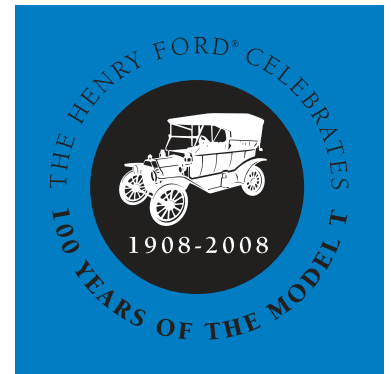
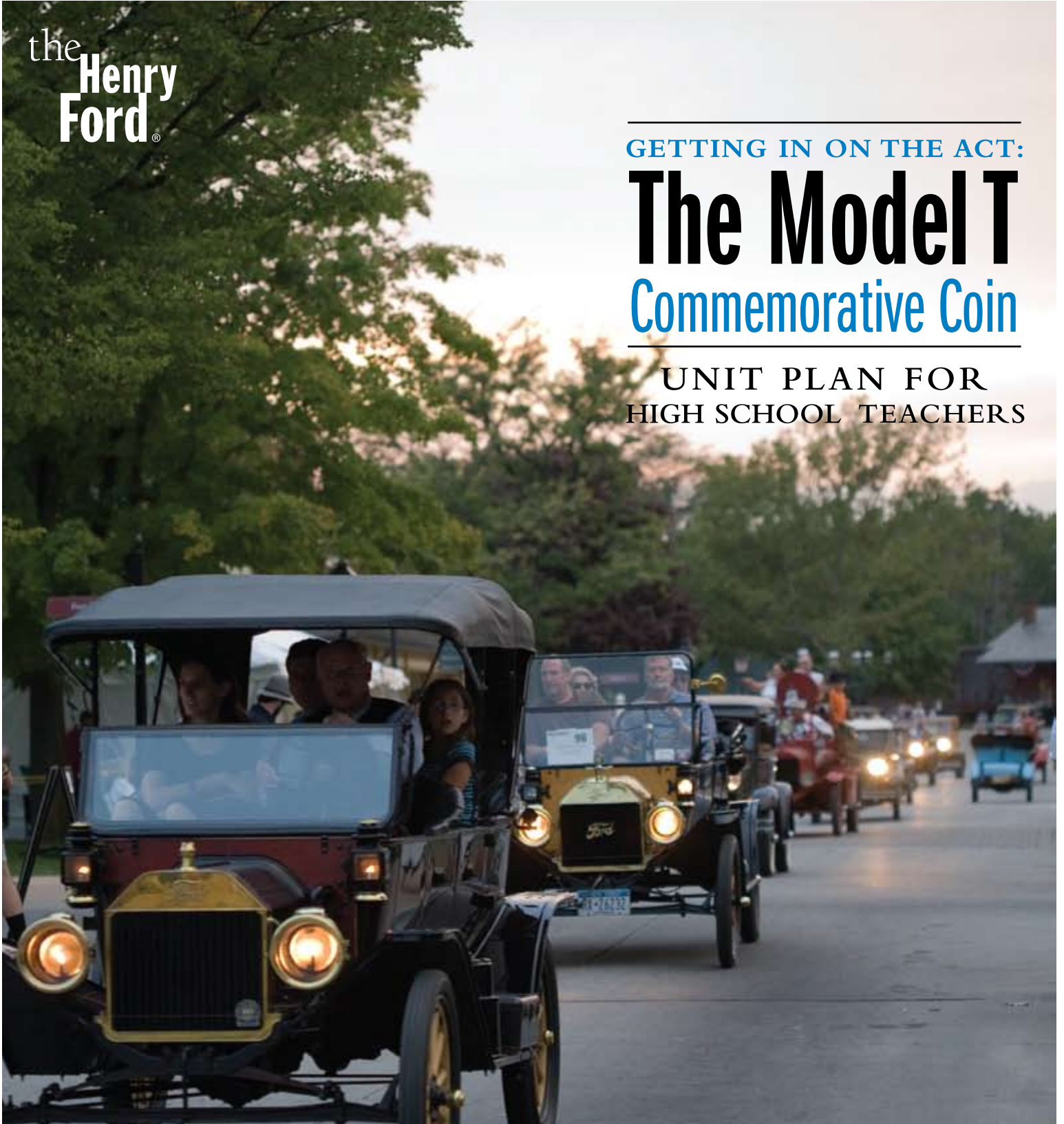


the  
**Henry  
Ford**®

GETTING IN ON THE ACT:

# The Model T Commemorative Coin

UNIT PLAN FOR  
HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS



# Getting in on the Act: The Model T Commemorative Coin High School Unit Plan

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## GRADE LEVEL

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Grades 9-12

## SUBJECT(S)

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Civics  
History  
English

## ● UNIT OVERVIEW

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The year 2008 marks the centennial of the Model T Ford, and 2010 marks the centennial of the Highland Park Plant in Michigan, which was the birthplace of the moving assembly line. Both the Model T and the moving assembly line are significant in United States history, having transformed the nation's economy, landscape, social life and culture. In recognition of that significance, on Feb. 14, 2007, Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-Michigan) introduced a bill ([S. 587](#)) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint up to 500,000 one-dollar [commemorative coins](#) in honor of the Model T Ford and the 100th anniversary of the Highland Park Plant. An identical bill ([H.R. 1619](#)) was introduced in the House of Representatives on March 21, 2007. If the bill is signed into law, the minted coins would not only commemorate the Model T and the Highland Park Plant, they would provide funds, generated from the coin's \$10 surcharge, for the Automobile National Heritage Area Partnership Inc. and [The Henry Ford](#), a National Historic Landmark in Dearborn, Mich. These funds would be used by both institutions to create endowments for educational programs associated with the Model T.

This comprehensive unit uses the Model T Commemorative Coin bill as an opportunity for high school students to practice being informed, engaged citizens by addressing the same problem faced by members of Congress. Should Congress require the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury to mint Model T commemorative coins? The cumulative assessment of this unit asks students to become *engaged* by writing a persuasive letter regarding the Model T commemorative coin, but not before they become *informed* by considering the history and significance of the Model T and moving assembly line. Although this unit is intended for a civics class, it also supports student understanding in history and English, providing a wonderful opportunity for cross-curricular planning and reinforcement.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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[Henry Ford](#) (1863-1947) had a vision to create a car that was simple, affordable and versatile – a “car for the great multitude ... so low in price that no man making a good salary will be unable to own one.” Ford realized this vision with the creation of the Model T. It was strong, lightweight, simple to repair and capable of providing years of service in difficult conditions. It was an appealing and practical tool that anyone with an average income could afford, and it changed almost every aspect of American culture.

