



# Holiday Lesson Plans

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# Labor Day

## Social Studies

**SS.HK.2d** Recognize celebrations of national holidays as a way to remember and honor people, events and ethnic heritage

**SS.HK.2h** Recognize the contributions of important historical figures

Labor Day is a national holiday that honors the everyday worker who helps to make America a better place. It is celebrated each year on the first Monday in September.

Labor Day became an official holiday in 1894. It usually marks the end of summer, and many people fill the long weekend with their last picnics, swimming, and camping of the season.

## Suggested Literature

- *Labor Day* – Carmen Bredeson ISBN: 0516263129
- *Jobs People Do* – DK Publishing ISBN: 0789414929
- *Community Helpers From A to Z* – Bobbie Kalman ISBN: 0865054045
- *When I Grow Up* – P.K. Hallinan ISBN: 0824953932
- *Cesar Chavez: A Hero for Everyone* – Gary Soto ISBN: 0689859228
- *Harvesting Hope* – Kathleen Krull ISBN: 0152014373

## Historical Figure

César Chávez (March 31, 1927 – April 23, 1993)

## Vocabulary

**labor** – another word for work

**honor** – to show respect

**occupation** – another name for a job

**community** – area around where we live, work, shop, learn and play

**community helpers** – people in our neighborhoods who work to help others (ex. doctors, nurses, firefighters, teachers, postal workers, etc.)

**factories** – a place full of machinery that makes things like computers, toys, clothing, or cars



## Why Do We Celebrate Labor Day?

Explain that Labor Day is a day when we *honor*, or remember, the everyday workers who help make our country a better place. In fact, the word *labor* means to work.

Discuss how most people in America work so that they can earn money to buy food and other necessities for themselves and their families.

Choose volunteers to share their parents' *occupations*.

Explain: **Some people in our neighborhood work in jobs that make our community better for everyone. We call these people *Community Helpers*.**

The children discover *Community Helpers* by answering the following riddles:

<b>Postal Worker</b>	I work in all kinds of weather to make sure people get their mail everyday. Who am I?
<b>Doctor</b>	I try to make you feel better quickly if you are sick.
<b>Bus Driver</b>	I drive a big vehicle to take many people where they want to go.
<b>Dentist</b>	I help you take care of your teeth so you don't get cavities.
<b>Teacher</b>	I help you at school to learn all the things you need to know to read, write, and do math.
<b>Barber or Hairdresser</b>	You sit in my chair while I snip, snip, snip, and make your hair look great.
<b>Veterinarian</b>	I take care of your pets when they are sick.
<b>Trash Collector</b>	You place your trash in a big garbage can and I empty it into my truck to make room for more!
<b>Baker</b>	I make delicious cakes, cookies, breads and pies for you to eat.
<b>Firefighter</b>	I am very brave and I try to put out fires to keep everyone safe.
<b>Farmer</b>	I work on a farm growing fruits, vegetables and other food. Sometimes I milk cows.
<b>Police Officer</b>	I work to keep people from breaking the law. I also try to keep everyone safe.

### Materials

- Drawing paper
- Pencils, crayons

## Labor Day



# Labor Day



## Zookeeper

I take care of the elephants, tigers, monkeys, giraffes, and other wild animals at the zoo.

The children draw pictures of what they would like to be when they are grown, then share their drawings and discuss their choices with their classmates.

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## Get to Know César Chávez

Display the posters. Introduce César Chávez to your students by reading the first person narrative on the back.

The children should understand that Chávez:

- Tried his best to help other people, especially farm workers, live better lives
- Believed that people should help each other to make our *communities* (neighborhoods) better places to live

Share a time when you needed help from another person. Volunteers share times when they, too, needed help or when they helped someone else.

The children illustrate their experiences.

### Materials

- César Chávez Historical Figures Posters
- Drawing paper
- Pencils, crayons

### Optional Materials

- Book about César Chávez

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## Working Together

Draw children's attention to your classroom job chart.

Identify each job and ask children why that job is important. Discuss why it is important that everyone work together in the classroom.

Partner the children. Ask: **What would happen if we stopped doing our classroom jobs?** Partners discuss. Choose volunteers to share their insights.

Remind the children that in addition to their assigned classroom jobs, there are jobs that we all need to do to keep the classroom looking nice, such as cleaning up after playing, pushing in our chairs, throwing trash in the trash can, and putting recyclables into the recycling bin.

Ask: **What would it be like if one day no one went to work?**

The children discuss what would happen if:

doctors didn't go to the hospitals

teachers didn't come to schools

no one cooked in restaurants

there were no firefighters

no one could drive a school bus

no one delivered the mail

# Veteran's Day

Veteran's Day is a national holiday that honors men and women who served in the armed forces (Army, Navy, Marines Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard), in times of peace and war. Americans show their appreciation to veterans who worked hard and kept our country safe.

Veteran's Day, originally called Armistice Day, is celebrated each year on November 11th, marking the day World War I ended.

## Suggested Literature

- *Veteran's Day* - Jacqueline S. Cotton (Rookie Reader) ISBN: 0516274996
- *America – A Patriotic Primer* - Lynne Cheney ISBN: 0689851928
- *The Wall* - Eve Bunting ISBN: 0395629772
- *Pepper's Purple Heart: A Veteran's Day Story* - Heather French Henry ISBN: 0970634102

## Vocabulary

**wounded** - hurt

**freedom** – being allowed to say what you want and make choices

**Purple Heart** – a special heart-shaped medal which hangs on a purple ribbon and is given to some veterans who get hurt while serving

**veterans** – men or women who have served in the armed forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard)

### Social Studies

**SS.HK.2d** Recognize celebrations of national holidays as a way to remember and honor people, events and ethnic heritage

**SS.HK.2f** Identify the purposes of and the people honored in commemorative holidays

### What Is a Veteran?

Prior to Veteran's Day, ask parents to send in names of family members who have or are currently serving in any branch of the military. Only first names should be printed neatly so children can easily copy them.

