



## WHEN THE BORDER VANISHES

### “Will the Real Theodore Roosevelt Please Stand Up!”

Standard:

- II. Time, Continuity, and Change
- III. People, Places, and Environment
- IV. Individual Development and Identity
- V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- VII. Power, Authority, and Governance
- IX. Global Connections
- X. Civic Ideals and Practices

Grade Level: 7–12

Objectives:

The student will:

- Access background information about Theodore Roosevelt
- Assess the multiple personas of Theodore Roosevelt
- Determine which persona best exemplifies the life and presidency of Theodore Roosevelt
- Draw logical conclusions from primary documents

Time: 1–2 class periods

Materials:

*Cartoon #1:* T.R. Digging the Panama Canal

*Cartoon #2:* When the News of President Roosevelt’s Visit Reached Africa

*Cartoon #3:* The Many Faces of Theodore Roosevelt

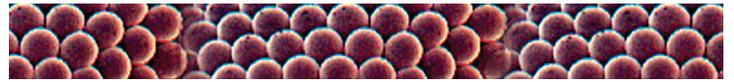
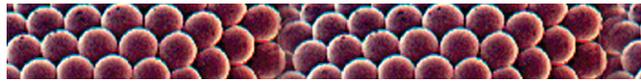
*Handout #1:* Petrified Forest Proclamation

Access to website: <http://www.theodoreroosevelt.com/trpanegyrics.html> and other websites listed in “Procedures”

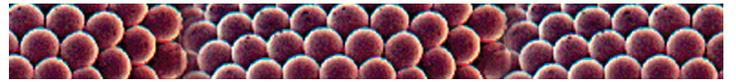
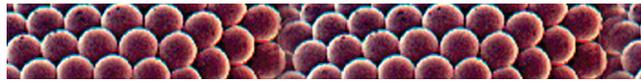
*Handout #2:* “Jungle Jangle” Text

Procedures:

1. Provide a short biographical sketch of Theodore Roosevelt to students:  
<http://millercenter.org/academic/americanpresident/roosevelt/essays/biography/1>  
<http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/biotr.htm>
2. Distribute copies of *Cartoons #1 and 2 and Handout #1*. Students may work individually or in groups.
3. Based only on these three documents, what do students know about Theodore Roosevelt? Have them write three (or more) statements about each document.
4. Have students share their statements.
5. A “persona” may be one aspect of a person’s public image. Theodore Roosevelt had several personas, including “Big Game Hunter,” “Nature Lover and Conservationist,” “Rough Rider,” and the tough President who carried a “Big Stick.”
  - Have students identify the personas revealed in the three handouts.
  - Provide this idea for discussion: T.R. was a game hunter and a conservationist. He also, by building the Panama Canal, destroyed ecosystems in the Canal Zone. Explain this dichotomy. How could one persona kill and destroy while seeking to preserve wildlife and land? How can a person reconcile different personas and resolve conflicting actions?



- Do each of us have different personas? What personas would students apply to themselves?
6. Divide students into groups. Prior to grouping, make copies of *Cartoon #3: The Many Faces of Theodore Roosevelt*. Cut the copies so that each group gets one of the personas of T.R.: "Rough Rider," "Big Game Hunter," "Statesman," "Politician," and the combination of "Scholar/Author" as one persona. (Five groups would be needed to match the personas.)
  7. Have students do BRIEF research using this information printed as a handout (or accessed through the Internet), <http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/biotr.htm>. If time permits, additional sites can be consulted (divided by persona):
    - **Rough Rider**  
[http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/Rough\\_Riders.htm](http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/Rough_Riders.htm)
    - **Big Game Hunter**  
<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/tr.htm>  
<http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/biotr.htm>
    - **Statesman**  
<http://www.biography.com/articles/Theodore-Roosevelt-9463424&part=3#8430>  
<http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/nobelportsmouth.htm>
    - **Politician: Why Napoleon back from Elba?**  
(Why was T.R. shown as "Napoleon back from Elba?" Newspapers dubbed Theodore Roosevelt's return from Africa (and his tour of Europe) as Napoleon back from Elba based on the idea that T.R. could help the Republican Party in the next election. T.R. did decide to run representing the Progressive Party. Napoleon left exile from the island of Elba and returned to lose the Battle of Waterloo.)  
<http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/biotr.htm>
    - **Author**  
<http://www.frfrogspad.com/writings.htm> (list of T.R.'s writings)
    - **Scholar** (Education)  
<http://americanhistory.about.com/od/troosevelt/p/ptroosevelt.htm>
  8. Have students report on their findings for each of T.R.'s personas. Again, determine what best describes T.R. He is widely considered one of the best American presidents. Does this mean that all of the personas made the president what he was? Do contradictions exist in this supposition?
  9. There is a missing persona from the previous cartoon because there is no drawing of T.R. as a conservationist. Show information from this site: <http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/conservation.htm>, to students.  
Have each group draw a conservationist persona of Theodore Roosevelt. One of the other drawings can serve as a guide. Have students think about the style of clothing and accessories Roosevelt would have worn as a conservationist. Display students' work. Have each group explain why they portrayed T. R. as they did.



### Extension Activities:

1. A different and fun perspective: concentrate on President Theodore Roosevelt's persona as a hunting enthusiast, well-known for his hunting trips to the Western United States, as well as big game hunting in Africa. In this activity we will look at a panegyric (formal or elaborate praise) written and drawn in 1909 by illustrator Peter Newell that lampoons—or makes fun of—Theodore Roosevelt's "big game hunter" persona.

<http://www.theodoreroosevelt.com/trpanegyrics.html>,

The original book has four cartoons each illustrating a quatrain, which is a poem with four lines of rhyme. Three of the quatrains are written from the point-of-view of a different African animal—a lion, an ape, and a rhinoceros. This lesson focuses on the final quatrain, which is written from the point-of-view of Theodore Roosevelt.

- What do the animals say to Roosevelt?
  - What symbolic references does Roosevelt make to his past when dealing with the animals?
  - Why are eyes and teeth mentioned in each quatrain?
  - Why is Peter Newell lampooning Roosevelt? If a panegyric normally offers praise, how does one reconcile these different approaches?
2. Have students, while still in their persona groups, create a quatrain for their Theodore Roosevelt persona, including T.R. as a conservationist. Provide copies of *Handout #5: "Jungle Jangle" Text* by Peter Newell. Read the quatrains in class. ■