The first Model T was built in October 1908 at the Piquette Avenue Plant in downtown Detroit. The car became an immediate success. Because of its flexible suspension and high ground clearance, and the light weight and strength of its vanadium steel chassis, the Model T was able to traverse the poor roads of the day. Its new mono-block engine was strong, peppy and agile. The unique two-speed and three-pedal drive system was easily mastered by a nation of new and untrained drivers. The car was simple enough to be maintained by the average person, and thus, orders for the new car poured into the plant. By late fall 1908, Ford Motor Company was so overwhelmed with Model T orders that it had to tell dealers to stop taking them.

When the Model T first came out, the touring car was \$850. Even though it was very affordable compared to other cars of the day, Henry Ford thought it was still too much money. He decided to concentrate on making the car at a faster rate, which would allow him to drop the price. To do this he would need to create a new factory and an improved assembly process. He knew dropping the price would create more sales, which would increase the need for even more production. In late 1913, Ford unveiled the first continuously moving assembly line at his new Highland Park Plant. This was the beginning of mass production as we know it today. Production jumped dramatically, and the price of the touring car dropped

from the original \$850 to \$525. Over the next eight years, production increased significantly due to continuous improvements in production techniques, causing the price of the Model T to drop even more.

The Model T offered reliability, mobility and freedom that were unprecedented and previously beyond the dreams of average Americans. Farm wives could go shopping in neighborhood towns instead of having to accept what was available at the local store or take a chance with a catalog order. Factory workers could escape the smoke and soot of the city; they could pack their families into the car and picnic in the fresh, clean air of the country. City residents could buy land and a house outside the city and drive to work. As the “Tin Lizzy” rattled onto the landscape and into the hearts of Americans, she left an interconnected road system, parking lots and an array of motels, service stations, car dealerships and other automobile-inspired businesses in her wake. Businesses, cultural activities and taxpayers moved away from city centers and into the suburbs. Traffic accidents, air pollution and oil dependence became an everyday part of American lives.

The new industrial technology changed the nature of factory work, taking the skill out of the worker and putting it into machinery, which made for tedious, demanding labor. Realizing he needed to make his workers happy to keep up production, Ford introduced the five-dollar workday, which allowed employees to more than double their wages if they met certain requirements in the workplace and at home. Workers clamored to work for Ford, resulting in a huge migration of people from the country and an expansion and redefinition of the middle class. The idea of mass production and standardized goods embodied in the Model T spread throughout the American economy. It appeared in familiar places like McDonald’s and Holiday Inn, and in the production of tanks, guns and uniforms for World War II.

By the time Model T production ceased in 1927, more than 15 million of the cars had rolled off Ford assembly lines. Realizing that a new generation of stylish cars with more amenities was available from his competitors, Ford began producing a new car — the Model A — that would meet competitors’ challenges. But the Model T had left an indelible mark on the American landscape and economy, and in the American psyche. What had flowed from Ford’s series of innovations was more than an endless stream of Model T’s — it was part of the foundation of the 20th century itself.

## ● UNIT OBJECTIVES

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Students should be able to...

- Explain the role and importance of citizens in American constitutional government.
- Describe the importance of a citizen’s civic responsibility to be informed and attentive to public issues and monitor political leaders.
- Formulate questions to focus inquiry.
- Describe the purpose of commemorative coins.
- Identify and explain the principles of popular sovereignty, checks and balances, and separation of powers.
- Explain the purposes and functions of Congress, including its relationship to the other branches of government.
- Explain the purposes and functions of the Department of the Treasury, especially how it functions to produce coins.
- Explain how Congress is able to require the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins.
- Identify different ways the automobile affects their lives, both positively and negatively.
- Question and investigate the significance of the Model T and the moving assembly line.
- Analyze the social, economic and cultural impact of the Model T and moving assembly line on Michigan and the United States.
- Explain Americans’ belief in the importance of education.
- Identify their U.S. representative and senators.
- Describe and evaluate the effectiveness of contacting public officials as a way to participate in the political process.
- Make a persuasive, reasoned argument on a public issue and support it using historical examples.
- Draft, revise, edit and “publish” a persuasive letter to their U.S. representative or senators regarding the Model T commemorative coin that:



- Considers audience.
- Refers to the purpose of commemorative coins, the significance of the Model T and moving assembly line, and the value of supporting the creation of educational resources.
- Uses correct grammar, usage, mechanics and spelling.
- Demonstrates a coherent organizational structure.

## ● ESTIMATED TIME

Between five and seven 45-minute class periods (time to completion is dependent upon students' previous knowledge and instruction).

## ● MATERIALS NEEDED

- If possible, a commemorative coin. Otherwise, pictures of commemorative coins.
- Materials to review or teach the role and importance of citizens in American constitutional government.
- Transparencies of *Transparencies 1-1 and 1-2*.
- Photocopies of *Assessment 1-1, Handout 1-1, Reading 3-1 and Handout 3-1*.
- Materials to review or teach students about the structure and function of government, the branches of government and their relationship to one another. Refer to classroom resources or resources such as [Ben's Guide to U.S. Government](#), [Kids in the House](#) or [Congress for Kids](#).
- Arrange some time (one or two days) for students to do research in the library.
- Prepared assignment sheet and rubric for research project and presentation.
- Prepared assignment sheet and rubric for persuasive letter.
- Supporting materials to help students draft a persuasive letter, using classroom resources or resources such as those found on the [NCTE website](#).

## ● SUGGESTED PRE-INSTRUCTIONAL ASSESSMENT

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This unit asks students to explore the significance of the Model T and moving assembly line in American history to determine whether they are worthy of commemoration on a federally mandated coin. Research on students' understanding reveals that their ideas about what constitutes "significant" people, events and institutions within national and world historical narratives are culturally and socially determined. Their views of historical significance can depend, to varying degrees, upon personal interests and experiences. Furthermore, students may have incomplete knowledge or misconceptions about the people, events and institutions under study. Therefore, assessing students' understanding of historical significance, the Model T and the moving assembly line can provide important information for instruction. In addition, this assessment activity can serve as a springboard for a discussion of what "significance" is if it is a new term.