Tell the children that today they will learn about Veteran's Day. Ask them to share what they already know about *veterans*. This may not be very much!

Explain that a *veteran* is a person who has served America in the past by being in the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force or Coast Guard. Show pictures and allow time for discussion. Encourage children to wonder if members of their families are *veterans*.

- Distribute names and a star printout to each child.
- The children copy names onto stars with pencils, trace over the names with black crayons, then color the stars lightly with red or blue crayons.
- The children cut out the stars.

The stars may be stapled to ribbon and hung in the classroom or hall for everyone to see.

If possible, invite *veterans* (especially parents and relatives) to visit the classroom in uniform and discuss the pride they take in helping our country and its citizens.

#### Materials

- Names of veteran family members (You should have extra names on hand for children who forgot theirs, or don't have any. These could be members of the school community.)
- Book with pictures of members of the different armed forces
- Starfall star printout
- Pencils, crayons
- Scissors

### The Purple Heart

Review the definition of a *veteran*. Explain that *veterans* are important to our country because of their service for our *freedom*.

Sometimes *veterans* are hurt, or *wounded*, while they try to keep our country safe. Some *veterans* who are *wounded* are given a special medal called the *Purple Heart*. It is called that because the medal is heart-shaped and hangs on a purple ribbon. The *Purple Heart* medal was George Washington's idea, so his profile (demonstrate side view) is on it. Show picture if available.

- The children design and name their own special medals in their Starfall journals.
- The children write about what their medals mean, and to whom they would award them.

#### Materials

- Writing journals and dictionaries
- Pencils, crayons

#### Optional Materials

- Picture of a Purple Heart medal



## Thank a Veteran

### Materials

- Drawing paper
- Pencils, crayons

Remind the children that *veterans* are important to us because they have served to protect our *freedom*. To thank them for their service, we celebrate a holiday called Veteran's Day. Many people fly United States flags on this day, and some cities have Veteran's Day parades.

Discuss some of the reasons to be thankful for *veterans*. The children should understand that *veterans* often:

- Are away from their homes and families for a long time
- Risk their lives in the service of our country
- Don't get to eat their favorite foods
- Aren't able to take a shower every day
- May get hurt or *wounded*

Say: **When people do things for us we usually thank them. How can we thank our veterans?** Volunteers respond.

If children do not mention "thank you" cards, say: **Sometimes we send people "thank you" cards to tell them we are thankful. Let's write a thank you card to a veteran!**

Choose volunteers to share ideas. The children draw pictures on drawing paper that express their appreciation, then write a sentence.

Use a sentence stem such as: *Thank you for \_\_\_\_\_.*

Send cards to a nearby veteran's hospital, or to parents/relatives who have served, or are currently serving in the Armed Forces.

# Thanksgiving Day

## Social Studies

**SS.HK.2f** Identify the purposes of and the people honored in commemorative holidays

**SS.ST.4a** Differentiate land and water, and locate general areas referenced in legends and stories on maps and globes

Thanksgiving is a national holiday that commemorates events that have shaped the history of North America. It is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November, a date set by Franklin Roosevelt in 1939, a change from the last Thursday in November, previously set by Abraham Lincoln.

The actual date of the Pilgrim's first Thanksgiving was somewhere between September 21st and November 9th, 1621. This harvest feast, shared with the Wampanoag (Wah-m-PAN-oh-ag) tribe, was in keeping with the long tradition of giving thanks and celebrating a bountiful harvest.

Thanksgiving is a time when families and friends get together to think about the many things for which they are thankful. It is marked with a large dinner, or feast, consisting of traditional foods, such as turkey, corn, cranberries and pumpkin pie.

## Suggested Literature

- *Thanksgiving* – David F. Marx ISBN: 0516271571
- *If You Sailed on the Mayflower in 1620* – Ann McGovern ISBN: 0590451618
- *Pilgrim's First Thanksgiving* – Ann McGovern ISBN: 0590461885
- *Legend of the Indian Paintbrush* – Tomie dePaola ISBN: 0698113608
- *Eating the Plates: A Pilgrim's Book of Food and Manners* – Lucille Recht Penner ISBN: 0027709019
- *Pilgrims and Indian Corn: The Story of the Thanksgiving Symbols* – Edna Barth ISBN: 0618067833
- *Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message* – Jake Swamp ISBN: 1880000547

## Historical Figure

Squanto (c. 1585 - November 1622)

## Vocabulary

**pilgrim** – someone who makes a special journey (trip)

**Native American** – a person who lived in America before the Pilgrims

**Mayflower** – ship the Pilgrims traveled in to Plymouth in 1620

**harvest** – the crop that is gathered at the end of a growing season

**feast** – a large meal for many people often to celebrate something special

**England** – the country the Pilgrims left to come to America

**Plymouth Rock** – the name the Pilgrims gave to the place in Massachusetts where they first landed

**thankful** – being glad for what you have





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## The First English Settlement

Explain:

- There were people in a country named *England* who were not happy there; they decided to leave and travel to the New World (America).
- They became known as *pilgrims* because they made a special trip.
- They traveled across the Atlantic Ocean on a ship called the *Mayflower*. The ship was very small so they couldn't take many of their things with them.

