

The Artios Home Companion Series

Unit 10: Start of the Twentieth Century

Teacher Overview

UPON THE DEATH OF William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt became President of the United States. The youngest president the nation had ever had, “Teddy” Roosevelt brought great energy and vitality to the office, and he set about to find ways to help America prosper. The most significant thing he did was to oversee the construction of the Panama Canal. Oklahoma also became a state during his presidency. William Howard Taft became president after Roosevelt, and two states—Arizona and New Mexico—were added to the Union during his administration.



The New Agua Clara locks on the Panama Canal

Suggested Assignments

Based on your student’s age and ability, the reading in this unit may be read aloud to the student and journaling and notebook pages may be completed orally. Likewise, other assignments can be done with an appropriate combination of independent and guided study.

In this unit, students will:

- Complete one lesson in which they will learn about **Theodore Roosevelt**, the **Panama Canal**, and **William H. Taft**.
- Define a vocabulary word.
- Complete a biography notebook page on **Theodore Roosevelt**.
- Complete your report on either Hawaii or Cuba.
- *Optional:* Do a report or presentation on either the Wright Brothers and their first flight at Kitty Hawk, or on Henry Ford and his production process for assembling the Model T automobile.
- Visit the **ArtiosHCS** curriculum website at www.ArtiosHCS.com for additional resources and any videos and websites assigned for this unit.

Leading Ideas

Scripture addresses the Christian's responsibility to government—to obey laws that do not violate Biblical principles.

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment . . . Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

– Romans 13:1-7

God created all human beings equal in His sight. Although we may have different and individual God-ordained purposes, God sees us as equal.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

– Galatians 3:28

Key People, Places, and Events

Theodore Roosevelt
Square Deal
Panama Canal

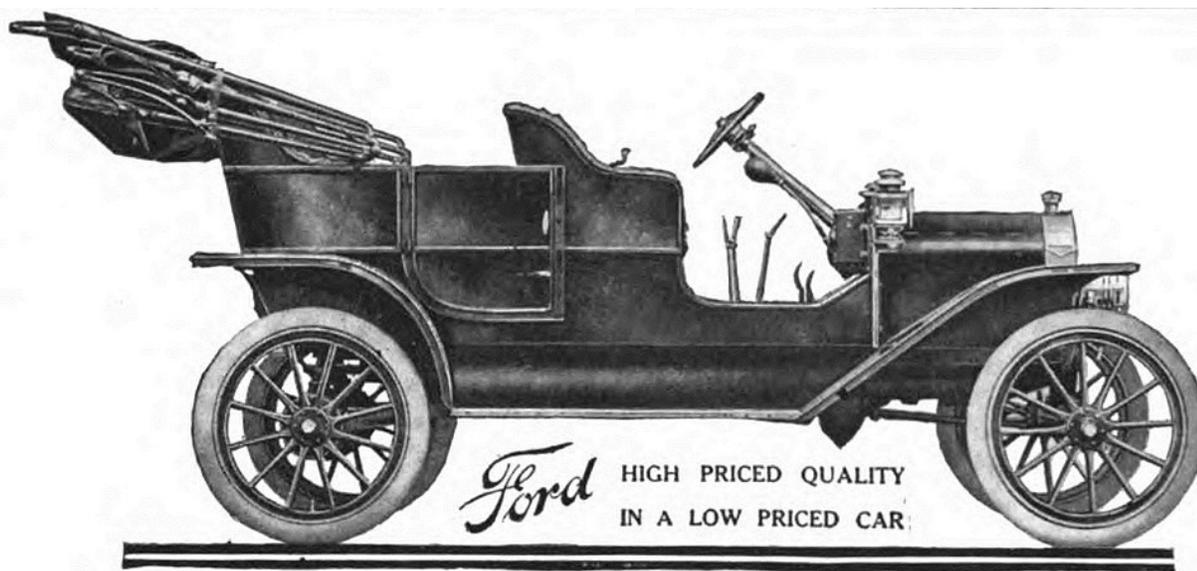
Wright brothers
Henry Ford
Oklahoma

William H. Taft
New Mexico
Arizona

Vocabulary

Lesson 1:

isthmus



1908 Ford Model T advertisement

Lesson One

History Overview and Assignments Presidents Roosevelt and Taft

“As Mr. Roosevelt was the youngest of all presidents, he brought to the White House a youthful energy and “hustle” such as no president had before. He had strong opinions to which he never hesitated to give voice, and perhaps since Lincoln no president had been such a forceful leader. His plan for improving America, reflecting three major goals of corporate regulation, conservation of resources, and consumer protection, became known as the ‘Square Deal.’ He made many reforms and laws to protect business dealings, laborers, food, and public land. Perhaps the most interesting thing in Roosevelt’s presidency was the beginning of the Panama Canal.”