### *Assessing Understanding of Historical Significance*

Give students the following list of words: American Revolution, Susan B. Anthony, civil rights movement, Civil War, Christopher Columbus, computer, electric light bulb, emancipation, Henry Ford, Martin Luther King Jr., Abraham Lincoln, Model T Ford, moving assembly line, Elvis Presley, Vietnam War, George Washington, Westward Expansion, Women's Suffrage Movement and World War II. Ask them to write which ones they recognize or know about and jot down anything they know about them. Then, ask them to choose eight items they think are important enough to go on a timeline of American history. Once they have chosen the items, ask them to explain their choices on a piece of paper. Ask students to discuss their responses with one or more people. They should find out why others agreed or disagreed with one or more of their choices. Discuss students' responses and their different opinions. Discuss the idea of significance as needed.

## *Assessing Understanding of the Model T Ford and Moving Assembly Line*

After collecting students' papers, look through the responses to see (1) how many students know something about the Model T and moving assembly line, and (2) what they know about the moving assembly line. Look for misconceptions, such as, "The Model T was the first car."

Note: There are other opportunities to assess students' pre-instructional understanding with individual lessons.

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## **LESSON PLAN 1: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING AN INFORMED, ENGAGED CITIZEN**

### ● **OVERVIEW**

This introductory lesson sets up the rest of the unit by asking students to consider the meaning and importance of being informed, engaged citizens. It then introduces students to commemorative coins and the Model T commemorative coin bill, asking them to *practice* being informed, engaged citizens by considering whether or not Congress should mint the Model T coins, and contacting their legislators to express their opinions.

### ● **ESTIMATED TIME**

One 45-minute period.

### ● **PREPARATION**

- Have writing prompt visible for students.
- Classroom materials to review or teach the role and importance of citizens in American constitutional government.
- Review U.S. Mint's pages on [commemorative coins](#).
- If possible, bring in a commemorative coin. Otherwise, have pictures of coins ready for students.
- Prepare overhead transparencies of *Transparencies 1-1 and 1-2*.
- Make photocopies of *Handout 1-1* and *Assessment 1-1*.

### ● **LESSON OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:

- Explain the role and importance of citizens in American constitutional government.
- Describe the importance of a citizen's civic responsibility to be informed and attentive to public issues and monitor political leaders.
- Identify and explain the principle of popular sovereignty.
- Formulate questions to focus inquiry.

### ● **ACTIVITIES**

#### *The Importance of Informed, Engaged Citizenship*

1. Give students the following prompt and ask them to respond in writing:

What does it mean to be an *informed, engaged citizen*? How is that different from simply being an *informed citizen*? How is that different from simply being an *engaged citizen*? What kinds of things does a citizen who is informed and engaged do? Do you think informed, engaged citizenship is important? Why or why not?

Ask students to take five minutes to discuss their responses with a partner, then come together as a group to discuss. If necessary, remind students of the constitutional principle of popular sovereignty. Refer to parts of your text that discuss citizenship or to previous lessons on the importance of citizenship in American constitutional democracy.

2. Tell students you're going to explore what it means to be an informed *and* engaged citizen by studying a relatively simple public issue — Congress' decision whether to mint a proposed commemorative coin.

### *What are commemorative coins?*

3. If possible, show students an example of a commemorative coin and pass it around the class. Otherwise, show students a picture of a commemorative coin (e.g., the [2007 Little Rock Central High School Desegregation Silver Dollar](#) or the [2007 Jamestown 400th Anniversary Commemorative Coin](#)). Ask students what they know about commemorative coins. Find out if students know the purpose of commemorative coins.

4. Using an overhead transparency of *Transparency 1-1*, provide students with the two-part definition of a commemorative coin. Write "Commemorative Coins ..." in the circle and these parts of the definition in the boxes:

- Commemorative coins celebrate and honor American people, places, events and institutions.
- Commemorative coins help raise money for important causes.

5. Tell students important facts about the commemorative coin program from the [U.S. Mint website](#). For example:

- The coins are legal tender, but they are not minted for general circulation. They are considered collectors items.
- They are minted in limited quantities and are available for a limited time.
- Since the modern commemorative coin program began in 1982, the United States Mint has raised more than \$418 million to help build new museums, maintain national monuments like the Vietnam War Memorial, preserve historical sites like George Washington's home, support various Olympic programs and much more.
- There have been two commemorative coins minted per year since 2000, with the exception of 2003, when only one coin was minted.

6. Refer to the coin you brought to class or a [past commemorative coin](#) from the U.S. Mint website. Point out who or what they were honoring and what organization received money from sale of the coins. Discuss the significance of what was being commemorated and what institution received money from the sale of the coins. Use *Transparency 1-2* to write (1) the name of the coin in the circle, (2) the significance of what is being honored with the coin in the first square and (3) the importance of the cause it is supporting in the second square.

### *Introducing the Model T Commemorative Coin and the Unit Problem*

7. Tell students that United States senators from Michigan decided that they wanted a law that would require the United States Treasury to make a coin in honor of the Ford Model T and the moving assembly line. Provide students with the main text of [the bill](http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c110:S.587) (<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c110:S.587>;) and read together.

8. Tell students that over the next couple of days they will be deciding whether there should be such a law, by investigating the following question: **Should the United States Congress require the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury to mint Model T commemorative coins?** Write the question on your chalkboard, white board or overhead. This question should remain visible throughout the unit of study.

9. Ask students what they need to know to answer the question. Try to help them come up with the following:

- What is Congress and what does it do?
- What is the Secretary of the Treasury? What does the Department of the Treasury do?
- What are the Model T and assembly line?
- Are the Model T and the assembly line important enough for a commemorative coin?
- Is the "cause" that sale of the commemorative coins will be supporting important enough?

*Display these questions under the unit problem.*

10. Tell students that they're going to start by learning about or reviewing the structure and function of government, so that they can understand how it is that Congress can require the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins.

● **SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT(S)**

Ask students to complete an exit ticket, *Assessment 1-1*, explaining what they learned about the importance of informed, engaged citizenship and about commemorative coins. Students should turn in a complete exit ticket as they leave your class.

