Theodore Roosevelt and the 1912 Election

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Module contains:
- Lesson plan which includes 7 identified Shapell Manuscript Foundation resources.
- Teaching strategies including differentiation for diverse learners.
- Ideas for assessment.
- National history standards met by teaching modules.
- Argument Essay Style question.

Introduction

The U.S. presidential election of 1912 was one of the most unique in U.S. History and Theodore Roosevelt was the main reason why. Roosevelt had previously served as president from 1901 to 1909 as a Republican. Roosevelt declined to run again in 1908 and instead supported fellow Republican, William Howard Taft, who won the election of 1908 easily. Roosevelt, however, did not agree with many of President Taft's policies. Roosevelt felt that Taft was too pro-business and suspected that President Taft was not a progressive. In a highly unusual move, Roosevelt challenged Taft for the Republican nomination in 1912. Losing narrowly, Roosevelt accused the Republican Party of corruption and launched a third party campaign for president under the Progressive Party, also nicknamed the Bull Moose Party. The Democrats nominated Woodrow Wilson, who also favored many of the same progressive policies as Roosevelt. On October 14, 1912, just three weeks before election day, Roosevelt was shot in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, while delivering a campaign speech. After the shooter was apprehended, Roosevelt, deciding that the injury was not fatal, finished his speech. In this module, teachers will be introduced to learning activities that allow students to imagine they are advising former President Roosevelt on his campaign. In doing so they will develop a greater understanding of the issues central to the 1912 election and of the unique man himself.

Lesson Length: One 90-minute period or two 45-minute periods

Level: 11th Grade U.S. History or 12th grade U.S. Government

Compelling Question: What qualities did Teddy Roosevelt possess that made his third party campaign appealing to voters?

Description: It's October of 1912 and Theodore Roosevelt is in the hospital after being shot while giving a campaign speech. Students will play the role of campaign advisors and work in groups to better understand Roosevelt and the election by analyzing primary sources. Then each group will create a campaign poster promoting Roosevelt's candidacy. Students will consider what the key issues are in the election and how their poster will attract voters to Roosevelt's campaign.

Materials needed:
1. Primary sources (below)
2. [Primary source analysis sheets](#): (one per student)
3. Sheet of paper for poster
   a. Alternative: the assignment could take the form of a digital poster. Students can post historical photos or other images on Google Slides or PowerPoint create. More digital options might be a campaign website or fake social media feed. Another alternative could be to make a campaign film (black and white and silent with title cards).

Activities:
1. Bell ringer: Students examine source [Theodore Roosevelt Assassination Attempt Painting by John Falter](#) | Shapell Manuscript Foundation
   ○ Model [primary source analysis](#) for art and fill it out with the class. Note: This artwork by John Falter was painted decades after the event (it's from a book published in 1970) and the artist was not an eyewitness. Talk with students about how this affects their process of analysis for the painting. Ask students to consider: How is the painting still a useful source for historians? What can it tell us about how Roosevelt was perceived?
   ○ For AP Teachers: Encourage students to apply HIPP analysis (Historical Context, Intended Audience, Purpose, Point of View) to this painting.
2. Inform students that the event depicted in the painting was an assassination attempt against presidential candidate (and former president) Theodore Roosevelt. Also let students know that after being shot, Roosevelt insisted on finishing his campaign speech. Ask students: using what they have learned from analyzing this painting and this new information: what qualities do they think Theodore Roosevelt might have possessed?
3. Inform the class that they will be role playing as advisors to Theodore Roosevelt as he runs for president in 1912. To get to know Roosevelt and the campaign they will analyze primary sources from the time period. First have students read the overview above or summarize it to provide context on the election of 1912.
4. Analyzing the sources
   ● Group students into groups of three (or let students choose groups).
   ● Give each group a selection of below sources either printed out or via links if students have access to a tablet or laptop. This is an opportunity for differentiation. The teacher may provide all sources to each group, a selection of sources to each group, or one source to each group depending on students' reading abilities. Tell students that these sources will help answer supporting questions such as:
      ○ What qualities or characteristics about Theodore Roosevelt are revealed by this source?
      ○ What does this source tell you about Roosevelt's campaign?

- ○ What can this source tell you about key issues in the 1912 Presidential Election?
  - ○ How can campaigns use images to build popular support?
- ● Formative assessment: Each student completes a [Primary source analysis sheet](#) on one source. Students may help each other but each student should complete a sheet.
- ● Once students have completed their source analysis, ask students to share what they have learned about Roosevelt and his campaign.
4. Creating the poster.
   - ● Using these sources students will make a campaign poster for Theodore Roosevelt's campaign. This could be a physical poster or a digital poster. Alternatively students could make a campaign film.
   - ● Students should pick a quality of Theodore Roosevelt OR a campaign issue to base their poster on. If a student needs help coming up with a poster topic or slogan, teachers can suggest a line from the campaign song ["Triplicity, or Donkey, Moose or Elephant"](#)
   - ● Inform students that the purpose of the poster is to effectively communicate visually.
   - ● Students present their poster to the class or do a gallery walk.

