



Lesson Plan to accompany the story  
"Ulysses S. Grant in China."

# ULYSSES S. GRANT

Politics are complicated, either on the fields of war or in a government office. It is thus not too unusual for war veterans to enter politics, and several American presidents were veterans. In fact, the first President of the United States was one. From his precedent, others took up the mantle as leader of the nation, some more successfully than others.

One such man was Ulysses S. Grant. Born Hiram Ulysses Grant in 1822, Grant was the oldest of six children. Born in Ohio, of all places, Grant never quite found success in life outside the military, though he did try. A quiet, humble man, he proved a talented horse rider and in fact received the first speeding ticket in Washington DC's history. When old enough, Grant entered West Point Academy, and it was here that his name was mangled into Ulysses S. Grant. Grant tried to have the error changed, but, the Academy refused, and, as one of his fellow cadets quipped, it was fitting for a future Army officer to have the same initials as his country.

Grant graduated and served in Missouri, though his infantry unit relocated as tensions brewed between Mexico and the United States over the possible annexation of Texas. In 1846, the Mexican-American War started. Grant, and many future Civil War officers on both sides, took part. He performed well, and, following the war, served for several more years. He resigned his commission in 1854 to return home and try his hands at a trade. Unfortunately, civilian life seemed to not agree with him, and when the American Civil War started, Grant stepped forward to do his part.

Grant earned fame in the West, fighting aggressively and strategically. His efforts earned him promotions and media attention, and his aggressive campaigns helped lead to the end of the war. This success followed him after the war, and, siding with Radical Republicans to defend the freedmen, was elected President in 1868. His first term proceeded relatively well, but his second term was marred with accusations of corruption and increased disillusionment with Reconstruction. After the presidency, he lived a quiet life of little note.

Grant's Presidency is noted for several factors. The most arduous was an economic recession that did little to raise his popularity. One popular act was his near eradication of

the Ku Klux Klan, perhaps his greatest achievement as President. He was also sympathetic to Chinese immigration and American expansion at the expense of native tribes. Despite a controversial second term, his efforts in the Civil War are not in doubt, and one biographer subtitled their monograph “The Man Who Saved the Union”.

#### ASSIGNMENT

Please visit these sites and answer two questions:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/ulysses-s-grant/>

<https://millercenter.org/president/grant/life-in-brief>  
<https://www.americancivilwar.com/north/grant.html>

<https://www.history.com/news/10-things-you-may-not-know-about-ulysses-s-grant>

- 1) How did Grant perform during the Mexican-American War?
- 2) Why was Grant’s Second Term so difficult

Length: your essay should be roughly 300 words