AND/OR

Provide students with *Handout 1-1* and ask them to investigate commemorative coins you have not discussed.



## **TRANSPARENCY 1-1: COMMEMORATIVE COINS AND THEIR PURPOSE**

**Commemorative Coins...**

...celebrate and honor American people,  
places, events and institutions.

...help raise money for important causes.

## TRANSPARENCY 1-2: PAST COMMEMORATIVE COINS

**Name of the Coin**

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What or who did the coin honor? What is the significance of the person, place, event or institution the coin was honoring in United States history?

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What was the cause for which the coins raised money? Why was it an important cause?

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_

**ASSESSMENT 1-1:  
EXIT TICKET**

1. What did you learn today about the importance of informed, engaged citizenship?

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2. What did you learn today about commemorative coins? Name at least two things.

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3. What questions do you have? Write at least two questions.

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_

**HANDOUT 1-1:  
PAST COMMEMORATIVE COINS**

**Name of the Coin**

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What or who did the coin honor? What is the significance of the person, place, event or institution the coin was honoring in United States history?

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What was the cause for which the coins raised money? Why was it an important cause?

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## LESSON PLAN 2: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONGRESS AND THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

### ● OVERVIEW

To help them understand and address the unit problem, students should know how it is that the U.S. Congress can require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins. This requires that they know about the structure and function of government, the different branches of government, and particularly the relationship between Congress and the Secretary of the Treasury. Because this is a topic that is typically covered in a high school civics course, it may be a review for your students or you may already have lessons that address the structure and function of government. Therefore, this lesson provides suggestions to assess students' understanding and the need to implement further instruction.

### ● ESTIMATED TIME

One 45-minute period (additional time is dependent upon students' needs).

### ● PREPARATION

Use classroom resources or resources such as [Ben's Guide to U.S. Government](#), [Kids in the House](#) or [Congress for Kids](#) to prepare materials to review or teach students about the structure and function of government, and the branches of government and their relationship to one another.

### ● LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Identify and explain the principles of popular sovereignty, checks and balances, and separation of powers.
- Explain the purposes and functions of Congress, including its relationship to the other branches of government.
- Explain the purposes and functions of the Department of the Treasury, especially how it functions to produce coins.
- Explain how Congress is able to require the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins.

### ● ACTIVITIES

#### *Review*

1. Remind students of the problem you are investigating: **Should the United States Congress require the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury to mint Model T Commemorative Coins?** Also remind them of the supporting questions you developed in class:
  - What is Congress and what does it do?
  - What is the Secretary of the Treasury? What does the Department of the Treasury do?
  - What are the Model T and assembly line?
  - Are the Model T and the assembly line important enough for a commemorative coin?
  - Is the cause that sale of the commemorative coins will be supporting important enough?
2. Tell students that you are going to address the first two supporting questions about Congress and the Secretary of the Treasury.



### *Congress and the Secretary of the Treasury*

3. Ask them to take out a sheet of paper and draw a horizontal line across the middle of it. Above the line they should write everything they know about Congress. Below the line they should write everything they know about the Secretary of the Treasury. Provide about five minutes for each section.
4. On the board or overhead, ask students to share what they know. Explain or expand upon responses as necessary.
5. If you think students are able, ask them to use the back of their paper to respond to the following: Based on what you know about the structure and function of government, explain how the U.S. Congress is able to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins.
6. If students need further instruction, use classroom resources and/or online resources such as [Ben's Guide to U.S. Government](#), [Kids in the House](#) or [Congress for Kids](#) to teach students about the structure and function of government, the branches of government and the relationship between Congress and the Secretary of the Treasury.

### *A Look Ahead*

7. Once you are confident that students understand the relationship between Congress and the Secretary of the Treasury, ask them what questions they need to address next. Referring back to the supporting questions for the unit problem, tell them that next they are going to consider the significance of the Model T and the moving assembly line in United States history.

### ● **SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT(S)**

Ask students to act out the process of a commemorative coin moving from a bill introduced in Congress to its minting. They can use a coin that has already been minted or make up their own coin. If they make up their own coin, be sure they use the criteria you discussed for commemorative coins — it should represent a significant person, place or event in American history and its sales should support an important cause. The students should include:

- The introduction of a commemorative coin bill to Congress.
- Process of how the bill became a law.
- The role of the Secretary and Department of Treasury.

## LESSON PLAN 3: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MODEL T AND THE MOVING ASSEMBLY LINE

If possible, supplement this lesson with a Henry Ford Museum field trip!

### ● OVERVIEW

To decide whether Congress should require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint Model T commemorative coins, students should investigate the significance of the Model T and moving assembly line in United States history. This lesson asks them to do one or two days of research and then debate whether the Model T and moving assembly line are significant enough in United States history and culture to mint a commemorative coin in their honor.

### ● ESTIMATED TIME

Between two and three 45-minute periods.

### ● PREPARATION

- Arrange some time (one or two days) for students to do research in the library.
- Prepare an assignment sheet and rubric for a research project and presentation.

### ● LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Identify different ways the automobile affects their lives, both positively and negatively.
- Question and investigate the significance of the Model T and the moving assembly line.
- Analyze the social, economic and cultural impact of the Model T and moving assembly line on Michigan and the United States.

### ● ACTIVITIES

#### *Introduction: Considering Car Culture*

1. Give students the following writing prompt:

How does the automobile affect your life? Think of all the things you've done and seen over the last couple of days. Write about the things that you did and saw because of the automobile. How would life be different without the automobile?

Write down and discuss students' responses. Help them think about things like parking lots, drive-through restaurants, car products, etc.

2. Provide students with *Reading 3-1*. Ask them how the reading supported, contested or extended their thinking about car culture. What would life be like without the automobile?

3. Tell students that even though it might be difficult to imagine life without the automobile, it was not so long ago that many people did not own an automobile and it didn't seem to be a necessity. The Model T Ford and the moving assembly line were instrumental in changing all that.

4. Introduce students to their research project. Tell them they will be doing a research project to learn about the Model T and moving assembly line and engage in a debate about whether or not they were significant enough in United States history to mint a commemorative coin in their honor. In other words, they will be addressing the supporting question: Are the Model T and the assembly line significant enough for a commemorative coin?

