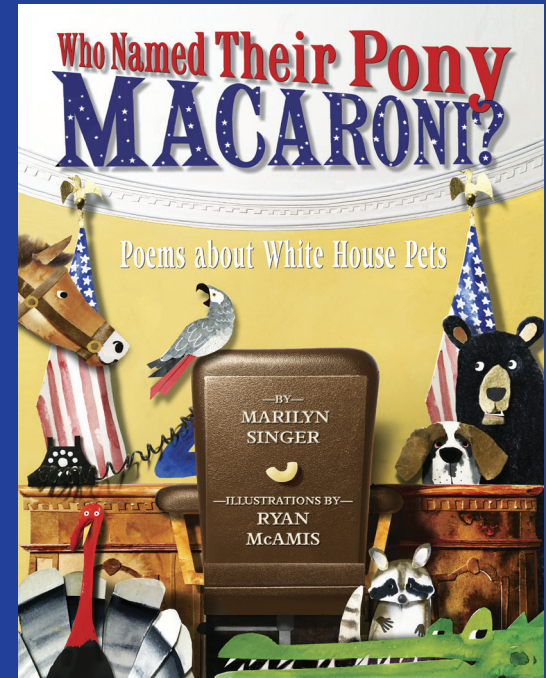
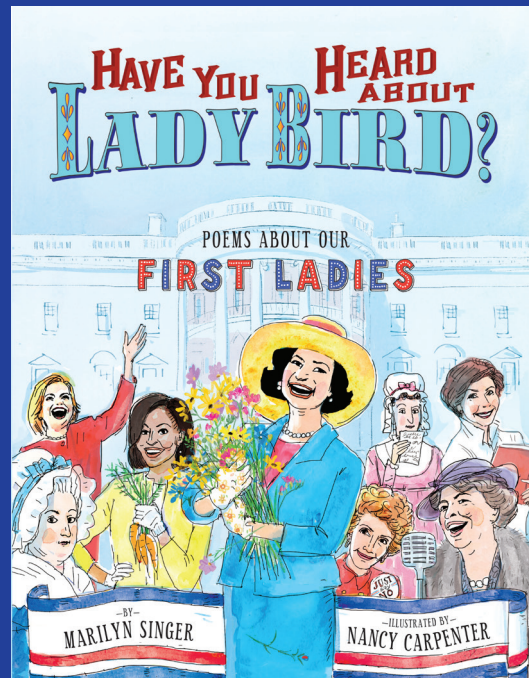
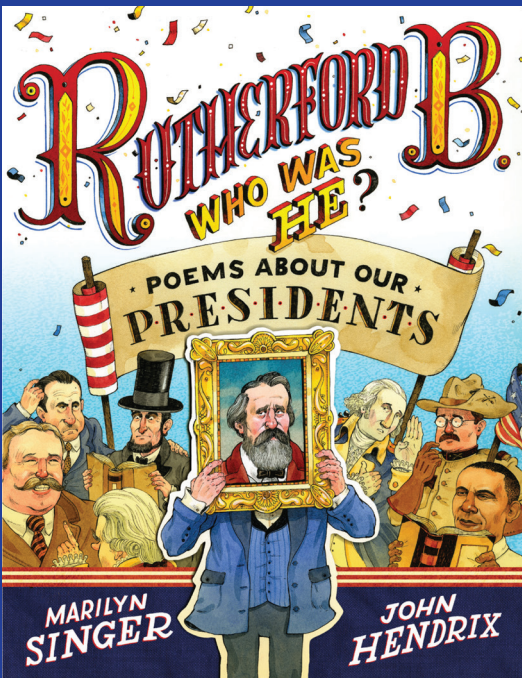


