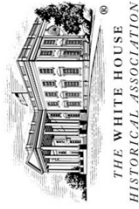


# WHITE HOUSE



*The rooms in the White House have evolved as our nation's history has unfolded.*

► This architectural sketch depicts the **STATE FLOOR** of the White House in 1803.

► **THE WHITE HOUSE** has six floors: two sub-basements, the Ground Floor, the State Floor, and two floors above that for the private residence.

*Family Dining Room*



*State Dining Room*

The **State Dining Room** now seats 140 guests, but originally it was much smaller. At times it served as a Cabinet Room and private office.

*Entrance Hall*

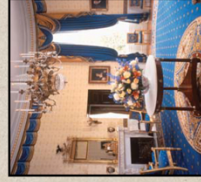


*Cross Hall*



*Green Room*

*Blue Room*



President Grover Cleveland was married in the **Blue Room** in 1886. He was the first president to have his wedding in the White House.

*East Room*



President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the 1964 Civil Rights Act in the **East Room**. This grand space often hosts music and dance performances.



## TECH FACT

The first telephone was installed for President Rutherford B. Hayes in 1879. His telephone number was "1."



# EXPLORING HISTORY & TECHNOLOGY AT THE WHITE HOUSE

## STUDENTS WILL

Research innovations' impact on society

Write nonfiction guides

Write narratives with research-based settings



*ELA + Social Studies Lessons on  
Innovations That Changed American Society*

GRADES 6-8

Visit [scholastic.com/whitehousehistory](https://www.scholastic.com/whitehousehistory) for additional resources.

THE WHITE HOUSE ©  
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



# Researching Technological Innovations

Help students discover how the White House played a key role in introducing cutting-edge technology that still impacts us today.

## Objective

Students will apply primary and secondary sources to present information on historical technology.

## Standards

CCSS ELA, Grs. 6–8

### RH.1

Cite specific textual evidence from primary and secondary sources

### CCRA.W.4

Produce writing developed, organized, and styled to task an audience

### CCRA.W.7

Conduct short research projects from focused questions, demonstrating understanding

## Time

120 minutes

## Materials

- Internet access for student pairs (or computer lab time)
- Tap Into the Tech activity sheet
- Create Your Brochure! activity sheet
- Blank 8½ x 11-inch paper and art supplies
- Welcome to the White House classroom poster



**Check out the White House Experience App** to find educational and interactive experiences to further engage students with history. Just scan the code above to get started!

**1 ★ Have** students pair up and brainstorm technologies that are important in their daily lives (for example, phone, school bus, etc.). Then facilitate a class discussion about technologies we use that now seem mundane but were game-changing when first introduced. (Examples: vacuum cleaner, electricity, telegraph, air conditioning, etc.)

**2 ★ Explain** that historically, the White House has hosted, presented, and introduced all kinds of new technologies. In fact, one way we can consider how technology has changed in the United States is to look at how and when new technologies were adopted at the White House. Show the classroom poster, emphasizing the tech callouts. Ask: *What would make a specific technology at the White House a game changer?* Guide students toward criteria such as: enhances human comfort, is more efficient, builds community connections, has a unique purpose. Collect ideas on the board. As a class, decide on five criteria of top technologies.

**3 ★ Pair up** students to research technological advances using the Tap Into the Tech activity sheet. Explain that at the end, they will choose one technology that's most interesting to them. Students over 13 may use [bit.ly/WH-Tech1](http://bit.ly/WH-Tech1)

and/or [bit.ly/WH-Tech2](http://bit.ly/WH-Tech2) for internet research; for those under 13, you may print (or project onto the board) some advances from the site, then direct students to use books or child-friendly, COPPA-compliant research sites.

**4 ★ Direct** each pair to create a White House Visitor's Guide brochure that focuses on their chosen technology. Hand out the Create Your Brochure! activity sheet to guide their work in describing their technology, explaining its impact, and drawing conclusions on how it has shaped life since it's introduction.