The children discuss how they would feel leaving their homes for a new land and only being able to take a few things with them. Have children partner to share what they would have taken.

Trace the voyage of the *Mayflower*, on a map or a globe, from Plymouth, *England* to Plymouth, Massachusetts.

- Read and display the sentence strip: **The Pilgrims leave England**

Say: **Traveling on the Mayflower was dangerous and very crowded. The trip lasted more than three months. Many of the Pilgrims got sick. There were also babies born!**

- Read and display the sentence strip: **Life on the Mayflower**
- The children imagine what the *Pilgrims* did all day on the *Mayflower*. Volunteers share their thoughts.

Say: **Finally the Pilgrims reached the New World. They landed in Massachusetts and called the place they landed, Plymouth Rock.**

- Read and display the sentence strip: **Arriving in the New World**

Discuss what it must have been like when the *Pilgrims* went ashore. There were no buildings, stores, or houses, only unfamiliar looking people dressed in clothing they had never seen before. Distribute the prepared drawing paper to the children:

- The children sketch, then color, three main parts of the *Pilgrim* experience in each section.
- The children cut their papers on the folds and print their names on all pieces.

The children exchange "puzzle parts" and discover if the new illustrations still reveal the same sequence.

### Materials

- Map or globe
- Drawing paper folded in thirds
- Pencils, crayons
- Scissors
- Pocket chart
- Three Sentence Strips as pictured below

### Get to Know Squanto

Display the *Squanto Historical Figures Posters* and read the first-person narrative on the back. The children should understand that Squanto:

- Was a *Native American* of the Wampanoag (Wah-m-PAN-oh-ag) People, who showed courage and generosity toward the *Pilgrims*
- Played a major role in helping to establish the first English settlement in the New World

Say: **The Pilgrims were thankful to Squanto because he taught them to grow food, hunt, fish, and build homes. They had a feast to celebrate their successful harvest. This was the first Thanksgiving.**

Explain: **Some of the Wampanoag People wore headbands with feathers attached to them. Each feather stood for something special. Let's think of special things that we are thankful for.**

- List children's responses on the whiteboard as they are given.
- The children choose things they are most *thankful* for, then draw and cut out a feather for each from construction paper.
- The children refer to the whiteboard or use kid writing to write one thing they are *thankful* for on each feather.
- Staple feathers to a headband and measure to fit.

#### Materials

- Squanto Historical Figures Posters
- Classroom whiteboard
- Construction paper strips for headbands
- Construction paper for feathers
- Scissors
- Pencils, crayons
- Stapler



### Thanksgiving Then and Now

Remind children that there were no grocery stores when the *Pilgrims* celebrated Thanksgiving, so they could only eat what they *harvested*, hunted or caught.

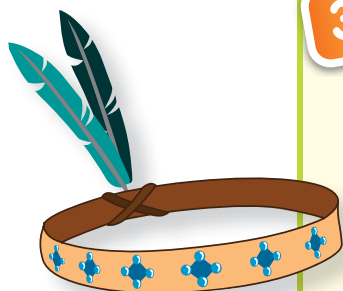
- Write responses on the whiteboard as volunteers share what they will eat on Thanksgiving.
- Discuss which foods are similar to those the *Pilgrims* ate (turkey, corn, squash, pumpkin, etc.).

Ask children to imagine what it would be like if the *Pilgrims* and their *Native American* friends came to their houses for Thanksgiving.

The children illustrate a Thanksgiving feast at their homes with the *Pilgrims* and Wampanoag People.

#### Materials

- Classroom whiteboard
- Drawing paper
- Pencils, crayons



# Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is a national holiday that marks the birth date of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King is remembered for his lifelong struggles in favor of equal rights for African-Americans. He is famous for his “I Have a Dream” speech in which he dreamed of a world free from prejudice with equal rights for all.

Each year, on the third Monday of January, we celebrate the life and dream of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The day was made a national holiday in 1986.

## Suggested Literature

- *A Picture Book of Martin Luther King, Jr.* - David Adler ISBN: 0823408477
- *Black is Brown is Tan* – Mary Hoffman ISBN: 0064432696
- *My Dream of Martin Luther King* – Dragonfly Books ISBN: 0517885778
- *What is Martin Luther King Day?* – Margaret Friskey ISBN: 0516437844

## Historical Figure

Martin Luther King, Jr. (January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968)

## Vocabulary

**equal** – the same as something else, fair

**speech** – a talk given to a group of people

**dream** – imagining something you really want

**leader** – a person who guides other people

**peace** – when there is no fighting, calm

**law** – rules that people must obey

**rights** – things you are allowed to do

**march** – a group of people walking together to let others know how they feel about something

### Social Studies

**SS.HK.2f** Identify the purposes of and the people honored in commemorative holidays

### Get to Know Martin Luther King, Jr.

Display the historical figures posters and introduce Martin Luther King, Jr. by reading the first person narrative on the back. The children should understand that:

- During Martin Luther King, Jr.'s lifetime there were many *laws* that were unfair to African-Americans (people with dark skin).
- Martin Luther King, Jr. became a *leader* who tried to use *peaceful* ways to get *laws* changed in order to give all people *equal rights*.

Ask children to try to imagine what it would be like to be treated unfairly just because there is something different about them, such as the color of their eyes, hair or skin. Read the following; children indicate if each is fair or unfair.