MARILYN SINGER'S Presidential Poetry Collection



EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

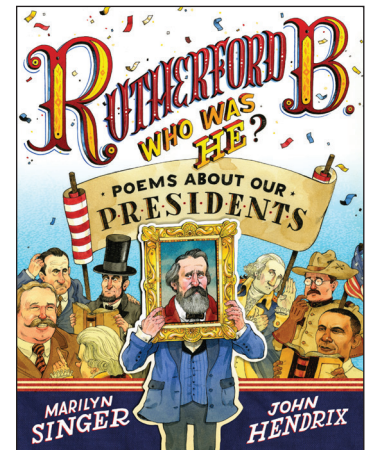
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ABOUT THE BOOKS

Rutherford B., Who Was He?: Poems About Our Presidents

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN HENDRIX

A peanut farmer. A haberdasher. A senator. A log cabin dweller. An actor. A scholar. A general. A millionaire. Forty-three men with forty-three passions, but with one thing in common: a presidential place in America's history. With her gift for unforgettable rhythm and innovative rhyme, Marilyn Singer brings the presidents of the United States to life—from Washington to Obama—and contextualizes them in their time. Illustrations by John Hendrix are full of hilarious wit and refined exuberance. Detailed back matter enriches the experience with short biographies, quotes by each president, and more.



Have You Heard About Lady Bird?: Poems About Our First Ladies

ILLUSTRATED BY NANCY CARPENTER

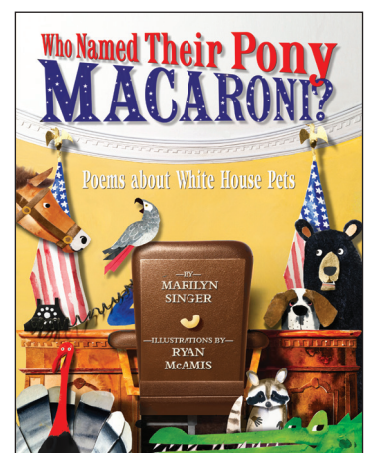
An heiress. An artist. A bank manager. An ambassador. A lawyer. A debutante. A librarian. A dancer. All were First Ladies! The role of First Lady has been defined differently by each woman who's held it, but all of them left an impact on our nation as partner of the commander in chief. Incisive poetry by Marilyn Singer and energetic art by Nancy Carpenter provide a fascinating glimpse into the lives of women—from Martha Washington to Eleanor Roosevelt to Lady Bird Johnson—who variously embraced the position or shied away from it, craved the spotlight or fiercely guarded their privacy, took controversial stands or championed the status quo. Detailed back matter includes short biographies, quotations, and more.

