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(CCSS information from the Common Core State Standards Initiative at www.corestandards.org.)
OVERVIEW:

Through the nonfiction exemplar text, THE HOUSE THAT GEORGE BUILT, students will learn about the original construction and later changes made to the President’s House, as well as develop their own plans for future improvements to the White House. This may be a short assignment or expanded to an in-depth research assignment.

HOLIDAY TIE-INS:

President’s Day - February (third Monday)
Election Day - November (Tuesday after the first Monday)

"ANCHOR" COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:

CCSS Reading: R.1, R.2, R.3
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

CCSS Writing: W.2, W.3, W.4, W.7, W.10
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

CCSS Speaking & Listening: SL.1, SL.4
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS Language: L.1, L.2
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.]
**CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

1. **Building the President’s House**
After reading *THE HOUSE THAT GEORGE BUILT*, students will identify and write a list of the raw materials used to build the President’s House from the rhyming text (bricks, stone, wood, roof), prose text (stone sealer, slate, plaster, staircase wood) and illustrations (doors, windows, shutters, wood flooring, etc.)

Students will write a descriptive paragraph(s) that explains how the President’s House was built, including raw materials and the proper order of construction.


**Modification options:**
Teacher may specify number of construction steps included in narrative.
Students will draw a sketch of the completed President’s House using the last book illustration and the White House photo in backmatter as reference.

2. **The Changing President’s House**
Read “The Changing President’s House” section in the back of exemplar text, then write a descriptive paragraph(s) which shares several improvements made to the President’s House after it was built, including details of who made each and why.

(CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.4, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.1, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.2, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.4)

**Modification option:**
For older grades, students may reference two reliable websites below and include one improvement from each that is not listed in the book.

- Changing White House Timeline (click “next” to view all website pages) - [http://www.pbs.org/wnet/whitehouse/timeline/1792b.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/whitehouse/timeline/1792b.html)

- The White House Time Machine (click different years to see all pages) - [http://www.whitehousehistory.org/whha_shows/whitehouse_timemachine/index.htm](http://www.whitehousehistory.org/whha_shows/whitehouse_timemachine/index.htm)
3. The Best President’s House Improvement
Discuss the question below as a class, encouraging students to express their opinions and provide reasons for their answers:

- What do you think was the best addition or improvement made to the President’s House, and why?

(CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.1)

4. Student Improvements for the President’s House
Students will write a narrative about their own plans for a new improvement/addition to the President’s House or grounds and a sketch of the proposed building plan. Narrative will include well-chosen details about the improvement and its potential benefits (for the President’s family, White House staff, visitors, country, etc.)

(CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.3, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.4, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.1, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.2)

Modification option:
Students may present their improvement ideas to the class during individual presentations which may include a digital or poster board display.

(CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.4)

PROJECT modification option:
Complete all four above items over a period of time, allowing for sustained research and writing time over extended time frames and shorter time frames.

(CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.7, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.10)
**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND WORKSHEETS:**

**K-3 Activity Pages (White House Historical Association)** -
“The White House Symbol of Leadership” -

“Every Day is President’s Day at the White House” -

“The Colors and Shapes of the White House” -

**4-8 Activity Page (White House Historical Association)** -
“Building the White House” -

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

Suzanne Slade is the award-winning author of over 100 non-fiction children’s books. You can find out more about the author and her upcoming books on her website www.suzanneslade.com.