

Unit Plan Timeline

Race Cars

from the Collections of **The Henry Ford**

- 1901 Ford “Sweepstakes” – Henry Ford’s first race car, which gives him publicity that helps him gain financing for his company.
- 1902 Ford “999” – Henry Ford’s second race car, first driven by Barney Oldfield, which gains more positive publicity for Henry Ford.
- 1906 Locomobile “Old 16” Vanderbilt Cup race car, typical of pre-WW I race cars.
- 1907 Ford “666” – the car that Henry Ford intends to set land speed records, but it does not.
- 1956 Chrysler 300, a real production car, or true “stock car,” sponsored by Karl Kiekhaeffer.
- 1959 Willys “Gasser,” one of the most successful drag race cars of all time, converted into dragster and driven by George Montgomery.
- 1960 Slingshot drag racer, in which the driver actually sits behind the rear wheels, like a rock in a slingshot.
- 1965 Goldenrod, a streamlined racer that sets a land speed record of 409.277 mph.
- 1967 Ford Mark IV race car, driven by Dan Gurney and A.J. Foyt, which wins the 24 Hours of Le Mans.
- 1984 March 84C Cosworth Indianapolis race car, driven by Tom Sneva; a typical Indianapolis race car of the 1980s, it has wings to keep it on the ground
- 1987 Ford Thunderbird, a typical NASCAR stock car driven by Bill Elliott, has only a passing resemblance to street cars.

Important Events in American Automobile Racing

- 1895 The Duryea brothers enter the first American auto race as a way of testing and advertising their car.
- 1902 The first top speed runs are held on the beach at Daytona Beach, Florida.
- 1910 The first high-banked wooden speedway is built at Playa Del Rey in Southern California.
- 1911 The first Indianapolis 500 race is held.
- 1947 Bill France organizes mechanics and drivers into the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing, called NASCAR.
- 1955 The National Hot Rod Association begins holding national championships for drag racing.
- 1959 Daytona International Speedway opens in Florida as one of NASCAR’s most popular races.
- 1960s Paved tracks take over in popularity from dirt racetracks.
- 1960s Television cameras begin to follow auto racing, covering the Indianapolis 500 as well as NASCAR events.
- 1970 The Indy 500 begins drawing heavy sponsorship from auto-related products, such as spark plugs and oil, as well as non-auto-related firms like Proctor & Gamble (the makers of Tide) and Dean Van Lines.
- 1977 Janet Guthrie is the first woman to qualify at the Indianapolis 500.
- 1992 Lyn St. James becomes the first woman to win Indianapolis 500 Rookie of the Year honors.
- 2001 Dale Earnhardt’s death at the 2001 Daytona 500 shocks NASCAR and leads to its adoption of numerous safety devices.

Unit Plan Timeline Continued

National Events

- 1903 The Wright brothers make their first successful flight.
- 1906 San Francisco experiences the great earthquake.
- 1917 The United States enters World War I.
- 1919 The 19th Amendment gives women the right to vote.
- 1929 The U.S. stock market crashes; the Great Depression begins.
- 1959-1975 The Vietnam War.
- 1967 Detroit experiences civil unrest.
- 1982 Honda begins car production in the United States.
- 2001 Terrorists hijack passenger planes, crashing them in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania.

World Events

- 1899 The Boer War begins in South Africa.
- 1909 Robert Peary and Matthew Henson reach the North Pole.
- 1914 World War I begins in Europe.
- 1917 Lenin leads the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, laying the groundwork for the Soviet Union.
- 1939 World War II begins.
- 1948 An assassin kills India's Mahatma Gandhi.
- 1969 Neil Armstrong sets foot on the moon.
- 1994 Nelson Mandela is elected as the first black South African president; apartheid ends.
- 2002 The euro becomes the cash currency for 12 European nations.