- **People with blue eyes aren't allowed to eat in some restaurants.**
- **Girls in the class get to play and boys don't.**
- **Everyone gets to play with the plush characters.**
- **Children wearing red get to have a snack.**
- **All children get to listen to a story.**
- **Children with brown hair get to line up first.**

Say: **Martin Luther King Jr. saw things that were unfair and he tried to change them peacefully. That means he didn't want people to fight or hurt each other.**

The children partner to discuss how to *peacefully* resolve the unfair situations listed above. Volunteers share with the class.

#### Materials

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Historical Figures Posters



### A Peace March

Recall that Martin Luther King Jr. wanted to change *laws* that were unfair in a *peaceful* way. Choose volunteers to name situations where they are expected to behave in a *peaceful* way (at school, in restaurants, in the car, on the playground, etc.).

Say: **In our classroom we are expected to behave in a peaceful way. What are some things we can do to work peacefully together?**

List responses on the whiteboard and review the list when it is complete.

Backpack Bear has a great idea and whispers it to you, "Why don't we have a *peace march*? We could make *peace* signs to carry!"

#### Materials

- Whiteboard
- Drawing paper
- Pencils, crayons
- Backpack Bear

Share Backpack Bear's idea and explain what it means to *march* for a cause.

Distribute drawing paper and crayons for the children to make posters for the *march*.

- On the board write: PEACE.
- The children copy PEACE on drawing paper then add decorations.

The children "march" around the room and/or through the halls holding their *peace* posters. Don't forget to invite Backpack Bear and other plush characters to join in the *peace* march!

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## I Have a Dream

Explain that Martin Luther King Jr. gave a famous *speech* in which he told people his *dream* for the world.

Say: **Martin Luther King's dream was more like a wish. He dreamed for a world in which all people would live together peacefully and no one would be treated unfairly.**

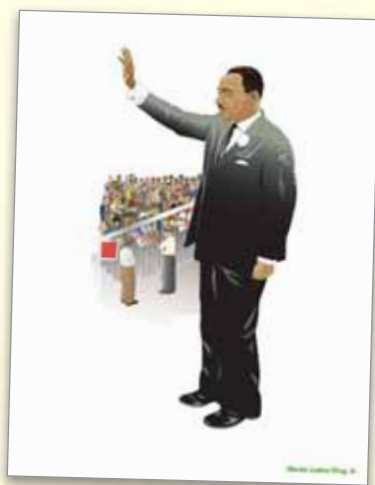
Play the Star Writers Melodies CD while children close their eyes to visualize their *dreams* for the world.

The children illustrate their *dreams* and write sentences in their writing journals using kid writing and their *Starfall Dictionaries*.

Share *dreams* as time allows.

### Materials

- Writing journals and dictionaries
- Drawing paper
- Pencils, crayons
- Backpack Bear



# 100th Day

## Social Studies

**SS.HK.2c** Understand how the lives of people from earlier times would be different today

The 100th Day of School is celebrated at many grade levels but primarily in kindergarten through second grade. Anticipation of the celebration builds as the classes begin counting the days leading up to it starting on the first day of school. The actual date of the celebration varies, but the hundredth day of school occurs somewhere between mid-January and mid-February.

## Suggested Literature

- *100th Day of School* - Melissa Schiller ISBN: 0516279432
- *Jake's 100th Day of School* - Lester L. Laminack ISBN: 1561453552
- *The 100th Day of School* - Abby Klein ISBN: 0439895936
- *The Night Before the 100th Day of School* - Natasha Wing ISBN: 0448439239
- *Miss Bindergarten Celebrates the 100th Day of Kindergarten* - Joseph Slate ISBN: 0613581229

## Vocabulary

**routine** – an everyday activity

**grade** – the group you are with in school (determined by age and years in attendance)



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## One Hundred Days Older

Discuss the meaning of the 100th Day Celebration. The children should understand that:

- 100 days of school have passed since they first started kindergarten.
- They have been doing *routine* activities about 100 times since school began in the fall.

Choose volunteers to list some of the *routines* they and their classmates have performed since the beginning of the year, such as coming to school, saying good morning to their friends, seeing Backpack Bear, discussing the calendar, and playing with friends.

Explain that about six months have passed since the school year began. (In the life of a kindergartner that may seem like forever!) Ask children to think way back to the beginning of the school year and remember when they couldn't do many of the things they can do now. The children share some of these things.

On the board, print: *On the 100th day of school I can \_\_\_\_\_.*

The children copy and complete the sentence stem into their *Starfall Journals*, then illustrate it in the space above. Share as time allows.

### Materials

- Writing journals
- Pencils, crayons

2

## How Much is 100?

Explain that one hundred is a large number. To demonstrate, display the numbered chart paper and say: **You have to count a lot of numbers in order to get to one hundred!**

Challenge your children to think of 100 items in a category, such as foods, animals, or things that make them happy. List their responses on the numbered chart paper as they are given.

If children's responses don't reach 100, set the activity aside and complete it at a later time.

### Materials

- Chart paper numbered in a list from 1 to 100
- Markers

3

## In A Hundred Years

Inform the children what schools in the United States were like one hundred years ago. The children should understand that:

- Schools were in houses with rooms that were used as classrooms.
- There were only three or four students in each *grade*.

### Materials

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Drawing paper
- Pencils, crayons

- In one classroom there were several *grades* taught by one teacher.
- Boys and girls were taught separately.
- Children were supposed to attend school until they turned 16, but most of them couldn't stay in school past the 8th *grade* because they had to work on family farms or businesses.