**5 ★ Host** a showcase in which pairs present their brochures, or set up a gallery walk.

★ ★ ★

## Supporting All Learners

### To increase the challenge:

Have students prepare a video or slide presentation to replace or supplement their brochure. Teachers can include a public-speaking rubric.

### To decrease the challenge:

Show students how to turn the questions on the Create Your Brochure! sheet into sentence stems to facilitate their writing.

## ELA Lesson Online!

Teach students more applications for research with our story-writing activity based on historical setting at [scholastic.com/whitehousehistory](http://scholastic.com/whitehousehistory).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## *Tap Into the Tech*

As you start your fact-finding mission on White House innovations, use this chart to collect info. Then choose the technology on your list that's most interesting to use for your final brochure.

### **The Technology**

List four or five technological advances that were adopted at the White House. (Example: the vacuum cleaner.)



### **Immediate Impact**

Explain how the technology improved life. (Example: It made cleaning the many rooms at the White House easier.)



### **The Bigger Picture**

Combine your research and inferencing skills to describe how the technology made life better for all Americans.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Create Your Brochure!

Now that you've chosen your top technology from White House history, it's time to present it in a Visitor's Guide brochure. Follow this planner to help you get creative.



*This chandelier was made by Christoph Palme & Co., a lighting design firm that supplied electric lighting fixtures to the White House in 1902.*

**Page 1** ★ Think of the cover as what sells your technology and makes people want to come to the White House to learn about it. On this first page, include a clear title that reveals your technology. Feel free to get clever and catchy! Also, include a great photo or illustration of your innovation. Jot down several possibilities for your title here:

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**Page 2** ★ Here, give visitors a short history of your innovation. Who invented it, and when was it introduced? What exactly does it do? How does it work?

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**Page 3** ★ Describe why the technology was adopted at the White House. What issue did it help with? How did it impact the lives of those living and working there at the time?

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**Page 4** ★ The back cover wraps up your brochure. Give a short report on how this technology impacted the nation at the time. How did it make life easier or better? What problems did it solve? And how has it evolved over time to serve generations of Americans?

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# Developing Narrative Settings

Nurture students' creativity—and their grasp on setting—with a fiction writing activity about a historical moment in the White House.

## Objective

Students will write narratives, focusing on setting, and apply the writing process (planning, revising, and editing) to their work.

## Standards

CCSS ELA, Grs. 6–8

**CCRA.W.3**

Write narratives about imagined events with details and well-structured sequences

**CCRA.W.5**

Develop writing by planning, revising, editing, and rewriting

**CCRA.W.7**

Conduct short research projects with focused questions

## Time

120 minutes

## Materials

- Access to the internet (alternately, library time for students to research)
- Craft a White House Story activity sheet
- The Places and Spaces of the White House resource sheet

**1 ★ Ask:** *What makes a story interesting?* Have students brainstorm and collect answers on the board (examples: characters who seem real, intriguing settings, colorful details, humor, compelling conflict, etc). Focus on setting (where and when a story takes place), and prompt students to explain what it is. Come up with a definition based on student answers and write it on the board.

**2 ★ Discuss** why setting impacts a story. Have students consider how a favorite novel would have gone differently if it had taken place in another room, country, or time period. For example, how might Hansel and Gretel's story be different if they had gotten lost in a castle...or in 2019 with GPS phones? How does the dialogue in a story about a fight with a friend play out if it happens during class versus the cafeteria; or in 1930 versus today?

**3 ★ Tell** students they will be writing a story, and using a room of the White House during a historic time period as their setting. As they plan their story, they should consider how setting, character, and plot intertwine and impact one another.

**4 ★ Research:** Students will research a few White House rooms—and what they were like in a different historical time period—to gather details for their story setting. To kick off, show the classroom poster and discuss the floor plan.

- **For students over 13,** direct them to [bit.ly/WH-Rooms](http://bit.ly/WH-Rooms) to see individual rooms (click on a photo to see a room's details).