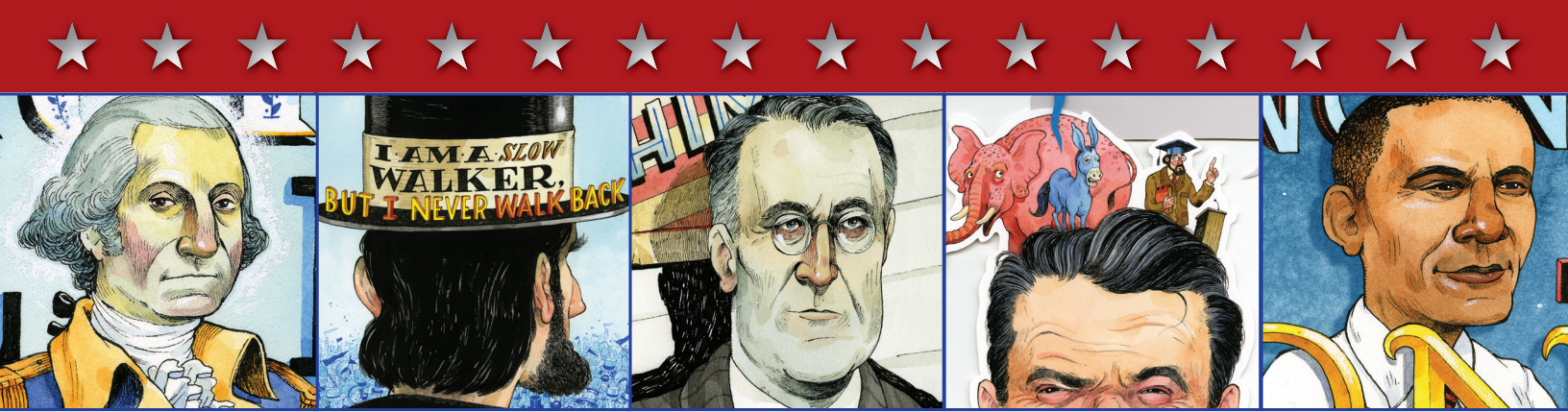


Who Named Their Pony Macaroni?: Poems About White House Pets

ILLUSTRATED BY RYAN McAMIS

A family of mice. A runaway goat. A mischievous snake. A shocking parrot. A pardoned turkey. A pampered raccoon. A ghostbusting dog. A celebrity cow. The White House housed more than presidents and First Families—who could forget the furry, scaly, feathered friends who impressed the press, guarded their charges, and kept them company through all the ups and downs of their respective terms? Marilyn Singer's compelling poems will delight readers with stories of the creatures who sat beside our country's leaders, as she draws intriguing connections between the animals and the administrations they accompanied. Mixed-media illustrations by Ryan McAmis lend humor and vivacity, and detailed back matter explores each president's pet history in more depth.





BEFORE READING

Set the Scene

Share these poems for pure pleasure or use them to build student knowledge and skills. With so many ways to use these books, consider first how you want to introduce a poem or poems before reading aloud. Here are some different approaches:

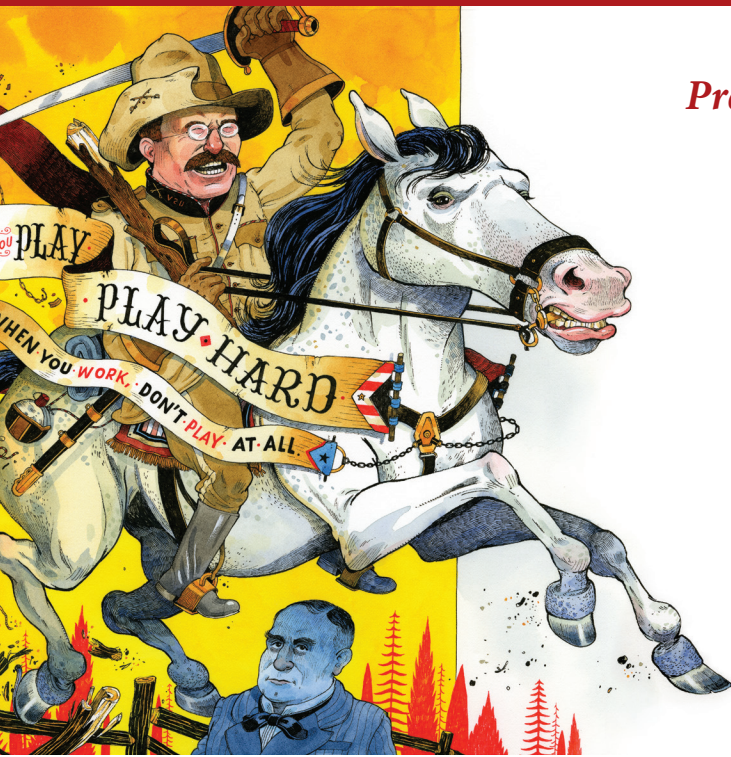
JUST DIVE IN. Read a poem or a group of poems aloud for fun! If the poem's subject is someone whom students should be familiar with, read the poem without the name and have students guess whom the poem is about.

FOCUS FIRST ON FACTS. Before sharing poems from *Rutherford B., Who Was He?*, *Have You Heard About Lady Bird?*, or *Who Named Their Pony Macaroni?*, work with your students to generate a list of what they already know and what else they want to know about our presidents and First Ladies. You can have students use this list to verify facts and find answers to their questions before listening to you read poems aloud.

