

Lesson Plan: Teddy Roosevelt in Maine

This lesson was developed by Maine Historical Society for the Seashore Trolley Museum as a companion curriculum for Teddy Roosevelt, Millie, and the Elegant Ride by Jean. M. Flahive (2019). The lesson corresponds with themes and topics covered in Chapters 4, 5, 9, 11, 12, 19, 26, 27.

Objectives:

- Students will practice the skills involved in researching and analyzing primary sources.
- Students will be able to explain Theodore Roosevelt's connections to Maine and the people of Maine.
- Students will be able to describe the work and accomplishments of Theodore Roosevelt.
- Students will be able to describe the platform of the Bull Moose Party.

Essential Questions:

1. What were some of Theodore Roosevelt's accomplishments as President of the United States?
2. What was the platform of the Bull Moose party?
3. Why was Maine an important place to Theodore Roosevelt?

Materials:

- computers with internet access for teacher and student use – teachers and students will need to access Maine Memory Network (www.mainememory.net) to examine the documents used in this lesson and may want to access **Additional Recommended Resources** (see below)
- pen/pencil
- copies of ***My Debt to Maine: Close Reading Questions*** (see below)
- copy (or copies) of *Teddy Roosevelt, Millie, and the Elegant Ride* by Jean Flahive – might be useful for students to have copies on hand, but not imperative for the completion of the activities in this lesson

Timeframe:

Will vary depending on length of class period, class size, etc.; 1 day/class period recommended.

Procedure:

1. Review as necessary **what students have already learned about Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt**. Make sure that students understand that the Roosevelt:
 - a. served as the 26th President of the United States from 1901-1909

b. increased government regulation and safety standards, regulated big businesses and broke up monopolies (companies that controlled an entire industry), and supported labor laws for the working class

c. set aside large tracts of land for conservation as national forests, parks, and monuments

d. worked to make the U.S. a world power through imperialism and the building of a powerful navy, and believed the U.S. had the responsibility of protecting other countries in the Western Hemisphere

Some other “fun facts” students may find interesting about Roosevelt:

a. He was first president to start calling the White House the White House.

b. He was the first president to ride in a car while in office.

c. At 42 he was – and still is – the youngest person to ever take office as president.

d. Before he was president he served in the New York legislature, as New York City Police Commissioner, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and Governor of New York.

e. He was a Lieutenant Colonel in the 1st U. S. Volunteer Cavalry during the Spanish-American War.

f. He was William McKinley’s Vice President (1901) and became president when McKinley was assassinated.

g. John Flammang Schrank shot Roosevelt while the later was campaigning in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on October 14, 1912. The bullet lodged in Roosevelt’s chest after passing through an eyeglass case and a 50-page speech in his pocket. Roosevelt continued speaking to crowds for an hour-and-a-half before seeking medical attention, exclaiming “...it takes more than that to kill a Bull Moose.”

2. Explain to students that **Roosevelt was president from 1901 – 1905 after William McKinley was assassinated (Roosevelt was McKinley’s Vice President) and was then elected for a second term in 1904.** As explained in *Teddy Roosevelt, Millie, and the Elegant Ride*, after his second term Roosevelt supported fellow Republican William Taft as the next candidate for president. However, after Taft was elected Roosevelt didn’t believe that Taft was progressive enough and so he **formed a new political party called “The Progressive Party” or “Bull Moose Party” and ran for president again.**

3. Explain that **the main beliefs of the Progressive/Bull Moose Party** included:

a. limits on how much money someone could donate to a political campaign

b. making it easier to amend (change) the U.S. Constitution

c. help for farmers

d. a national health service

e. a social assistance/welfare system for people who were elderly, unemployed, or disabled

f. an eight-hour workday and an end to child labor

g. voting rights for women

4. Explain that **while he was campaigning for president in 1914, Roosevelt visited Maine**, just as described in the book. He **first visited Maine when he was just nineteen years old in 1878**. His **host and guide during that visit to Maine was Bill Sewall** of Island Falls; Sewall took Roosevelt **hiking, hunting, and fishing** (also described in the book). The two men came from very different backgrounds, but they both loved the outdoors and formed **a lifelong friendship**. Roosevelt would visit Sewall in Maine a few more times and during Roosevelt's first term as president he invited Sewall and his family to stay at the White House.

5. Ask students to **look at excerpts from Roosevelt's rough draft of the article *My Debt to Maine*** (see worksheet below), written in 1918. In the article, **Roosevelt describes his time with Sewall in Maine and why it was important to him**. Instruct students that they will not be reading the entire article, but that they are going to look a few specific sections and answer some questions. Give each student a copy of ***My Debt to Maine: Close Reading Questions*** (see below). It might be helpful to read the excerpts out loud and ask students to follow along before they answer the questions. After students have a chance to answer the questions, review their answers as a class.