### *Investigating the History and Impact of the Model T and Moving Assembly Line*

5. Students should begin with individual research on the Model T and moving assembly line. They should find library books and Internet sources that will tell them about the history and impact of the Model T and moving assembly line (see list of resources beginning on page 22 of this unit). They might also ask a U.S. history teacher for some resources. Students should be able to address the following questions:

- What is the history of the Model T and moving assembly line? How and when did they come to be?
- How did the Model T and moving assembly line change American lives and landscapes?

6. After students have conducted individual research, divide the class in half and assign each half to one of the following positions:

- The Model T Ford and the assembly line were significant enough in American history to mint a commemorative coin in their honor.
- The Model T Ford and the assembly line were not significant enough in American history to mint a commemorative coin in their honor.

7. Provide students with *Handout 3-1*. Students will work in pairs to develop at least three points and at least two counterpoints for their position. Provide students with feedback on their worksheets before they move to the next step.

8. Have students come together as a group and discuss strategy for their debate. The group should synthesize their reasons, which will be provided in the opening argument. They should also decide on the best supporting facts and examples. One or more people should be assigned to present the opening argument. Another should be assigned the closing argument.

### ● **SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT(S)**

Students should engage in a class debate on the Model T. After the debate, each student should decide what opinion he/she holds regarding the Model T commemorative coin. Each student should write his/her own thesis, supported by at least three reasons, including two supporting facts or examples for each reason. This is in preparation for the persuasive letter students will write (see the [NCTE website](#) for persuasive letter writing resources).

## **READING 3-1: CAR CULTURE IN THE U.S.A.**

Have you ever thought about what life would be like without the automobile? Let's think about all the different ways the automobile shapes our world.

### *Getting Around*

To get around, many people depend on the automobile more than any other source of transportation. If your family owns a car, you can probably imagine all the different ways you use it. You may use it every day to get to school, to work and to the grocery store or on some other errand. On the weekends, you may use the family car to go to the movies, visit a friend or drive to a relative's house. Perhaps you use it to take a family vacation every year.

Even if your family does not own a car, you probably still use automobiles in some way. Perhaps you take the bus or a taxi to get where you need to go. You might ask someone else to give you a ride. If you walk or ride a bike to get where you need to go — watch out! — there are cars all around you, and you need to be aware of them.

### *On the Road*

Whether you use an automobile every day or not, you probably come across a road every day. All around us, there are streets, avenues, expressways and turnpikes; one-way streets, two-lane roads and six-lane highways; stop signs, yield signs and traffic lights; and much, much more.

Often, roads have a lot of traffic. Most of us have experienced a traffic jam of some sort. Maybe this is because of road construction, or maybe it is just a busy time of the day and we run into "rush hour" traffic. Even when we do not experience traffic for ourselves, we often hear about it. We hear traffic reports on the radio or the news, or we hear someone telling us they were late because of traffic. Just as automobiles are a regular part of our lives, so are roads and everything that goes along with them.

### *It's a Big Business*

Something we might not think about as much as cars or roads are things like advertisements or businesses that are related to cars. Many of us probably ride along a road or highway without even thinking about all the things we see that are there because of cars. Think about all the car or car product billboards, magazine ads or radio and television commercials you encounter in a day.

You also see car-related businesses everywhere all along a city street: car dealerships, gas stations, service stations, auto parts stores and car washes. Even businesses that do not sell cars or car parts cater to cars, such as drive-through restaurants, drive-through pharmacies and more. Next time you are driving along a city streets, count all the car-related advertisements or places that you can see — you may be surprised about how many there are!

### *Our Environment*

From the factory to the junkyard, automobiles use lots of resources and pollute air, land and water. People living in or near big cities know about living with smog and "ozone actions days," when people are asked to limit car use. Thousands of cars are abandoned along the side of the road every year, and scrapped tires create their own land pollution problem. Automobiles make waste products in the form of plastic, glass, motor oil and more.

Each day, though, we hear about ways automobile companies and concerned citizens are finding ways to use fewer resources, reuse or recycle resources and reduce pollution. Government officials debate when and how to control automobile-related pollution. People ask citizens to be responsible about choosing and using vehicles that will cut down on gas use and harmful emissions. We hear or read about these things all the time, and slowly, people are beginning to make changes in their lives that will have a positive impact on the environment. These are just some of the ways automobiles affect our lives and environment. Can you think of more?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**HANDOUT 3-1:  
POINT-COUNTERPOINT WORKSHEET**

**Directions:** Use this worksheet to develop points and counterpoints for debate.

State your thesis: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Main Points:** In the spaces below, provide at least three reasons to support your thesis. Under each reason, provide at least two facts or examples to back up your reasons.

**Reason 1:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Fact or Example 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Fact or Example 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Reason 2:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Fact or Example 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Fact or Example 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Reason 3:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Fact or Example 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Fact or Example 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**Points You Are Prepared to Rebut:** In the spaces provided below, write at least two possible points from the opposition that you are prepared to rebut. Below each point, write your counterpoint.

**Possible Point 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Counterpoint:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Possible Point 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Counterpoint:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON PLAN 4: EXERCISING CIVIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES: WRITING A PERSUASIVE LETTER TO A MEMBER OF CONGRESS

### ● OVERVIEW

This lesson asks students to act as informed, engaged citizens by writing a letter to a member of Congress, expressing their opinion on whether Congress should require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint Model T commemorative coins. It begins with a review of the discussion on the importance of being an informed and engaged citizen that began this unit. Keeping in mind the importance of informed citizenship, it then asks students to consider the importance of education in American society. Finally, it asks them to use everything they have learned over the course of the unit to write to their senators or representative.

### ● ESTIMATED TIME

Between one and two 45-minute class periods

### ● PREPARATION

- Prepare assignment sheet and rubric for persuasive letter.
- Using classroom resources or resources such as those found on the [NCTE website](#), prepare supporting materials to help students draft their letters.

### ● LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Identify their U.S. representative and senators.
- Describe and evaluate the effectiveness of contacting public officials as a way to participate in the political process.
- Make a persuasive, reasoned argument on a public issue and support it using historical examples.
- Draft, revise, edit and “publish” a persuasive letter to their U.S. representative or senators regarding the Model T commemorative coin that:
  - Considers audience.
  - Refers to the purpose of commemorative coins, the significance of the Model T and moving assembly line, and the value of supporting the creation of educational resources.
  - Uses evidence to support their argument.
  - Uses correct grammar, usage, mechanics and spelling.
  - Demonstrates a coherent organizational structure.