## • For students of any age:

- » Print and distribute The Places and Spaces of the White House resource sheet as a cheat sheet.
- » Alternately, print photos and descriptions of each room and post around the classroom for students to choose from.

**5 ★ Hand out** the Craft a White House Story activity sheet to guide students in brainstorming and planning specific story elements. Students may need to conduct additional research on their room's setting and time period.

**6 ★ Assign** students to draft and revise in class or at home (set a length guideline). Once their narratives are finalized, create a class book or invite other classes to "visit the White House" for a read-aloud publishing party in your classroom.

★ ★ ★

## Supporting All Learners

### To increase the challenge:

Instruct students to write two possible endings, basing them on two different decisions a character could make at the turning point of the story. Increase the challenge further by having students introduce a second White House room.

### To decrease the challenge:

Have students "write what they know" using a conflict from their own lives and tweaking it for a White House setting. They can base characters on people in their own lives who don't live or work at the White House.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Craft a White House Story

On a separate piece of paper, plan out the important elements of your story, like setting, character, and plot. Once you've outlined everything, start writing.



- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>1 Story genre</b><br>Choose mystery, fantasy, historical fiction, humor, etc.   | <b>3 Main characters</b><br>Write down a couple of words or images to describe their character traits.   | <b>5 Plot summary</b><br>Use the plot arc stages: exposition, rising action, conflict, turning point, and resolution. |
| <b>2 Setting</b><br>Describe the specific room in the White House by considering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Room purpose</b>, such as public state dinners, private meetings, playroom, workers working, etc.</li> <li>• <b>Room details</b>, such as size, decorations, color, history, artifacts displayed there, etc.</li> <li>• <b>Time period details</b>, such as what technology was available, how people dressed, etc.</li> </ul> | <b>4 Conflict</b><br>You can expand on one of these problems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Between characters</b> (example: one person wants power over another)</li> <li>• <b>Inside one character</b> (example: the protagonist can't decide whether to do the right thing)</li> <li>• <b>External event that the character must deal with</b> (example: something was stolen)</li> </ul> | <b>6 Resolution</b><br>How does the main character fix the problem?   |
|  |  | <b>★ Extra details you want to include:</b>   |

**WRITING TIP** ★ *Be sure to blend your story elements by having the characters interact with the setting and making the surroundings part of the plot.*

# THE PLACES AND SPACES OF THE WHITE HOUSE



## RESOURCE LIST

**Blue Room** ★ Main drawing room used for receiving guests, noted for its oval shape. State Floor.

**Cabinet Room** ★ Meeting room for the president's **cabinet**. West Wing. Former Cabinet Rooms were on the second floor in the Residence.

**China Room** ★ Exhibition space where selections from the historic presidential china collection are displayed. Ground Floor.

**Cross Hall** ★ Long, grand passage from the East Room to the State Dining Room; also a gallery of portraits of recent presidents. State Floor.

**Diplomatic Reception Room** ★ Oval-shaped room located beneath the Blue Room where foreign **dignitaries** are received after they enter through the South **Portico**. Ground Floor.

**East Colonnade** ★ Glass-enclosed corridor connecting the Residence to the East Wing. Ground Floor.

**East Room** ★ Great **ceremonial** room of the White House. State Floor.

**East Sitting Hall** ★ Family sitting room. Second Floor.

**East Terrace** ★ Open area above the roof of the East **Colonnade**.

**East Wing** ★ Building on the east, connected to the Residence by the East Colonnade; contains offices of the first lady and her staff, and the main entrance for visitors touring the White House.

**Entrance Hall** ★ **Formal** reception area for visitors coming through the North Door. Also known as Grand **Foyer**. State Floor.