INTRODUCE A UNIT OF STUDY. Choose poems that can activate prior knowledge or serve as a springboard for discussion about:

- the branches of government, the role of the president, and elections
- an in-depth look at one president and the role he played in history
- how our early presidents set precedents for the future of the United States and offered visions of how the country and the government should evolve
- major events and eras of U.S. history, such as westward expansion, the Civil War and Reconstruction, WWI, WWII, Prohibition, the Great Depression, the Cold War, etc.

INTEGRATE READING AND SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION. While they play with language, build new vocabulary, practice pronunciation and fluency, and make inferences and connections, students will also have the opportunity to make sense of new content and understand perspective by hearing and reading these poems.



Prepare for Poetry

READING POETRY ALOUD

- Read a poem several times to get familiar with its ideas and imagery.
- Practice reading aloud before reading to your students. Learn the best pacing and make sure you can pronounce all the words.
- Experiment with delivery. Look for impact in stressing *this* word rather than that word.
- Read slowly, with conviction, in a normal, relaxed tone.
- Pause only where there is punctuation.
- Look up and connect with your listeners.
- Share your reaction.
- Reread the poem, or have someone else read it aloud.

Learn more about “How to Read a Poem Aloud” from Marilyn Singer at <https://marilynsinger.net/how-to-read-a-poem-aloud/>

EXPLORING POETRY

- Lovely verse does not always need to be followed by endless questions or probing research. An amazing thing about poetry is that it suggests to the reader questions to ask—questions with rarely just one right answer. Help students prompt their own questioning by having them create reaction and reflection statements to poems that could begin with “I wonder,” “I am curious about,” “I noticed,” “I feel,” “I enjoy,” or “I am excited/surprised/confused by.”
- Teach your students about figurative language and distinguishing between what the words say and what they mean. Poems often use metaphors, similes, onomatopoeia, alliteration, idioms, and other figurative language. Recognizing and understanding these literary devices will help make words come alive for your students, understand deeper levels of meaning, and promote critical thinking. Use the books in Marilyn Singer’s Presidential Poetry series to create a poetry hunt and send students looking for favorite poems featuring metaphors, idioms, similes, etc.
- Emphasize visualization by having students consciously practice making mental images and talk about what they visualize when listening to poems, informational text, or stories read aloud. Get them to discuss or draw and share their “mind movies,” and encourage recognition of the wide variety of mental image-making. As you select and share one or more poems, get students to focus on the descriptive words and ask: What words are used to describe the person or pet? How do these words make you feel? What images do they bring to mind?

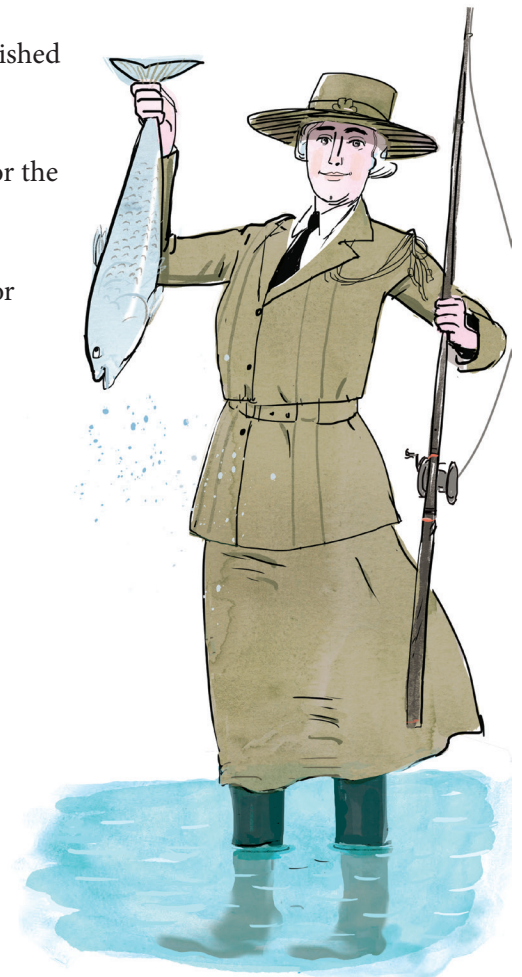


AFTER READING

Discussion Questions

The questions below are designed to help you get students thinking about a poem, its subject, its poetic structure, or its specific words. Use them for class discussion and reflection or offer them to students as reflective writing prompts.

