

2: Getting to Know an Era

American History 1812–Present

CLASS TIME

Three 45- to 50-minute sessions

OBJECTIVES

Students will describe the ways in which the United States Mint honors the contributions of individuals, events, and institutions. They will recognize how the United States Mint 50 State Quarters® Program reflects the nation’s history, diversity, unity, pride, and commitment to maintaining these American ideals.

NATIONAL STANDARDS

The standards used for these lesson plans reference the “10 Thematic Standards in Social Studies” developed by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS).

- **Time, Continuity, and Change**—Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ways human beings view themselves in and over time.
- **Civic Ideals and Practices**—Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ideals, principles, and practices of citizenship.

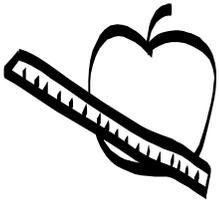
TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- The United States Mint 50 State Quarters Program
- Commemorate
- Commemorative
- Events
- Leaders
- Institutions

SESSION 1

Materials

- 1 overhead projector (optional)
- 1 overhead transparency (or photocopy) of any quarter reverse from the 50 State Quarters Program
- Copies of the “They’ve Made A Difference” worksheet (1 per student)
- A reserved computer lab with Internet access
- Copies of either the “Commemorative Coinage Web Questionnaire” or “The United States Mint 50 State Quarters® Program Web Questionnaire” (1 per student)
- Classroom Social Studies text (1 per student)



Getting to Know an Era

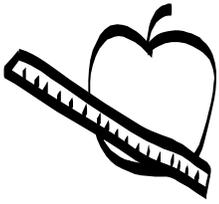
Procedures

1. Write the terms “commemorate” and “commemorative” on the chalk board.
2. Assign each student a partner, and conduct a Think-Pair-Share activity in which students define the word “commemorate” and identify a way in which the United States commemorates an important person or event. For example, the United States commemorates our independence on the fourth of July each year.
3. Display a quarter reverse for all the students to see. Ask if students have ever seen this coin, and what they know about it. Who produces this coin? What does it commemorate?
4. Introduce students to the idea that the 50 State Quarters Program is one way in which the United States Mint commemorates our country’s heritage but that there are many other coins made at the Mint to commemorate individuals, institutions, and events.
5. Distribute a “They’ve Made a Difference” worksheet to each student and allow approximately ten minutes for its completion.
6. Regroup and, as a class, discuss some of your students’ responses. Why were certain people, places and events selected over others? How did students come to the decision as to what they’d choose to commemorate.
7. As a class, visit the computer lab.
8. Distribute a copy of either the “Commemorative Coinage Web Questionnaire” or the “United States Mint 50 State Quarters® Program Web Questionnaire” to each student. Either individually, in pairs, or as a class, read the questionnaire.
9. Explain that students will use only the United States Mint Web site, and others bookmarked by their teacher, which relate to commemorative coinage.
Note: Depending on your unit of study, you may want to direct the students to identify key events, leaders or institutions that pertain to a particular time period.
10. Explain that students will research the appropriate responses using the available Internet resources. Explain that in the next session they will determine cultural aspects worth commemorating in the time period they are studying.

SESSION 2

Materials

- 1 overhead projector (optional)
- 1 overhead transparency (or classroom set of photocopies) of the “Quarter Design” page
- 1 blank overhead transparency sheet or chalkboard
- Overhead markers or chalk
- Blank coin outlines (1 per student)
- Colored pencils, markers, or crayons
- “Independent Work Rubric” (1 per student)
- Classroom Social Studies text



Getting to Know an Era

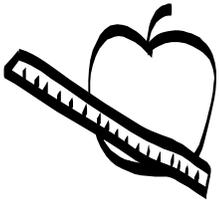
Procedures

1. Ask students to take out their Web questionnaire from the previous session.
2. Review the terms “commemorate” and “commemorative” and ask students to name the kinds of topics commemorated with coins from the United States Mint. Consider specifically the 50 State Quarters Program.
3. Place the terms “events,” “leaders,” and “institutions” on the board and ask the students to write a description of each term.
4. On the overhead projector or on the chalk board, record the topics listed by your students. As your students identify the classifications, make mention of examples that exist on the new quarter reverse designs. (For example, one military accomplishment is represented by George Washington crossing the Delaware.) You may direct the students to create the following categories:
 - Arts, Entertainment, and Sports
 - Politics
 - Military Accomplishments
 - Society (Social Movements, Social Activists)
 - Natural Resources
 - Economic Prosperity
5. Place students in jigsaw groups based on the categories they listed. Explain that in these groups they will commemorate the time period that they are studying.
6. Each group will brainstorm aspects of American society during this period that relate directly to their assigned category.
7. Allow students 10-15 minutes to identify key leaders, events, and institutions that relate to their category and time period.
8. Supply each student with a blank coin outline and art supplies. Direct the students to design a coin that commemorates the particular time period and category that was researched.