The children discuss how schools 100 years ago are different from schools today. For example:

- We go to schools that are not houses.
- There are more than three or four students in a class.
- There is only one *grade* level in most classrooms.
- Girls and boys are taught in classes together.
- Most children stay in school past 8th *grade*.
- We use computers, televisions, DVD players, projectors, etc.

Say: **It seems like schools have really changed in the past 100 years! What do you think schools will be like in 100 more years? Let's write about it.**

Choose a volunteer to give your shared writing a title, and write it at the top of the chart paper.

The children close their eyes and imagine the changes. Fuel their imaginations by suggesting a few ideas, such as a computer on every desk, 100 years more information to learn, riding in space ships to school, robots for teachers, etc.

Volunteers contribute sentences to the shared writing.

- Print the sentences on the chart paper as they are given.
- Write the contributor's name next to his or her sentence to generate enthusiasm.

As children contribute sentences, guide them to use transitional words so that the sentences flow. As you progress, read the sentences aloud several times, tracking the words. Ensure that the shared writing has an introduction, supporting statements, and a conclusion.

When it is completed, read the shared writing aloud.

The children illustrate their "School of the Future." Display the shared writing and illustrations for everyone to enjoy.



# Groundhog Day

Groundhog Day is observed on February 2nd. It is based on a popular legend that the groundhog (also called a woodchuck) awakens from hibernation, pokes his head out of his burrow and forecasts the weather. The legend tells us that if the groundhog sees his shadow there will be six more weeks of winter, but if he doesn't, spring is on the way.

Conduct the lessons that follow a day or two before the actual holiday so children are able to anticipate the groundhog's weather forecast.

## Suggested Literature

- *Groundhog Day* by Michelle Aki Becker ISBN: 0516279246
- *Groundhog Day!* by Gail Gibbons ISBN: 0823421163
- *Go to Sleep, Groundhog!* by Judy Cox ISBN: 0823416453
- *Wake Up Groundhog* by Susan Korman ISBN: 0307988481
- *Animals in Winter* by Henrietta Bancroft ISBN: 0064451658
- *What Makes a Shadow?* by Clyde Robert Bulla ISBN: 0060229160
- *Geoffrey Groundhog Predicts the Weather* by Bruce Koscielniak ISBN: 0395883989

## Vocabulary

**hibernate** – the deep sleep some animals go into during cold weather

**burrow** – an underground home dug by animals like groundhogs and rabbits

**forecast** – to tell ahead of time what might happen; to predict

**legend** – a story passed down by tradition

**winter** – the season that follows fall. The weather is typically cold in many places in winter; some animals hibernate

**spring** – the season that comes after winter. The weather begins to get warmer; new leaves and buds can be seen on plants and trees

### Social Studies

**SS.E.5a** Identify coins and their values

**SS.E.5b** Match descriptions of work people do to related jobs in school, community and from historical accounts

### Groundhog's Day Predictions

Show the children a photograph of a groundhog and discuss the Groundhog Day legend. Explain that a legend is a story that has been told for many years and is not always entirely true. The Groundhog Day legend is one such legend. Although a groundhog is a real animal, whether or not it sees its shadow is not a reliable way to predict, or forecast the weather. We celebrate it simply because it is fun.

#### Materials

- Whiteboards, markers
- Index card for each child
- Pencils, crayons
- Photograph of a groundhog
- Computer navigated to *Starfall.com*: "Groundhog"

Discuss the following facts about groundhogs:

- Groundhogs are also called woodchucks and are members of the squirrel family.
- They hibernate, or go into a deep sleep, during the winter.
- When the weather becomes warmer the groundhog warms up and awakens.
- Groundhogs live underground in burrows they dig with their front feet.
- Groundhogs actually build two burrows, one for summer and one for winter. They even build an extra exit or two just in case another animal comes into the burrow.
- Groundhogs usually have between three and five babies per year. The babies are called cubs, kits, or pups.

Gather the children around a computer navigated to *Starfall.com*: "Groundhog." As you read the story and song focus the children's attention on the groundhog's environment. A volunteer tells the groundhog's prediction and explains what clues he or she used to determine it.

Read the story again. The children continue to focus on the groundhog's environment. The second time through the activity the environment and prediction will change! A volunteer tells the new outcome and explains how he or she determined it.

Write the words yes and no on the whiteboard and verify that the children know which word is which. Distribute an index card to each child.

- The children write yes on their cards if they think the groundhog will see his shadow, and no if they think he will not.
- Collect the index cards.
- A volunteer makes tally marks under yes and no on the classroom whiteboard as you read them out.
- Total the predictions.

Explain: **The groundhog's prediction will be announced in the newspaper and on the television news on February 2nd. When it is announced, we will know if we made the same prediction as the groundhog!**

2

## Groundhog Day Journal Writing

Discuss the two possible predictions the groundhog will make according to the Groundhog Day legend.

- The children imagine the scene should the groundhog see his shadow. It would be sunny, the groundhog might be peeking out of his burrow, and he would have a shadow.
- Next, they imagine the scene if the groundhog does not see his shadow. The sun may be hidden by clouds in the sky, and the groundhog would not have a shadow.

The children recall their predictions from Session 1 and illustrate them accordingly in their *Starfall Journals*. When illustrations are complete, the children write sentences to explain their predictions.

Children who have finished share their entries with each other.

### Materials

- Writing journals
- Pencils, crayons

3

## Shadows

Recall that the Groundhog Day legend revolves around whether or not the groundhog sees his shadow. If he sees it, he becomes frightened and goes back to hide in his burrow. If he doesn't see his shadow, he comes out of his burrow to explore and look for something to eat! Choose volunteers to share what they know about shadows.