Ideas for differentiation:
- ● Students can be grouped according to ability with higher performers in groups with middle and lower performers.
- ● For ESL students or students with disabilities who may need language supports, teachers can use templates for writing on posters.
- ● For digital learning, a pre-made google sites template might be ideal for implementing differentiation.
- ● Students who need language supports may also require letters be read out loud by teachers or classroom assistants as appropriate. Teachers may decide to read excerpts rather than the entire letter.

Sources:

For Bell Ringer:
- Theodore Roosevelt Assassination Attempt Painting by John Falter | Shapell Manuscript Foundation https://www.shapell.org/manuscript/tr-assassination-painting-john-falter

For group Primary Source Analysis Activity:
- Theodore Roosevelt Health Update After Being Shot | Shapell Manuscript Foundation https://www.shapell.org/manuscript/theodore-roosevelt-assassination-attempt-hearty-as-a-bull-moose/
- First Lady Edith Roosevelt on Teddy Roosevelt Assassination Attempt https://www.shapell.org/manuscript/first-lady-edith-roosevelt-on-theodore-roosevelt-assassination-attempt/
- Theodore Roosevelt Edits Account of Assassination Attempt on Him | Shapell Manuscript Foundation https://www.shapell.org/manuscript/theodore-roosevelt-edits-account-of-assassination-attempt/
- Theodore Roosevelt On The Bull Moose Party & 1912 Election | Shapell Manuscript Foundation https://www.shapell.org/manuscript/theodore-roosevelt-1912-elections-bull-moose-party-chicago-convention
- William Taft wins Republican Nomination Against Theodore Roosevelt | Shapell Manuscript Foundation https://www.shapell.org/manuscript/taft-roosevelt-rivalry/
- Theodore Roosevelt William Howard Taft | 1912 Presidential Campaign https://www.shapell.org/manuscript/roosevelt-taft-1912-campaign/
- Triplicity, or Donkey, Moose or Elephant (Sheetmusic) | Library of Congress https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.200155632/

Assessment:

	5 points	**3 points**	**1 point**
Title	Poster title clearly communicates that Theodore Roosevelt (or "Teddy") is running for president for Progressive Party (or "Bull Moose Party) in 1912.	Poster title is missing two of the following: the candidate's name, the office he's running for, the party, or the year.	Title is missing.
Campaign slogan	Campaign slogan is clear and historically accurate.	Poster has campaign slogan, but statement has issues with clarity/accuracy.	Poster is missing slogan.
Visuals	Poster's visuals are historically accurate and neatly presented.	There are issues with clarity/accuracy of visuals.	Poster has limited or basic visuals.

TOTAL: _____ /15

Applicable standards:
The lesson follows The Inquiry Design Model (IDM) which is defined as "a distinctive approach to creating curriculum and instructional materials that honors teachers' knowledge and expertise, avoids overprescription, and focuses on the main elements of the instructional design process as envisioned in the Inquiry Arc of the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards (2013)"

	Content	Skill
College Board AP Government AP U.S. History	AP Government Unit 5: Political Participation 5.5 Third-Party Politics 5.8 Electing a President AP U.S. History Unit 7: The Progressives	AP Historical Thinking Skills - (1) Developments and Processes - Identify and explain historical developments and processes; (2) Sourcing and Situation - Analyze sourcing and situation of primary and secondary sources; (3) Claims and Evidence in Sources - Analyze arguments in primary and secondary sources; (4) Contextualization - Analyze the context of historical events, developments, or processes; (5) Making Connections - Using historical reasoning processes (comparison, causation, continuity and change), analyze patterns and connections between and among historical developments and processes; and (6) Argumentation - Develop an argument.
IB History of the Americas		• Influence of leaders in the transition to the modern era: political and economic aims; the successes and failures of Theodore Roosevelt, Wilfrid Laurier and any one Latin American leader
Common Core	N/A	**Key Ideas and Details**: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3

Argument Essay Style question:

Successful third party presidential campaigns have been rare in U.S. history. Some have argued that reforms are necessary to assist third party candidates and give voters more choices beyond the two main political parties. The most successful third party presidential campaign in U.S. history was Theodore Roosevelt's 1912 run for the presidency. Roosevelt finished in second place with 27 percent of the vote ahead of Republican candidate and incumbent, William Howard Taft.

Develop an argument that explores whether the two-party system should be reformed to allow for more opportunities for third parties.Use at least one piece of evidence from one of the sources provided.

In your essay, you must:
- Respond to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of specific and relevant evidence.
  - One piece of evidence must come from one of the sources provided
  - A second piece of evidence can come from any other source provided not used as your first piece of evidence, or it may be from your knowledge of course concepts.
- Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim/thesis.
- Respond to an opposing or alternative perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.

Sources:
- Theodore Roosevelt On The Bull Moose Party & 1912 Election | Shapell Manuscript Foundation
  https://www.shapell.org/manuscript/theodore-roosevelt-1912-elections-bull-moose-party-chicago-convention
- William Taft wins Republican Nomination Against Theodore Roosevelt | Shapell Manuscript Foundation https://www.shapell.org/manuscript/taft-roosevelt-rivalry/
- Theodore Roosevelt William Howard Taft | 1912 Presidential Campaign https://www.shapell.org/manuscript/roosevelt-taft-1912-campaign/
- Triplicity, or Donkey, Moose or Elephant (Sheetmusic) | Library of Congress https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.200155632/