SESSION 3

Materials

- Blank coin outlines (1 per group)
- Colored pencils, markers, or crayons
- “Group Effort Rubric” (1 per group)



Getting to Know an Era

Procedures

1. Place students in new groups. Each new group must contain one member from each of the previous groups.
2. In the new groups, each student will share his or her coin and the reasons for the images he or she selected.
3. Distribute a “Group Effort Rubric” and blank coin outline to each group.
4. Each group will decide which aspects were of greatest importance during this time period and will design one coin to commemorate only those aspects.
5. Give the student groups about 20 minutes to create one coin.
6. After the students have been given an appropriate amount of time to create a group coin, ask one representative from each group describe his or her group’s coin to the class. The representative must explain what is on the coin, and why his or her group feels that this design best commemorates this era.

EXTENSIONS

- Expand this lesson to serve as an “end of the course” review for benchmark/standardized test. Each group will explore a different time period. Display the coins around the room and use them as study guides.
- Students will design a Web questionnaire of their own, featuring coins from a specific period in U.S. history.
- After examining a selection of American commemorative coins, direct students to write an essay establishing the criterion for selecting commemorative coins.

NAME _____



They've Made A Difference

To commemorate a special person, place, or event is to celebrate and honor its impact on your life. Think about people, places, or events in your history that have had a significant impact on you.

People:	Reason:
Places:	Reason:
Events:	Reason:

Today, you are going to look for information on the United States Mint Web site to explore how our nation commemorates special individuals, places, and events through coins. The information you find should help you determine why the leaders of our country have commemorated these particular people, places, and events. Think about whether you agree or disagree with the events chosen for commemoration. Be prepared to discuss your opinion with your fellow students.

NAME _____



Commemorative Coinage (1)

Web Questionnaire

Commemorative coins honor people, places, events and/or institutions and are created in this country by the United States Mint. As you research the United States Mint's Web site (www.usmint.gov), consider whether the coins are honoring people, places, events or institutions. Why are these subjects worth commemorating?

In your own words, answer the following questions:

1. What does "commemorate" mean?

2. What is the purpose of commemorative coins?

3. When was the first commemorative coin issued by the United States Mint? What was this coin?

4. In 2002, the commemorative coin was the West Point Bicentennial Commemorative Coin.

a. What does the term "bicentennial" mean?

b. Why do you think the West Point Academy received this honor?

5. How many times and in which years were Olympic games commemorated with coins?

NAME _____



Commemorative Coinage (2)

Web Questionnaire (Broad)

6. List three presidents (or their deeds) who have been commemorated, the coins on which they were commemorated, and the years the coins were issued. Identify which presidents you think are the most important and why.

President	Coin and Denomination	Year of Issue
1.		
2.		
3.		

7. List three military leaders, war heroes, battlefields, sites, and/or institutions that have been commemorated with U.S. coins. Look them up in your textbook and list one important fact about each.

Military Subject	Fact
1.	
2.	
3.	

8. Chose one of the following categories, and name two coins from each classification:

Athletic Achievements: _____

Exploration: _____

Western Expansion: _____

Important Locations: _____

Social Movements or Social Activists: _____

9. What is your favorite design on a commemorative coin and why?



Commemorative Coinage

Web Questionnaire—Key (1)

In your own words, answer the following questions:

1. What does “commemorate” mean?

To honor an outstanding person, place, or event in history.

2. What is the purpose of commemorative coins?

They are special (collectible) coins that honor or preserve the memory of an outstanding person, place, or event. The money made from the sales of these coins is also used to help raise money for important causes.

3. When was the first commemorative coin issued by the United States Mint?

What was this coin?

The 1892 Columbian Exposition half dollar was the first commemorative coin authorized by Congress.

4. In 2002, the commemorative coin was the West Point Bicentennial Commemorative Coin.

a. What does the term “bicentennial” mean?

Bicentennial means the 200th anniversary of an event.

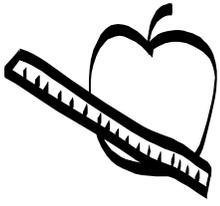
b. Why do you think the West Point Academy received this honor?