Invite the children to experiment with shadows:

- Shine a light onto a white surface, or if weather permits, take the children outside.
- Encourage the children to cast shadows from various positions and locations. Some may make shadow puppets.

After the children return to their seats, discuss some of the things they noticed about shadows. Responses will vary, but should include:

- The direction of the shadow is affected by the position of the light.
- When light cannot pass through an object, a shadow is formed.
- The shadow is cast on the side of the object that is opposite the light source.
- The size of a shadow changes according to how close the object is to the light. If the light source is far away, the shadow will be small. If the light source is close, the shadow will grow larger.

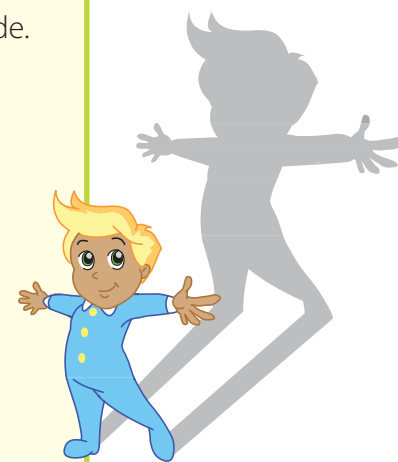
Volunteers share what they did during the experiment and how that action helped them learn about shadows. Write their responses on chart paper.

### Materials

- Light source (overhead projector or large flashlight)
- A white surface (projection screen, white sheet or whiteboard)
- Chart paper
- Markers

# Groundhog Day

GROUNDHOG DAY



# Presidents' Day

## Social Studies

**SS.HK.2b** Know triumphs in American legends and historical accounts through stories of famous Americans

**SS.HK.2f** Identify the purposes of and the people honored in commemorative holidays

**SS.HK.2g** Learn examples of honesty, courage, determination, responsibility and patriotism from stories and folklore

Both Abraham Lincoln's birthday (February 12th) and George Washington's birthday (February 22nd) were observed as federal holidays until 1971, when the two holidays were combined into Presidents' Day. Presidents' Day honors not only Washington and Lincoln, but all past presidents of the United States.

## Suggested Literature

- *Presidents' Day*- David F. Marx ISBN: 0516273760
- *If I Were President* – Catherine Stier ISBN: 0807535427
- *Celebrating Presidents' Day* – Kimberly Jordano & Trisha Callella-Jones ISBN: 1574715682
- *If You Grew Up With Abraham Lincoln* – Ann McGovern ISBN: 0590451545
- *Abe Lincoln Remembers* – Ann Turner ISBN: 0060275774
- *A Picture Book of Abraham Lincoln* – David Adler ISBN: 0823408019
- *George Washington's Breakfast* – Jean Fritz ISBN: 0698116119
- *George Washington's Teeth* – Deborah Chandra ISBN: 0374325340
- *A Picture Book of George Washington* – David Adler ISBN: 0823408000

## Historical Figures

George Washington (February 22, 1732 – December 14, 1799)

Abraham Lincoln (February 12, 1809 – April 14, 1865)

## Vocabulary

**president** – the elected leader of our country

**honest** – telling the truth and doing the right thing

**Washington D.C.** – the capital of the United States of America

**leader** – the person in charge

**elect** – when people choose someone by voting

**vote** – choosing the person you want for president

**White House** – the house in Washington, D.C. where the president and his/her family live

**lawmaker** – a person who decides what rules people should follow

**laws** – rules people should obey

**slavery** – when people own other people and make them do their work

1

## A letter to the President

Explain that the *leader* of the United States is called our *president*. The *president* is *elected* by the people of our country. Adults *vote* for the person they would like for *president*. The person who gets the most *votes* wins the election and becomes the *president* for four years.

The *president* and his or her family move to *Washington D.C.*, the capital of our country. They live in a special house called the *White House*.

Explain that the *president* has a very difficult job. Discuss some of the duties of the *president*:

- Decides what is best for our country
- Helps solve problems
- Works with *leaders* of other countries
- Is a *lawmaker* who makes laws to keep us safe

Ask: **Who has a question for the president, or something to tell him or her?** (Children respond.) **Let's write the president a letter!**

- Volunteers offer ideas as you write the letter on chart paper.
- Read the letter to the children when it is complete.

Send a copy of the letter to the *president*. Include a cover letter with your name, the grade you teach, and the complete mailing address of your school.

It may take several weeks, but you should receive a response and possibly some educational materials from The White House.

### Materials

- Chart paper
- Markers

### Optional Materials

- Photograph of the White House and president

## Presidents' Day

President (Name)  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500



PRESIDENTS' DAY

2

## Get to Know George Washington and Abraham Lincoln

Display the *George Washington Historical Figures Posters*. Introduce George Washington to your children by reading the first person narrative on the back. Children should recall George Washington from having learned about him during Week 8. They should understand that George Washington:

- Led the fight for America's freedom as a general in our first army
- Was elected the first *president* of our country

### Materials

- George Washington Historical Figures Posters*
- Abraham Lincoln Historical Figures Posters*
- Whiteboard or chart paper
- Markers

# Presidents' Day

Display the *Abraham Lincoln Historical Figures Posters* and read the first person narrative on the back. The children should understand that Abraham Lincoln:

- Was the sixteenth *president* of our country
- Is remembered as the *president* who put an end to *slavery*

Draw a Venn diagram on the whiteboard. Label the circle on the left "George Washington" and the circle on the right "Abraham Lincoln."