1. What does the poem spark you to see, hear, and think about?
2. As you listen to or read the poem, what pictures are you making in your mind?
3. How does the poet show you something about the person (or pet) instead of just telling you?
4. How does this poem help you think about this person in new ways?
5. What does this poem make you wonder about this person? How do you feel about this person?
6. If you could meet one person (or pet) featured in any of the books, who would you choose? Why?
7. Which president do you think all the other presidents might have wished to meet and why?
8. Which First Lady do you think all the other First Ladies might have wished to meet and why?
9. Who is your favorite president? What life experiences prepared him for the role of president? What contributions did he make to America?
10. Who is your favorite First Lady? What life experiences prepared her for the role of First Lady? What contributions did she make to America?
11. How is the poem structured or organized? What is its particular poetic form?
12. How do patterns or rhyme, sound, and rhythm make you feel about the poem or the subject of the poem?
13. What language and rhymes do you especially admire?
14. When you look at the word choices of the poet, did she use specific or general words? Why? Give an example.
15. What words create a vivid image of the person in your mind?





Choral Reading and Reader's Theater

Help build student fluency, self-confidence, and motivation—and have fun!—with choral reading and reader's theater. Both these strategies are great for sharing poetry and giving students a chance to bring the words to life. Work in small groups if possible, especially when using reader's theater.

CHORAL READING. In choral reading, students read a poem out loud together, in groups or as a whole class. Plan your choral reading of Presidential Poetry:

- Divide your class into three groups. Choose a poem about a president, his First Lady, and their pet(s) and assign one poem to each group. For example, Group 1 gets “Lyndon Baines Johnson,” Group 2 gets “Claudia Alta ‘Lady Bird’ Taylor Johnson,” and Group 3 gets “Lyndon Baines Johnson Loved His Dogs.”
- Divide each group into smaller groups. Divide each poem into sections and assign individual lines or stanzas to different groups of students.
- Read each poem aloud, then have all students read it aloud in unison—more than once.
- Have the smaller groups of students take turns reading aloud lines or stanzas from their poem. Vary the assignments of lines and poems to give students the opportunity to perform different parts and different poems.

READER'S THEATER. Reader's theater combines reading practice and performance. Students perform by reading scripts, usually without any costumes or props. Poems can make wonderful reader's theater scripts!

- Use the dialogue poems found in *Rutherford B., Who Was He?* and *Have You Heard About Lady Bird?*, because they can easily be adapted into a script. When creating your script, consider adding a narrator who can provide context by sharing information from the presidential and First Lady biographies included in the backs of the books.

Poems with two or more voices:

“John Adams/Thomas Jefferson”

“Andrew Jackson/Martin Van Buren”

“Zachary Taylor/Millard Fillmore/Franklin Pierce/James Buchanan”

“Mary Anne Todd Lincoln”

“Frances Clara Folsom Cleveland (Preston)”

“Edith Kermit Carow Roosevelt/Helen ‘Nellie’ Louise Herron Taft”

Or, with a little more writing and editing, you (or your students) can choose any poem and transform it into a script by adding narrators.

- Divide students into small groups and read through the scripts with each group. Then give students time to read and reread the script silently.

- Have students read through their scripts out loud, letting them take turns with different parts. Encourage expressive reading!
- Cast your readers and have them mark their parts in the script. They can also mark their script to indicate where they plan to add special emphasis or dramatic tone.
- Invite an audience—parents or another class—to the performance! Large or small, just having an audience is a great motivator for your cast of readers.