The full rough draft and a transcription are available on Maine Memory Network:

[My Debt to Maine, Theodore Roosevelt, 1918](#)

6. Show students some **photographs of Roosevelt's campaign visits to Maine**; explain that most of these photos would have been taken during visits during his first term as President in 1902. Did he draw big crowds? Ask students to consider what they know about Maine in the early 1900s and what they have learned about Roosevelt and the Progressive/Bull Moose Party and ***Why would people in Maine have supported Roosevelt and/or the Progressive/Bull Moose Party? Why do you think Roosevelt utilized trains and trolleys during his visits?***

- a. [Crowd welcoming President Teddy Roosevelt, Union Station, Portland, 1902](#)
- b. [President Roosevelt at Gray, ca. 1912](#)
- c. [Theodore Roosevelt, Old Orchard Beach, 1902](#)

7. **Conclusion/Exit ticket:** Ask student to put themselves in Millie's place and imagine how she would answer the question ***Why do you support Theodore Roosevelt? How would he help Maine if he was president again?***

Extension Activities:

1. The Progressive/Bull Moose Party supported women's suffrage (the right to vote). In Chapter 17, Millie meets Maine suffragist Florence Brooks Whitehouse. Whitehouse is one of the women in this photo of Maine Governor Carl E. Milliken signing a Maine legislative resolution to hold a special election on Sept. 10, 1917 on a state constitutional amendment to grant women the right to vote in Maine ([Signing of Woman Suffrage Proclamation, 1917](#)). Whitehouse's papers are in the collections of Maine Historical Society and some of that collection can be seen on [Maine Memory Network](#), including several pro- and anti-suffrage political cartoons. Ask students to see what they can learn about the suffrage movement through those cartoons.

2. When trying to predict who would win a presidential election, people used to say "As goes Maine, so goes the nation", meaning that when Maine elected a governor it was usually the presidential candidate from the same party of that governor who would win the presidential election. For example, in 1840 Maine elected a governor from the Whig Party and that same

year the Whig candidate for president, William Henry Harrison, won the election. No full-time Maine resident has ever been elected president, but several Mainers have tried. Presidential candidates from across the country have often campaigned in the state and presidents have often visited or vacationed in Maine. Ask students to research Maine's role in electing presidents and the relationship that some presidents have had with the state.

3. Ask students to imagine that they have the chance to meet with a presidential candidate who will be visiting Maine. What questions would they ask the candidate and what would they ask the candidate to do for Maine if elected?

Additional Recommended Resources:

Maine Memory Network exhibits and slideshows:

[Debates Over Suffrage](#)

[Presidents and Campaigns](#)

Theodore Roosevelt Center:

[Learn About TR](#)

Khan Academy:

[Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt](#)

Library of Congress:

[Theodore Roosevelt: His Life and Times on Film](#)

National Park Service

[Sagamore Hill National Historic Site](#)

Name: _____

My Debt to Maine: Close Reading Questions

I owe a personal debt to Maine because of my association with certain staunch friends in Aroostook County; an association that helped and benefitted me (throughout my life) in more ways than one. It is over forty years ago that I first went to Island Falls and stayed with the Sewall family. I repeated the visit three or four times. I made a couple of hunting trips in the fall, with Bill Sewall and Wilmot Dow; and one winter I spent three or four weeks on snowshoes with them, visiting a couple of lumber camps. I was not a boy of any natural prowess, and for that very reason the vigorous outdoor life was just what I needed. It was a matter of pride with me to keep up with my stalwart associates, and to learn to shift for myself, and to treat with indifference whatever hardship or fatigue came our way...

...But the bodily comfort was not the largest part of the good done me. I was accepted as part of the household; and the family and friends represented in their lives the kind of Americanism - self-respecting, duty-performing, life-enjoying – which is the most valuable possession that any generation can hand on to the next...

...At one of the logging camps I became good friends with a quiet, resolute-looking man named Brown, one of the choppers; and afterwards I stopped at his house, and was as much struck with his good and pretty wife as I had been with him. He had served in the Civil War and had been wounded; his creed was that peace was a great - blessing, but that even so great a blessing could be purchased at too dear a price. I did not see him again until thirty seven years later, when he came to a meeting at which I spoke in Portland; he had shaved off his beard, and was an old man, and I did not at first recognize him; but after the first sentence I knew him, and very glad indeed I was to see him once more.

1.) How does Roosevelt say that visiting Maine helped him?

2.) Describe the impression that the people of Maine left on Roosevelt.

3.) Why do you think Roosevelt called his article “My Debt to Maine”

Maine Learning Results for Social Studies (2019):

Social Studies, Grades 6-8 – Civics & Government: Students draw on concepts from civics and government to understand political systems, power, authority, governance, civic ideals and practices, and the role of citizens in the community, Maine, the United States, and the world.

- **Civics & Government 1:** Students understand the basic ideals, purposes, principles, structures, and processes of constitutional government in Maine and the United States as well as examples of other forms of government in the world by: **(F1)** Explaining that the study of government includes the structures and functions of government and the political and civic activity of citizens. **(D3)** Analyze examples of democratic ideals and constitutional principles that include the rule of law, legitimate power, and common good.

Social Studies, Grades 6-8 – History: Students draw on concepts and processes using primary and secondary sources from history to develop historical perspective and understand issues of continuity and change in the community, Maine, the United States, and world.

- **History 1:** Students understand major eras, major enduring themes, and historic influences in the history of Maine, the United States, and various regions of the world by: **(F1)** Explaining that history includes the study of past human experience based on available evidence from a variety of primary and secondary sources; and explaining how history can help one better understand and make informed decisions about the present and future. **(F2)** Identifying major historical eras, major enduring themes, turning points, events, consequences, and people in the history of Maine, the United States, and various regions of the world. **(D2)** Analyzing major historical eras, major enduring themes, turning points, events, consequences, and people in the history of Maine, the United States, and various regions of the world. **(D3)** Explaining the history of democratic ideals and constitutional principles and their importance in the history of the United States and the world.

Common Core State Standards: English Language Arts Standards » History/Social Studies » Grade 6-8:

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.10

By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.