Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Period: \_\_\_\_\_

**Rating Recent Presidents**

**The AP Government course generally covers materials from the 1970s to the present. Therefore, students must have a solid background dealing with the President’s in this time period.**

**Expectations:**

* In small groups, students will evaluate a recent U.S. President.
* Each group will make a list of the president’s accomplishments and failures and then rate the president using the categories and criteria listed below.
* You must explain why you ranked the president the way you did for each category. Make sure you understand the events that occurred during your President’s term of office, so that you can adequately explain the situations and rank him accordingly.

**Possible Grades (for each Criterion):**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Great | Near Great | Above Average | Average | Below Average | Failure |

**Criteria:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Accomplishments | * domestic affairs * foreign affairs |
| Reaction to New Situations  (willingness to act) | * innovative (creative) * flexible |
| Use of Power | * expands presidential power * action-oriented * use of executive orders |
| Creates Nationalism | * vision of a greater America * brings out the best in the nation |
| General Prestige | * short run – while in office * long run – after office |
| Overall | What ranking, and why, did you give your President? |

**Notes to Students:**

* Pick ONE of the Presidents below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Richard Nixon * Gerald Ford * Jimmy Carter | * Ronald Reagan * George H.W. Bush * William J. Clinton | * George W. Bush * Barack Obama |

* Suggested websites:
  + <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/data.php>
  + <http://www.ipl.org/div/potus/>
  + <http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/presidents>
  + <http://www.potus.com/>

**President:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Presidential Report Card**

**Accomplishments**

**Domestic:**

Find two key bills that the President signed into law while he was in office. Briefly explain each one and the impact it had on domestic policy.

Bill #1:

Bill #2:

Did the President appoint any justices to the United States Supreme Court? If so, write down their name(s) and a brief biography of each justice.

Examine the President’s relationship with Congress while he was in office. Were they of the same party? Did it change after his first two years in office or during his second term (if he had one)? Give two examples to support your findings.

Example #1:

Example #2

**Overall Grade and Explanation:**

**Foreign:**

Describe what was going on in the world while the President was in office (i.e. worldwide recession, civil wars, military conflicts, etc.)

Identify two significant places where the United States was involved in conflict overseas while the President in office? Briefly explain the conflict below.

Conflict #1:

Conflict #2:

Did the President sign any major treaties or executive agreements while he was in office? If so, briefly explain at least one below.

**Overall Grade and Explanation:**

**Reactions to New Situations**

Choose two situations (conflict, world-wide event, international issue, economic issue, etc.) domestic and/or foreign that occurred while the President was in office. Describe the situation and explain how he reacted to each situation.

Situation #1:

Situation #2:

**Overall Grade and Explanation:**

**Use of Power**

Identify two successful ways in which the President expanded his power. Describe the situation and why you feel he was successful.

Situation #1:

Situation #2:

How many executive orders did he issue while in office? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Give an example of two of his executive orders:

Executive Order #1:

Executive Order #2:

**Overall Grade and Explanation:**

**Creates Nationalism**

Identify two successful ways in which the President created nationalism. Describe the situation and explain why you feel he was successful.

Situation #1:

Situation #2:

Find one area in which he was not successful in creating nationalism. Describe the situation and why you feel he was unsuccessful.

**Overall Grade and Explanation:**

**General Prestige**

**Short term – While in office**

How many electoral voters did he receive?

First term: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Second term: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How many popular votes did he receive?

First term: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Second term: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Look up his presidential approval rating. (The Wall Street Journal has an interactive chart for each president.)

What was his highest percentage and why was it so high?

What was his lowest percentage and why was it so low?

What was his approval rating when he left office?

**Overall Grade and Explanation:**

**Long term – After Leaving Office (Does not apply to Obama, of course)**

What has the President done since leaving office? How does he spend his time?

Has he been involved with any charities or worked with any interest groups since leaving office.

What is his legacy? Has it changed or stayed the same throughout the years since he has left office?

**Overall Grade and Explanation:**

**Overall Grade**

Revisit the information you found about the President and identify three areas in which you felt he was an effective president (Pros) and three areas in which you found him to be an ineffective president (Cons).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Pros** | **Cons** |
| 1.  2.  3. | 1.  2.  3. |

**Why did you give this President the grade you did?**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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