Answers will vary, but should relate to the idea that this coin was created to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the founding of the United States Military Academy by celebrating its contributions to our nation and to the people of the world.

5. How many times and in which years were Olympic games commemorated with coins?

- In 1983 and 1984, the Olympics held in Los Angeles, California, were commemorated with three coins.
- In 1988, the Olympics held in Seoul, Korea, were honored with two coins.
- In 1992, the Olympics were again commemorated, with three coins.
- In 1995, the Special Olympic World Games were marked with a special dollar.
- In 1995 and 1996, the Centennial Olympics were celebrated with sixteen special coins.
- And in 2002, the Olympic Winter games, held in Salt Lake City, Utah, were honored once more with two new commemorative coins.

Altogether, 27 U.S. commemorative coins have been created to celebrate these special games.



Commemorative Coinage

Web Questionnaire—Key (2)

6. List three presidents (or their deeds) who have been commemorated, the coins on which they were commemorated, and the years the coins were issued. Identify which presidents you think are the most important and why.

Answers will vary, but could include:

President	Coin and Denomination	Year of issue
• George Washington	250th anniversary half dollar	1982
• George Washington	250th anniversary gold five dollar coin	1999
• James Monroe	Monroe Doctrine Centennial half dollar	1923
• Franklin Delano Roosevelt	Gold five dollar coin	1997
• President Eisenhower	Centennial half dollar	1990

7. List three military leaders, War heroes, battlefields, sites, and/or institutions that have been commemorated with U.S. coins. Look them up in your textbook and list one important fact about each.

Answers will vary, but could include these coins:

- Dolley Madison (1999—Dolley Madison commemorative silver dollar)
- Women in the Armed Forces (1994—Women in the Armed Forces dollar)
- Prisoners of War (1994—American Prisoners of War dollar)
- Vietnam War (1994—Vietnam War Memorial/ Washington DC 10th Anniversary dollar)
- World War II (1993 and 1994—World War II 50th Anniversary half dollar, dollar, and \$5 gold coin)
- Korean War (1991—Korean War Memorial dollar)
- Battle of Antietam (1937—Battle of Antietam half dollar)
- Battle of Gettysburg (1936—Battle of Gettysburg half dollar)

8. Chose one of the following categories, and name two coins from each classification:

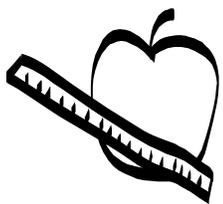
Answers will vary, but possible answers could include:

Athletic Achievements:

- 1997 Jackie Robinson Commemorative Coins
- 2002 Olympic Winter Games Commemorative Coins

Exploration:

- 2000 Leif Erickson Millennium Commemorative Coins
- 1935 Old Spanish Trail Half Dollar



Commemorative Coinage

Web Questionnaire—Key (3)

Western Expansion:

- 1903 Louisiana Purchase Exposition Gold Dollar
- 1933 Oregon Trail Memorial Half Dollar

Important Locations:

- 1999 Yellowstone National Park Silver Dollar
- 2000 Library of Congress Commemorative Coins

Social Movements or Social Activists:

- 1998 Robert Kennedy Dollar
- 1946-1951 Booker T. Washington Memorial Half Dollar

9. What is your favorite design on a commemorative coin and why?

Answers will vary.



NAME _____

Web Questionnaire (1)

United States Mint 50 State Quarters® Program

The United States Mint 50 State Quarters Program is a 10-year initiative (1999-2008) commemorating each state in our nation. Each new quarter has a design that reflects a concept or value of importance to that state. Although only the federal government can produce these coins, the individual states submit at least three, but no more than five initial design concepts with narrative descriptions. Based on the narratives, the United States Mint produces original artwork of the concepts, focusing on aesthetic beauty, historical accuracy, appropriateness and coinability. The United States Mint works with key individuals to refine the artwork prior to sending each design to the Secretary of the Treasury for review and approval. Once several designs have been approved, the state makes the final decision as to what design will appear on their coin. The United States Mint releases five quarters each year in the order that the states joined the Union (by ratifying the United States Constitution).

As you research the United States Mint's Web site (www.usmint.gov), consider whether the coins are honoring people, places, events, or institutions. Why are these subjects worth commemorating?