### ● ACTIVITIES

*The Importance of Education in American Society*

1. Write the following quote on the board for students:

“I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education. This is the true corrective of abuses of constitutional power.” --Thomas Jefferson to William C. Jarvis, 1820. Ask them to write about what they think Jefferson meant. Discuss, helping students think again about the importance of an informed citizenry.

2. Remind students that you need to consider whether the cause that sale of the commemorative coins will be supporting is significant enough for Congress to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint Model T commemorative coins. Remind them that if the bill is signed into law, sale of the minted coins would provide funds to the Automobile National Heritage Area Partnership Inc. and [The Henry Ford](#) to create endowments for educational programs associated with the Model T.
3. Discuss with students the role of educational institutions — schools, libraries and museums — in helping create an informed citizenry.
4. Ask students to write down which of the following two opinions they hold:
  - Developing educational resources related to the Model T is an important cause and should receive money to support it.
  - Developing educational resources related to the Model T is not an important cause and should not receive money to support it.

They should provide two reasons to support their opinion.

5. After students have written their responses, ask them to go to a designated place in your room, depending on what opinion they hold. Randomly choose students to back up their opinion. At the end, ask if any students would like to change their opinion and move to a different place in the room.
6. After students have returned to their seats, remind them of the unit problem and all the supporting questions you wanted to address: **Should the United States Congress require the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury to mint Model T commemorative coins?**
  - What is Congress and what does it do?
  - What is the Secretary of the Treasury? What does the Department of the Treasury do?
  - What are the Model T and assembly line?
  - Are the Model T and the assembly line important enough for a commemorative coin?
  - Is the cause that sale of the commemorative coins will be supporting important enough?

Tell them that now that you have addressed all the supporting questions, you are going to address the unit problem.

#### *Developing an Argument on the Minting of Model T Coins*

7. Ask students to respond to the unit question in writing:  
Should Congress require the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury to mint a Model T commemorative coin?  
Remind them to consider both what the coin is commemorating and the cause that it will support.
8. Discuss students' responses. Once the discussion has gained momentum and students are excited about the topic, ask them if they know what they can do to express their opinions to lawmakers. Discuss their responses.

#### *Exercising Civic Rights and Responsibilities*

9. Tell students that it is their right as a citizen to voice their opinion about policy and their civic responsibility to be informed about the issues and to monitor the actions of their government in carrying out the policy. There are effective ways to tell their U.S. representative or senators how they feel about a bill being considered in Congress. They are going to write a letter to their representative or senators persuading him or her to vote for or against the bill ([H.R.1619](#)) on the Model T commemorative coin. Read them [the bill \(http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c110:S.587:\)](http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c110:S.587) on the commemorative coin.

10. Assign students to find out who their representative and senators are and to write a persuasive letter regarding the Model T commemorative coin to one of them. Use classroom resources or resources such as those found on the [NCTE website](#) to help students draft of their persuasive letter. Their persuasive letters should reference:

- The purpose of commemorative coins.
- The significance of the Model T and moving assembly line.
- The value of supporting the creation of educational resources.

They should clearly state their thesis and provide at least three reasons, each supported by at least two facts or examples.

## ● SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT(S)

Ask students to write a draft of the persuasive letter for teacher and/or peer feedback.

## ● SUGGESTED CUMULATIVE ASSESSMENT

Ask students to write the final draft of a letter persuading their representative to vote for or against the Model T commemorative coin. They may post and send their letter through the [House of Representatives website](#) or through their senators' websites.

Ask students to develop a plan for informing others (fellow students, family, community members) about the Model T commemorative coin and encouraging them to express their opinions.

## ● TEACHER RESOURCES

*About the Model T.* 2008. **The Henry Ford.** 12 May, 2008.  
<http://www.TheHenryFord.org/exhibits/modelt/about.asp>

*The Automobile in American Life and Society.* 2004. University of Michigan–Dearborn, and **The Henry Ford.** 30 July, 2007.  
<http://www.autolife.umd.umich.edu/>

Barton, Keith C. “Middle Graders’ Explanations of Historical Significance.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL March 1997  
[http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content\\_storage\\_01/0000019b/80/15/59/bf.pdf](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/15/59/bf.pdf)

*Ben’s Guide to U.S. Government for Kids.* 1 February, 1997. U.S. Government Printing Office. 30 July, 2007.  
<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/index.html>

Brooke, Lindsay, in cooperation with **The Henry Ford.** *The Ford Model T: The Car that Put the World on Wheels.* St. Paul, MN Motorbooks, 2008.

Casey, Bob. *The Model T: A Centennial History.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2008.

“Commemorative Coin Programs.” *The United States Mint.* 2007. The United States Treasury. 30 July, 2007.  
[http://www.usmint.gov/mint\\_programs/index.cfm?flash=yes&action=commemoratives](http://www.usmint.gov/mint_programs/index.cfm?flash=yes&action=commemoratives)

“Dear Librarian: Writing a Persuasive Letter.” *ReadWriteThink.* 20 June, 2007. National Council for Teachers of English. 30 July, 2007.  
[http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=875](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=875)

Flink, J.J. *The Automobile Age*. Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1988.

“The Model T.” *Showroom of Automotive History*. 1995. **The Henry Ford**. 30 July, 2007.  
<http://www.TheHenryFord.org/exhibits/showroom/1908/model.t.html>

“Model T Legacy.” 2007. **The Henry Ford**. 12 May, 2008.  
[http://www.modeltcoin.org/model\\_t\\_legacy.html](http://www.modeltcoin.org/model_t_legacy.html)

Seixas, Peter. “Mapping the Terrain of Historical Significance.” *Social Education* 6.1 (1997): pp. 22-27.

