a great president? Does your whole exhibit make a clear case?

Assessment Criteria	Group Rating
<b>I. Museum Exhibit Presentation Content</b>	
1. Museum exhibit presentation demonstrates adequate understanding of the facts and arguments surrounding the issue.	
2. Museum exhibit presentation presents persuasive evidence and arguments for the client's point of view.	
3. Completed scaffolds clearly show strong preparation, presentation content, and cite sources for all historical info.	
<b>II. Museum Exhibit Presentation Composition</b>	
1. Museum exhibit presentation clearly communicates ideas.	
2. Museum exhibit presentation flows smoothly and works together to provide a consistent argument.	
3. Museum exhibit presentation demonstrates a creative and unique combination of information to present a persuasive argument.	
4. Final presentation is polished and appealing.	
<b>Assessment Totals</b>	
<b>Overall Assessment:</b>	

**Description of Criteria Ratings:**

5 = Exemplary: Goes beyond expectations to create original, highly insightful work.

4 = Competent: Meets expectations. Work is accurate and thorough.

3 = Acceptable: Meets most expectations with only minor omissions or inaccuracies.

2 = Needs Significant Improvement: Work has major omissions, inaccuracies.

1 = Unsatisfactory: Fails to meet minimal standards for quality work.