Say: **Let's read about George Washington and Abraham Lincoln again. This time, listen for information that is the same about these two presidents, and information that is different.**

Pause after reading each fact. The children partner to discuss where to place the information in the diagram. Volunteers explain their choices.

Possible answers common to both presidents include:

- Were *presidents* of the United States
- Brave
- Didn't have much formal education
- Fought for freedom
- Took part in wars
- Lived a long time ago
- Born in February
- Worked hard for our country



3

## If I Grow Up to Be President

Review the duties of our *president* outlined in Session #1. The children consider what they might like to do if they grow up to be the *President* of the United States one day. Choose volunteers to share their ideas.

The children illustrate something they would do as *president* and write sentences to explain their illustrations.

Share as time allows.

### Materials

- Classroom whiteboard
- Drawing paper
- Pencils, crayons

# Earth Day

On Earth Day, people all over the planet focus on changes they can make that would be good for the earth. The first Earth Day was celebrated on April 22, 1970. It was the idea of former Senator Gaylord Nelson, who was concerned about the health of our planet and wondered why more people weren't doing things to help solve Earth's problems. He advocated a special day to educate people about how to fix the problems we have created in our environment, and how to make changes for the future.

## Suggested Literature

- *Earth Day* by Trudi Strain Trueit ISBN 0531118363
- *Recycle!: A Handbook for Kids* by Gail Gibbons ISBN 0316309435
- *It's Earth Day (Little Critter)* by Mercer Mayer ISBN 0060539593
- *The Earth and I* by Bill Martin Jr. ISBN 1580891063
- *Where Does the Garbage Go?* by Paul Showers ISBN 0064451143

## Vocabulary

**Earth** – our world, the planet on which we live

**planet** – a heavenly body, or object in the sky that orbits a star like our sun

**environment** – the world around us

**recycle** - to use again

**conserve** – to use less in order to save for the future and prevent waste



## Science

**SC.ES.5c** Identify Earth resources that are used in everyday life and understand conservation

### It's Earth Day, Dear Dragon

Ask children what they know about Earth. Explain that Earth is our home. It is the planet on which we live.

Show the globe and say: **A planet is a large round object that travels around a star. Our planet, Earth, travels around a star we call the sun. Since Earth is where we live, or our environment, we need to take good care of it.**

Discuss Earth Day and briefly recall some of the environmental concepts introduced in Unit 5, Week 11:

- *Conservation* – Using less to save some for later and prevent waste
- *Recycling* –using things over again
- Caring for our *environment* – the world around us

Display *It's Earth Day, Dear Dragon* and read the title. The children describe the cover and predict what the story is about. Identify the author and illustrator.

Say: **We have learned about caring for our environment. The characters in this story will show us some of the things we can do to help.**

Distribute *It's Earth Day, Dear Dragon* books. Read the book as children follow along, tracking the words with their fingers. When you have finished, compare what happened in the book to the children's predictions. Discuss the following:

What did Father want the boy and dragon to do?	<b>help him work</b>
Where did Father, the boy and dragon go?	<b>the park</b>
How did they get to the park?	<b>on bikes and in a wagon</b>
Why did Father want them to go to the park?	<b>to help clean</b>
What did they do with the paper and cans that they found?	<b>put them in recycle boxes</b>
What happened after they cleaned the park?	<b>They got a tree.</b>
Why do you think Father wanted to get a tree?	<b>He wanted to celebrate Earth Day by planting a tree at home.</b>
What did Mother think about the tree?	<b>It was pretty.</b>
How did the boy feel after helping to clean the park and planting the tree?	

The children partner read, then discuss their favorite parts of the book.

#### Materials

- It's Earth Day, Dear Dragon* by Margaret Hillert for teacher and each child.
- Globe



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## Writing: I can...

Gather the children around a computer navigated to *It's Fun to Read*: "Earth Day."

As you interact with the activity discuss how recycling is good for our earth and helps keep it clean.

- The children determine if each recyclable item is paper, aluminum or plastic.
- Volunteers take turns sorting the recyclables into the labeled bins.
- The children tell you what they notice about the forest as they clean it.
- Discuss why the animals returned.

Play *Sing-Along* Volume 1 Track 7: "Every Day is Earth Day." After singing along, ask the children how they can help our planet Earth not only on Earth Day, but every day. Volunteers use the sentence stem "I can..." to respond.

The children use their dictionaries, kid writing and the sentence stem "I can..." to write sentences in their writing journals about how they can help.

As children finish they share their entries with other children who are also finished. Sing "Every Day is Earth Day" to conclude.

### Materials

- Pencils, crayons
- Writing journals and dictionaries
- High-frequency Word Cards: I, can
- Computer navigated to Starfall.com: "Earth Day"
- Sing-Along* Volume 1 Track 7

# Earth Day

EARTH DAY

3

## Story Elements

Distribute the books and review the author and illustrator. As you read the story, the children follow along in their books. Explain that after you finish reading, they will play a game to find out how much they remember from the story.

After reading choose two volunteers:

- One volunteer draws a Story Element Card from the basket.
- You read the question and place it in the pocket chart.
- The two volunteers discuss their answer and then respond.
- They choose the next pair of volunteers.

After all questions have been answered, Backpack Bear whispers that he found *It's Earth Day, Dear Dragon* on *Starfall.com*! Gather children around a classroom computer and navigate to I'm Reading: Fiction and Nonfiction, *It's Earth Day, Dear Dragon*. Children determine if this story is the same as or different from their printed copies.