For another list of resources, see <http://www.TheHenryFord.org/exhibits/smartfun/welcome.html>

## ● STUDENT RESOURCES

*About the Model T*. 2008. **The Henry Ford**. 12 May 2008.  
<http://www.thehenryford.org/exhibits/modelt/about.asp>

*The Automobile in American Life and Society*. 2004. University of Michigan, Dearborn, and **The Henry Ford**. 30 July, 2007.  
<http://www.autolife.umd.umich.edu/>

*Ben’s Guide to U.S. Government for Kids*. 1 February, 2007. U.S. Government Printing Office. 30 July, 2007.  
<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/government/branches.html>

“The Model T.” *Showroom of Automotive History*. 1995. **The Henry Ford**. 30 July, 2007.  
<http://www.TheHenryFord.org/exhibits/showroom/1908/model.t.html>

“Model T Legacy.” 2007. **The Henry Ford**. 12 May, 2008.  
[http://www.modeltcoin.org/model\\_t\\_legacy.html](http://www.modeltcoin.org/model_t_legacy.html)

\*Browse [books on transportation and Henry Ford](#) available for sale online from **The Henry Ford**.



## ● RELATED STANDARDS

### *National Standards for Civics and Government: 9-12 Content Standards*

**Standard II.B.1:** Students should be able to explain important factors that have helped shape American society, such as universal public education.

**Standard II.D.3:** Students should be able to evaluate, take and defend positions on what the fundamental values and principles of American political life are and their importance to the maintenance of constitutional democracy. To achieve this standard, students should be able to:

- Explain the following principles widely considered to be fundamental to American constitutional democracy:
  - Popular sovereignty — the concept that ultimate political authority rests with the people who create and can alter or abolish governments.
  - Constitutional government, including representative institutions, separated and shared powers, and checks and balances.
- Identify the fundamental values and principles expressed in basic documents, significant political speeches and writings, and the individual and group actions that embody them.
- Explain how the institutions of government reflect fundamental values and principles.

**Standard III.A.1:** Students should be able to explain how the United States Constitution grants and distributes power to national and state government and how it seeks to prevent the abuse of power. To achieve this standard, students should be able to:

- Explain how the overall design and specific features of the Constitution are intended to:
  - Aggregate power at different levels to allow government to be responsive and effective.
  - Disperse power among different levels of government to reduce chances of its abuse, protect individual rights and promote the common good.
  - Balance and check powers to prevent their abuse.

**Standard III.B.1:** Students should be able to evaluate, take and defend positions on issues regarding the purposes, organization and functions of the institutions of the national government. To achieve this standard, students should be able to:

- Describe the purposes, organization and functions of the three branches of the national government.
- Evaluate the extent to which each branch of the government reflects the people's sovereignty.

**Standard III.E.6:** Students should be able to evaluate, take and defend positions about the formation and implementation of public policy. To achieve this standard, students should be able to:

- Describe a current issue of public policy at the local, state or national level.
- Identify the major groups interested in that issue and explain their positions.
- Identify the points at which citizens can monitor or influence the process of public policy formation.
- Explain the processes by which public policy concerning that issue is formed and carried out.

**Standard VE.3:** Students should be able to evaluate, take and defend positions about the means that citizens should use to monitor and influence the formation and implementation of public policy. To achieve this standard, students should be able to:

- Describe the many ways citizens can participate in the political process at the local, state and national levels.
- Evaluate the usefulness of other forms of political participation in influencing public policy (e.g., contacting public officials).

**Standard VE.5:** Students should be able to explain the importance of knowledge to competent and responsible participation in American democracy. To achieve this standard, students should be able to explain why becoming knowledgeable about public affairs and the values and principles of American constitutional democracy and communicating that knowledge to others is an important form of participation.

### *National Standards for Historical Thinking: Grades 5-12*

*Standard 1.A:* Distinguish between past, present and future time.

*Standard 3.C:* Analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation, including the importance of the individual, the influence of ideas.

*Standard 3.J:* Hypothesize the influence of the past.

*Standard 4.A:* Formulate historical questions.

*Standard 4.B:* Obtain historical data from a variety of sources.

*Standard 4.C:* Support interpretations with historical evidence.

*Standard 5.B:* Marshal evidence of antecedent circumstances.

*Standard 5.E:* Formulate a position or course of action on an issue.

*Standard 5.F:* Evaluate the implementation of a decision.

### *National Standards for English Language Arts*

*Standard 4:* Students adjust their use of spoken, written and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

*Standard 5:* Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

*Standard 6:* Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language and genre to create, critique and discuss print and nonprint texts.

*Standard 8:* Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

*Standard 12:* Students use spoken, written and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion and the exchange of information).

### *Michigan Social Studies Standards*

*Standard I.2:* All students will understand narratives about major eras of American and world history by identifying the people involved, describing the setting and sequencing the events.

*Standard III.1:* All students will identify the purposes of national, state and local governments in the United States, describe how citizens organize government to accomplish their purposes, and assess their effectiveness.

*Standard III.4:* All students will explain how American governmental institutions at the local, state and federal levels provide for the limitation and sharing of power and how the nation's political system provides for the exercise of power.

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## *Michigan English Language Arts Standards*

*Standard 1:* All students will read and comprehend general and technical material.

*Standard 2:* All students will demonstrate the ability to write clear and grammatically correct sentences, paragraphs and compositions.

*Standard 3:* All students will focus on meaning and communication as they listen, speak, view, read and write in personal, social, occupational and civic contexts.

*Standard 7:* All students will demonstrate, analyze and reflect upon the skills and processes used to communicate through listening, speaking, viewing, reading and writing.

*Standard 10:* All students will apply knowledge, ideas and issues drawn from texts to their lives and the lives of others.

*Standard 12:* All students will develop and apply personal, shared and academic criteria for the enjoyment, appreciation and evaluation of their own and others' oral, written and visual texts.

## Michigan Social Studies High School Content Expectations: Civics

Students will...

*1.1.1:* Identify roles citizens play in civic and private life.

*1.1.2:* Explain and provide examples of the concepts "power," "legitimacy," "authority," and "sovereignty."

*2.1.3:* Explain how the Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights reflected political principles of popular sovereignty, rule of law, checks and balances, separation of powers, social compact, natural rights, individual rights, separation of church and state, republicanism and federalism.

*2.2.1:* Identify and explain the fundamental values of America's constitutional republic and their reflection in the principles of the United States Constitution.

*3.1.1:* Analyze the purposes, organization, functions and processes of the legislative branch as enumerated in Article I of the Constitution.

*3.1.2:* Analyze the purposes, organization, functions and processes of the executive branch as enumerated in Article II of the Constitution.

*3.2.1:* Explain how the principles of enumerated powers, federalism, separation of powers, bicameralism, checks and balances, republicanism, rule of law, individual rights, inalienable rights, separation of church and state, and popular sovereignty serve to limit the power of government.