In your own words, answer the following questions:

1. What does "commemorate" mean?

2. What does "commemorative" mean?

3. What is the purpose of the 50 State Quarters Program?



NAME _____

Web Questionnaire (2)

United States Mint 50 State Quarters® Program

4. When did the United States Mint begin producing quarters for the 50 State Quarters Program?

5. Where are the circulating versions of these coins minted?

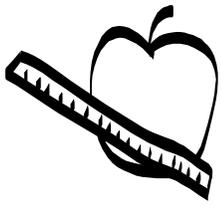
6. Who pays for this program to exist?

7. How are the designs conceived? Who participates in choosing the designs?

8. How many years will the 50 State Quarters Program last?

9. Up to this date, what is your favorite new quarter design and why? Be sure to elaborate.

10. If you were going to design a new quarter, what would be the most important consideration for selecting appropriate material to commemorate?



NAME _____

Web Questionnaire

United States Mint 50 State Quarters® Program—Key

In your own words, answer the following questions:

1. What does “commemorate” mean?

To honor an outstanding person, place, or event in history

2. What does “commemorative” mean?

Something that honors or preserves the memory of an outstanding person, place or event

3. What is the purpose of the 50 State Quarters Program?

This program was designed to commemorate the history, geography and heritage unique to each of the nation’s states.

4. When did the United States Mint begin producing quarters for the 50 State Quarters Program?

The first quarters were produced in 1999.

5. Where are the circulating versions of these coins minted?

The circulating versions of these coins are minted by the United States Mint in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Denver, Colorado.

6. Who pays for this program to exist?

This program is self-supported by the United States Mint.

7. How are the designs conceived? Who participates in choosing the designs?

Each state conducts a concept selection process as determined by the state. The state will provide to the United States Mint at least three but no more than five different concepts or themes emblematic of the state; each concept or theme will be in narrative format. Based on these concepts, the United States Mint produces designs, which are reviewed by the Mint, a Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee, and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts. These designs are reviewed and approved by the Secretary of the Treasury before being returned to the state, who will determine the final design.

8. How many years will the 50 State Quarters Program last?

This program will last for ten years (five new quarters designs will be released each year).

9. Up to this date, what is your favorite new quarter design and why? Be sure to elaborate.

Answers will vary.

10. If you were going to design a new quarter, what would be the most important consideration for selecting appropriate material to commemorate?

Answers will vary.



Quarter Design

Independent Work Rubric

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

PROJECT TITLE: _____

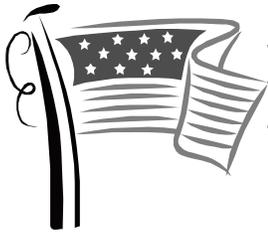
TEACHER: _____

CATEGORY	CRITERIA				POINTS
	5	10	15	25	
CLASS WORK	Student's work is disorganized and class time was not well used.	Student's work is poorly organized but class time was fairly well used.	Student's work is mostly organized and class time was well used.	Student's work is well organized and class time was well used.	
CREATIVITY	Student's work does not meet the project requirements and is not very creative.	Student's work meets the project requirements but is not very creative.	Student's work is fairly creative and meets or exceeds the project requirements.	Student's work is extremely creative and original. It exceeds project requirements.	
RESEARCH	Student's work demonstrates minimal research about the assigned time period.	Student's work demonstrates limited research about the assigned time period.	Student's work demonstrates a good amount of research about the assigned time period.	Student's work demonstrates extensive research about the assigned time period.	
ACCURACY	Student's work incorporates only inappropriate people, places, and events.	Student's work incorporates both appropriate and inappropriate people, places, and events.	Student's work incorporates some appropriate people, places, and events.	Student's work incorporates many appropriate people, places, and events.	

TOTAL

____/12

TEACHER'S COMMENTS



Quarter Design Group Effort Rubric

GROUP MEMBERS: _____

PROJECT TITLE: _____ DATE: _____

CATEGORIES	CRITERIA				POINTS
	10	15	25	35	
Events, people, and places represented	Events, people or places of import cannot be determined.	Events, people or places are not clearly represented.	Events, people or places are clearly represented yet references to the issue(s) at hand are missing.	Events, people and/or places are clearly represented and are believably significant.	
Supporting Information	Evidence is unrelated to argument.	Argument is supported by limited evidence.	Evidence supports the position but there is not enough evidence.	Evidence clearly supports the position; evidence is sufficient.	
Classification	There is a total lack of purpose or creativity.	Some attempt to commemorate but the purpose is poorly developed.	Shows commemorative ideas reasonably well but lacks clarity.	Shows understanding; clearly develops commemorative themes.	
Total Score	_____/100* * Take note: There are ways to make more than 100 points with extra effort!				

Teacher's Comments