### Materials

- It's Earth Day, Dear Dragon* for each child
- Pocket chart
- Classroom computer
- Place the Story Elements Cards pictured here into a basket.



# Memorial Day

## Social Studies

**SS.HK.2f** Identify the purposes of and the people honored in commemorative holidays

Memorial Day is a national holiday on which we remember our freedom and honor the brave men and women who gave their lives in service to the United States.

Originally called Decoration Day, Memorial Day has been observed since 1868, when families decorated the graves of Civil War soldiers. It became a national holiday in 1971 and is observed on the fourth Monday in May.

It is *traditional* for the president to lay a *wreath* on soldiers' graves at Arlington National Cemetery. Many cities and towns hold parades. Memorial Day also officially marks the beginning of summer activities nationwide.

## Suggested Literature

- *Memorial Day* - Jacqueline S. Cotton ISBN: 0516273698
- *Let's Get Ready for Memorial Day* - Lloyd G. Douglas ISBN: 0516243551
- *Memorial Day Surprise* - Theresa Golding ISBN: 1590780485
- *The Wall* - Eve Bunting ISBN: 0395629772
- *Memorial Day* - Robin Nelson ISBN: 061352442X

## Vocabulary

**half-mast** – when the flag is lowered halfway down the flag pole

**ceremony** – actions, words or music that mark a special event

**wreath** – flowers held together in a circle

**freedom** – being allowed to say what you want and make choices

**hero** – a person who is admired and is a model for others

**sacrifice** – to give up one thing, for something else you feel is important

**tradition** – a way of thinking or acting

## What is Freedom?

Explain that Memorial Day is the day we remember and honor the brave men and women who died fighting for our country while serving in the armed forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, or Coast Guard). On Memorial Day, we show our gratitude for their *sacrifices* by flying our flags at *half-mast*, which means halfway up the flagpole. Many people, including the president, lay flowers and *wreaths* on graves. Some cities have parades.

Say: **When we make a sacrifice, we give up something for something else that we feel is more important. On Memorial Day we remember the men and women who gave up their lives for our freedom. Freedom must be something very important! What is freedom?**

Lead children to understand that *freedom* is the right of each individual to find happiness. To be free means that we can:

- Read any book
- Be friends with whomever we choose
- Speak openly
- Get together with our families and friends

Explain: **On Memorial Day, we remember our freedom, and express our gratitude (or thanks) to the people who have died to protect it.**

- On the board, print: *I am thankful for my freedom.*
- Distribute construction paper strips.
- The children copy the sentence in pencil then trace over it in black crayon.
- Glue or staple the ends of the strips together in a linked chain. Make sure the sentence is visible. Hang the finished chain in a prominent place.

Say: **Another Memorial Day tradition is to observe a moment of silence. This means to stop what you are doing and quietly remember the sacrifice of the men and women who died for our freedom.**

Observe a moment of silence with the children.

### Materials

- Red, white and blue construction paper, cut in 3x6 inch strips
- Pencils, crayons
- Names of military organizations

### Materials

- Historical Figures Posters

## What is a Hero?

Explain: **When I think of what makes a person a hero, I think of people who stand up for the freedoms we all enjoy. Does anyone know what the word hero means?**

Volunteers respond.

The children should understand that *heroes* are people we value because their actions inspire us to be better. There are many ways to be a *hero*.

- Some heroes are very brave and some help others.
- Some discover or invent new things.
- Some do ordinary things every day that make our lives better such as our parents who work hard to care for us.

Ask children to think back and remember if they learned about any *heroes* this past year. Volunteers name a few of the historical figures from the *Historical Figures Posters*.

The children solve the following riddles as you display their associated posters:

<b>Abraham Lincoln</b>	I thought slavery was wrong, so I worked hard to stop it. Which hero am I?
<b>Cesar Chavez</b>	I used peaceful ways to help migrant farm workers in the United States have better lives.
<b>George Washington</b>	I was a brave leader in charge of America's army. I later became the first president of the United States.
<b>Squanto</b>	I taught the Pilgrims how to hunt and fish for food and to plant corn.
<b>John Muir</b>	I was famous for preserving and conserving nature.
<b>Rosa Parks</b>	I thought things should be fair for all people. I became famous because I refused to give up my seat on a bus.
<b>Orville and Wilbur Wright</b>	We are brothers who wouldn't give up trying to invent the first flying machine.
<b>Benjamin Franklin</b>	I did an experiment in a storm with a key and a kite to prove that lightning is electricity.

<b>Susan B. Anthony</b>	I fought to help women have the right to vote.
<b>Helen Keller</b>	I wrote a book about my life and other stories to help blind and deaf people. Anne Sullivan was my teacher.
<b>Martin Luther King, Jr.</b>	I became famous for my peaceful solutions to unfair problems. I am remembered for my "I Have a Dream" speech.
<b>Thomas Edison</b>	I invented many things, including the telegraph, the phonograph, the moving picture camera, and the electric light bulb.

### 3

## I Am a Hero

Recall the definition of a *hero*; someone whose actions we admire, and who inspires us to be better people.

Say: **The heroes on our posters are well known all over the world. But did you know there are more heroes right here in our classroom? Would you like to meet them?**

Walk around the classroom with the mirror allowing children to take a quick look at other *heroes*, themselves! Encourage the children to think about how they too are *heroes* when they help their families, are nice to friends, take care of pets, clean their rooms, treat their siblings and classmates kindly, and so on.

The children illustrate themselves in their writing journals and write sentences to explain what they do that makes them *heroes*.

The children share as time allows.

### Materials

- Writing journals
- Pencils, crayons
- Mirror