3.5.1: Explain how political parties, interest groups, the media and individuals can influence and determine the public agenda.

3.5.8: Evaluate, take and defend positions about the formation and implementation of a current public policy issue, and examine ways to participate in the decision-making process about the issue.

5.1.1: Using examples, explain the idea and meaning of citizenship in the United States of America, and the rights and responsibilities of American citizens.

5.3.2: Identify and explain political rights.

5.4.2: Describe the importance of citizens' civic responsibilities including obeying the law, being informed and attentive to public issues, monitoring political leaders and governmental agencies, assuming leadership when appropriate, paying taxes, registering to vote and voting knowledgeably on candidates and issues, serving as a juror, serving in the armed forces, performing public service.

5.4.3: Explain why meeting personal and civic responsibilities is important to the preservation and improvement of American constitutional democracy.

5.5.2: Describe the dispositions thought to encourage citizen involvement in public affairs (e.g., "civic virtue" or attentiveness to and concern for public affairs; patriotism or loyalty to values and principles underlying American constitutional democracy) and to facilitate thoughtful and effective participation in public affairs (e.g., civility, respect for the rights of other individuals, respect for law, honesty, open-mindedness, negotiation and compromise, persistence, civic mindedness, compassion, patriotism, courage and tolerance for ambiguity).

5.5.3: Explain why the development of citizens as independent members of society who are respectful of individual worth and human dignity, inclined to participate in public affairs, and are thoughtful and effective in their participation, is important to the preservation and improvement of American constitutional democracy.

6.1.5: Make a persuasive, reasoned argument on a public issue and support using evidence (e.g., historical and contemporary examples), constitutional principles and fundamental values of American constitutional democracy; explain the stance or position.

6.2.3: Describe and evaluate the effectiveness of ways individuals can participate in the political process at the local, state and national levels (including, but not limited to voting, attending political and governmental meetings, contacting public officials, working in campaigns, community organizing, demonstrating or picketing, boycotting, joining interest groups or political action committees).

6.2.9: Evaluate the claim that constitutional democracy requires the participation of an attentive, knowledgeable and competent citizenry.

### *Michigan Social Studies High School Content Expectations: U.S. History*

Students will:

6.1.5 *A Case Study of American Industrialism* – Using the automobile industry as a case study, analyze the causes and consequences of this major industrial transformation by explaining:

- Entrepreneurial decision making by Henry Ford and others.
- The impact on Michigan.
- The impact on American society.

## *Michigan English Language Arts High School Content Expectations*

1.1.2: Know and use a variety of prewriting strategies to generate, focus and organize ideas (e.g., free writing, clustering/mapping, talking with others, brainstorming, outlining, developing graphic organizers, taking notes, summarizing, paraphrasing).

1.1.3: Select and use language that is appropriate (e.g., formal, informal, literary or technical) for the purpose, audience and context of the text, speech or visual representation (e.g., letter to the editor, proposal, poem or digital story).

1.1.4: Compose drafts that convey an impression, express an opinion, raise a question, argue a position, explore a topic, tell a story or serve another purpose, while simultaneously considering the constraints and possibilities (e.g., structure, language, use of conventions of grammar, usage and mechanics) of the selected form or genre.

1.1.5: Revise drafts to more fully and/or precisely convey meaning — drawing on response from others, self-reflection and reading one's own work with the eye of a reader; then refine the text — deleting and/or reorganizing ideas and addressing potential readers' questions.

1.1.6: Reorganize sentence elements as needed and choose grammatical and stylistic options that provide sentence variety, fluency and flow.

1.1.7: Edit for style, tone and word choice (specificity, variety, accuracy, appropriateness, conciseness) and for conventions of grammar, usage and mechanics that are appropriate for the audience.

1.1.8: Proofread to check spelling, layout and font; prepare selected pieces for a public audience.

1.3.5: From the outset, identify and assess audience expectations and needs; consider the rhetorical effects of style, form and content based on that assessment; and adapt communication strategies appropriately and effectively.

1.3.6: Use speaking, writing and visual presentations to appeal to audiences of different social, economic and cultural backgrounds and experiences (e.g., include explanations and definitions according to the audience's background, age or knowledge of the topic; adjust formality of style; consider interests of potential readers).

1.4.1: Identify, explore and refine topics and questions appropriate for research.

1.4.2: Develop a system for gathering, organizing, paraphrasing and summarizing information; select, evaluate, synthesize and use multiple primary and secondary (print and electronic) resources.

1.4.4: Interpret, synthesize and evaluate information/findings in various print sources and media (e.g., fact and opinion, comprehensiveness of the evidence, bias, varied perspectives, motives and credibility of the author, date of publication) to draw conclusions and implications.

1.4.5: Develop organizational structures appropriate to the purpose and message, and use transitions that produce a sequential or logical flow of ideas.

1.5.4: Use technology tools (e.g., word processing, presentation and multimedia software) to produce polished written and multimedia work (e.g., literary and expository works, proposals, business presentations, advertisements).

1.5.5: Respond to and use feedback to strengthen written and multimedia presentations (e.g., clarify and defend ideas, expand on a topic, use logical arguments, modify organization, evaluate effectiveness of images, set goals for future presentations).

4.1.1: Use sentence structures and vocabulary effectively within different modes (oral and written, formal and informal) and for various rhetorical purposes.

4.1.3: Use a range of linguistic applications and styles for accomplishing different rhetorical purposes (e.g., persuading others to change opinions, conducting business transactions, speaking in a public forum, discussing issues informally with peers).

4.1.4: Control standard English structures in a variety of contexts (e.g., formal speaking, academic prose, business and public writing) using language carefully and precisely.

4.1.5: Demonstrate use of conventions of grammar, usage and mechanics in written texts, including parts of speech, sentence structure and variety, spelling, capitalization and punctuation.

## ● UNIT DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Dorothy Ebersole, Curator of Education, **The Henry Ford**

Tamara Shreiner, Associate Curator of Education, **The Henry Ford**

Nichole Bontomasi, Teacher, Lamphere High School, Madison Heights, MI

Trish Moroz, Teacher, Advanced Technology Institute, Dearborn, MI

Toni Simovski, Teacher, South Lyon High School, South Lyon, MI