## VOCABULARY

**Cabinet** a group of advisers of a head of state

**Colonnade** a series of columns set at regular intervals and usually supporting the base of a roof structure

**Dignitaries** persons considered to be important because of high rank or office

**Portico** a structure consisting of a roof supported by columns at regular intervals, typically attached as a porch to a building

**Ceremonial** the system of rules and procedures to be observed at a formal occasion

**Foyer** an entrance hall in a house, apartment, or other open area in a building used by the public

**Formal** done according to customary rules or etiquette; appropriate for or constituting an official or important situation or occasion

**Utilitarian** designed to be useful or practical rather than attractive

**Parlor** a room for receiving guests

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**Ellipse** ★ Oval-shaped park to the south of the White House.

**Executive Residence** ★ Original central portion of the White House and where the first family's living quarters are located.

**Executive Mansion** ★ Another name for the White House.

**Family Dining Room** ★ Originally the main family dining room; today used for special events. State Floor.

**Green Room** ★ State **parlor** used for small gatherings. State Floor.



**Ground Floor** ★ Originally a **utilitarian** basement below the State Floor; redesigned with reception rooms in the Theodore Roosevelt renovation of 1902.

**Jacqueline Kennedy Garden** ★ One of the main flower gardens of the White House; located on the east side of the South Lawn; also known as the First Ladies' and the East Garden.

**Ground Floor Corridor** ★ Central passageway connecting Ground Floor Rooms, the West Wing, and the East Wing. Ground Floor.

**Library** ★ Library with a collection of books on American history, thought, and tradition. Ground Floor.

**Lincoln Bedroom** ★ Guest bedroom that was the office and Cabinet Room of President Abraham Lincoln. Second Floor.

**Map Room** ★ Sitting room used as a situation room by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt during World War II. Ground Floor.

**North Lawn** ★ Outdoor area on the north/ Pennsylvania Avenue side of the White House.

**North Portico** ★ Three-sided, colonnaded entrance porch on the north side of the White House.

**Oval Office** ★ The president's office. West Wing.

**President's House** ★ Original name for the White House.

**President's Park** ★ Approximately 85-acre preserve designated by President George Washington when the capital was planned in 1792; includes the White House, Lafayette Park, the Ellipse, and the grounds of the Eisenhower Executive office and Treasury Buildings.

**Press Room** ★ Assembly room for news reporters covering the White House. West Colonnade.

**Queens' Bedroom** ★ Guest bedroom named for the visiting royalty who have stayed there. Second Floor.

**Red Room** ★ State parlor used for small gatherings. State Floor.

**Roosevelt Room** ★ Central conference room located across the hall from the Oval Office. West Wing.

**Rose Garden** ★ One of the main flower gardens of the White House, located on the west side of the South Lawn; used for outdoor ceremonies; also known as the West Garden.

**Second Floor** ★ The level that appears as the "upstairs" from the street and houses the private family quarters.

**Solarium** ★ Private family recreation room above the South Portico. Third Floor.

**South Lawn** ★ Outdoor area on the south side of the White House.

**South Portico** ★ Semicircular colonnaded porch with open-armed stairs on the south side of the White House.

**State Dining Room** ★ Dining room for State Dinners and other official dinners. State Floor.

**State Floor** ★ Main floor of the White House, containing the public rooms.

**State Rooms** ★ Formal rooms on the State Floor, including the Blue Room, Red Room, Green Room, State Dining Room, and East Room.

**Third Floor** ★ Originally an attic above the Second Floor, redesigned for use by the first family in 1927.

**Truman Balcony** ★ Second-level balcony added to the South Front of the White House by President Harry S. Truman in 1947–48.

**Vermeil Room** ★ Exhibition space where a collection of vermeil (gilded silver) is displayed. Ground Floor.

**West Colonnade** ★ Column-lined open passageway that borders the Rose Garden and connects the Residence to the West Wing.

**West Wing** ★ Office wing of the White House that contains the Oval Office and offices for the president's closest advisers.

**Yellow Oval Room** ★ Oval-shaped room located above the Blue Room that serves as a formal drawing room for the family quarters. Second Floor.