– from the adapted article below



President Theodore Roosevelt



President William H. Taft

Key People, Places, and Events

Theodore Roosevelt
Square Deal
Panama Canal
Wright brothers
Henry Ford
Oklahoma
William H. Taft
New Mexico
Arizona

Vocabulary

isthmus

Suggested Reading and Assignments

- Read the article: *Presidents Roosevelt and Taft*.
- Define the vocabulary word in the context of the reading. Write the word and its definition in the vocabulary section of your notebook.
- After reading the article, summarize the story you read by either:
 - Retelling it out loud to your teacher or parent.
 - OR
 - Completing an appropriate notebook page.Either way, be sure to include an overview of key people, dates, and events in your summary.
- Instead of answering discussion questions, complete a biography notebook page on **Theodore Roosevelt**. Include his goals and accomplishments during his time as president.
- Complete your report on either Hawaii or Cuba that was assigned in Unit 9.

- *Optional:* Do a report or presentation on either the Wright Brothers and their first flight at Kitty Hawk, or on Henry Ford and his production process for assembling the Model T automobile.
- Be sure to visit your **ArtiosHCS** curriculum website for additional resources and any videos and websites assigned for this lesson.



Map showing the location of the Panama Canal

Adapted for Elementary School from the book:

This Country of Ours

by Henrietta Elizabeth Marshall

Presidents Roosevelt and Taft

Upon William McKinley's death, Vice President **Theodore Roosevelt** became president. He was the youngest of all the presidents, being only forty-two when he came into office. Mr. Roosevelt was in the mountains with his wife and children when the news was brought to him that the President was dying. At nine o'clock at night he started off on a long drive of thirty-five miles to the railway station. The road was narrow, steep, and full of mud holes, and the drive through the darkness was one of danger.

A little after five in the morning, the station was reached. Here a special train was waiting which carried the Vice President to Buffalo as fast as might be. But he was too late to see his president in life. For while he was still on his wild drive through the night, President McKinley had passed peacefully to his last rest.



Sagamore Hill, home of Theodore Roosevelt on Long Island

As Mr. Roosevelt was the youngest of all presidents, he brought to the White House a youthful energy and "hustle" such as no president had before. He had strong opinions to which he never hesitated to give voice, and perhaps since Lincoln no president had been such a forceful leader. His plan for improving America, reflecting three major goals of corporate regulation,

conservation of resources, and consumer protection, became known as the “**Square Deal.**” He made many reforms and laws to protect business dealings, laborers, food, and public land.

Perhaps the most interesting thing in Roosevelt’s presidency was the start of the **Panama Canal.**



President Theodore Roosevelt sitting on a steam shovel at the Panama Canal, November 1906

You remember that when Columbus set forth upon the Atlantic, his idea was to reach the east by sailing west. And to the day of his death he imagined that he had reached India by sailing westward. But soon men found out the mistake and began the search for northwest passages by which they might sail past the great continent, and so reach India.

The Northwest Passage, however, proved a delusion. The men turned their attention to the narrow **isthmus** by which the two vast continents of North and South America are joined. And soon the idea of

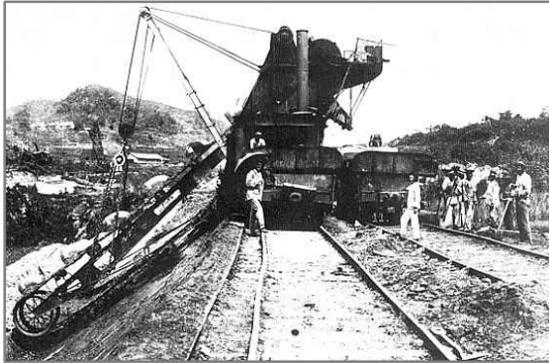
cutting a canal through this narrow barrier began to be talked of. But time went on, and the Spaniards who held sway over the isthmus did no more than talk. Then an adventurous Scotsman was seized with the idea of founding a colony on the Gulf of Darién, which is the southernmost portion of the Caribbean Sea, lying next to the border that existed at that time between Colombia and Panama. He meant to build a great harbor where all the ships of the world would come. Merchandise was to be carried overland across the isthmus by camels, and soon his colony would be the key to all the commerce of the world.

Such was his golden dream, but it ended in utter failure.

Still, the idea grew. Men of many nations began to discuss the possibility of building a canal, and Panama broke away from Spain in 1821 to join the Republic of Colombia. And at length the French got permission from the government of Colombia, and work on a canal was begun. But after working for many years the French gave up the undertaking, which was far more difficult and had cost far more money than they had expected. Meanwhile the Americans had become much interested in the scheme, and they had begun to think of cutting a canal through the isthmus at Nicaragua. Then when the French company went bankrupt, they offered to sell all their rights to the canal to the United States. There was a good deal of discussion over the matter, for some people thought that the Nicaragua route would be better. But in the end, it was agreed to take over the canal already begun and go with it.

Everything was arranged when the Colombian Senate suddenly refused to sign the treaty. By this treaty they were to receive

ten million dollars, besides a yearly rent for the land through which the canal ran. But that sum seemed to them now too small, and they refused to sign the treaty unless the money to be paid down should be increased to twenty-five million dollars.



An excavator at work during construction of the Panama Canal

This the United States was unwilling to give. Everything came to a standstill, and it seemed as if the Panama scheme would have to be given up, when suddenly a new turn was given to affairs. For the people of Panama rose in rebellion against Colombia and declared themselves a republic.

The United States at once recognized the new republic and sent military support, and before a month had passed a treaty between the United States and the Republic of Panama was drawn up and signed, and the work on the great canal was begun.

A good many people, however, were not very pleased at the manner in which the struggle had been ended. They thought that the United States ought not to have taken the part of rebels in such haste. But the President was quite satisfied that he had done the right thing, and that it would have been dishonorable not to help the new republic.

Two Other Advances in Transportation

During the first decade of the twentieth century, two more major advances took place

*in transportation. On December 17, 1903, the **Wright brothers**, Orville and Wilbur, made history by flying the world's first successful motor-powered airplane, making a controlled, sustained flight over the breezy, sandy dunes at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. In 1908, **Henry Ford** began mass-producing his famous Model T automobile. One of the first industries to use standardized parts, automated machines, and assembly-line production, Ford's production process revolutionized industrial manufacturing processes, and by 1913 his assembly line was able to produce a complete automobile in 93 minutes.*



The first flight of the *Wright Flyer*, December 17, 1903, Orville piloting, Wilbur running at wingtip

In 1902 Mr. Roosevelt had become president “by accident.” If it had not been for the tragedy of President McKinley’s death, he would not have come into power, and the thought grieved him. So when he was actually elected president, he was quite pleased. For now he felt that he held his great office because the people wanted him, and not because they could not help having him.

Few presidents have grown so much in popularity after coming into office as Mr. Roosevelt. People felt he was a jolly good fellow, and throughout the length and breadth of the land he was known as “Teddy.”

“Who is the head of the government?” a little girl was asked.

“Mr. Roosevelt,” was the reply.
“Yes, but what is his official title?”
“Teddy,” answered the little one.

During this presidency, **Oklahoma** was admitted to the Union as the forty-sixth state. Oklahoma is a Native American word meaning “red people.”



3-cent Mount Rushmore stamp, 1952. From left to right: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln

In 1909 **William H. Taft** became president. Mr. Taft had been governor of the Philippines and had shown great tact and firmness in that post. Then he was President Roosevelt’s secretary of war. He and Roosevelt were friends, and Roosevelt did all he could to further his election.

During Mr. Taft’s presidency, two states were admitted to the Union—the last two for nearly fifty years. Ever since the Civil War **New Mexico** had been seeking admission

as a state, and at one time it was proposed to call this state Lincoln. That suggestion, however, came to nothing, and some years later it was proposed to admit New Mexico and **Arizona** as one state. To this Arizona objected, and at length they were admitted as separate states, New Mexico on the 6th of January and Arizona on the 11th of February 1912. Both these states were made out of the Mexican Concession and the Gadsden Purchase. During his presidency, Mr. Taft faced much opposition to his insistence on reducing trade tariffs and conflict over land conservation and business regulation.

Many years after his presidency, Taft became chief justice of the Supreme Court, and he is the only person who has ever been both president and chief justice.



A photograph taken as William H. Taft learns by telephone from Roosevelt of his nomination for president



Construction of locks on the Panama Canal (1913)