Writing Poetry

The poems from the Presidential Poetry titles have a lot for students to explore. In addition to serving as models for learning about a variety of poetic forms, figurative language, summarizing, and informational writing, these works are great idea generators! Help student poets find inspiration in *Rutherford B., Who Was He?*, *Have You Heard About Lady Bird?*, and *Who Named Their Pony Macaroni?*, and encourage them to flex their creative and writing muscles by:

- assembling the quotes of the presidents featured in *Rutherford B., Who Was He?* into found poetry
- borrowing a line from one poem to begin a new poem
- looking at a figure featured in poems across all three books and choosing words and phrases about that person to create new, unique poems
- writing a poem as one of the presidents about your First Lady or your pet
- creating a poem using Marilyn Singer’s unique verso form featured in “Richard Nixon”
- writing a dialogue poem that features a conversation between the student and one of the presidents or First Ladies
- imagining the life of presidential children and writing a poem about what’s good and bad about having a parent as president
- writing a poem in which the last word is the same rhyme on each line
- looking at just the illustrations and creating a poem inspired by the artwork in all three poetry books
- writing and illustrating a poem from the point of view of a White House pet



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

A Look at Legacy

In her poems about presidents, Marilyn Singer offers facts about the lives of the men who were president, as well as how those facts and events shaped their legacies. Help students understand presidential legacies by imagining their own.

- Ask students to think about what has happened to them in their own lives and make a list that includes at least one important event for each year of their lives. This list should focus on things they have accomplished or that are important to the student, such as “learned to swim,” “became a big brother,” “sang a solo,” etc.
- Next, have them grow their list with “facts” and events they are planning or hope to experience in their futures. Get them thinking about what they want to accomplish as they grow up. For example, “graduated from medical school,” “built a house,” “started a YouTube channel.”
- When their lists are complete, have students share with the class what they will pass on to others—their legacies—both existing and imagined.
- Discuss with students what a presidential legacy is. Talk about how some presidents’ legacies changed the way people think or act; some provided solutions to problems that are still of concern today. Ask: Do you think there can be bad legacies as well as good legacies? What might affect how a president is remembered?
- Have students imagine they were president and write (a list, paragraph, poem) about what they would want their legacy to be. Display their work and give students time to browse and read their classmates’ presidential legacies.

Resources:

U.S. Presidents: A Reference Resource from the Miller Center at the University of Virginia; <https://millercenter.org/president>

American Experience: The Presidents

www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/collections/presidents/



If These Walls Could Talk

There are many physical monuments and memorials honoring our presidents and preserving their legacies. Have students research presidential memorials and choose one to learn more about. Using text and photographs, ask them to identify:

- What materials the memorial is built from
- How it is designed
- What is symbolic about its design
- What text, art, or ornaments are part of the memorial
- Its location
- What the memorial says about its subject and what story it tells



Have students use their research and answers to the above questions to write a poem about an existing presidential memorial or monument. Their poems should communicate the message of the memorial. Some students may wish to use their poem to contrast and compare what they know about the subject with how the memorial portrays his legacy.

Building on what they learned about memorials, have students design a memorial for a First Lady or a White House pet. Have them sketch their designs and provide a physical description with size specifications, colors, building materials, and a proposed location.

EXTRA! How would George Washington feel about a 555-foot-tall obelisk in his honor located in a city named after him? Ask students to imagine they are a president and write a poem about their own presidential memorial. Or get them thinking and penning poetry about how some presidents might feel about the memorials of others. How would John Adams feel about the Jefferson Memorial?

Resources:

National Park Service: Discover Our Shared Heritage Travel Itinerary: American Presidents
www.nps.gov/nr/travel/presidents/list_of_sites.html

Presidential Memorials and Public Memory
<https://blogs.loc.gov/teachers/2019/02/presidential-memorials-and-public-memory/>

Presidents and Poetry

Abraham Lincoln wrote and recited many poems to friends and neighbors. Woodrow Wilson liked reading and writing limericks. In his introduction to a poetry workshop and reading at the White House in April 2015, President Obama talked about being a teen poet and said:

Poetry matters. Poetry—like all art—gives shape and texture and depth of meaning to our lives. It helps us know the world. It helps us understand ourselves. It helps us understand others—their struggles, their joys, the ways that they see the world. It helps us connect. . . .

Many presidents recognize the power of poetry. Share with students the presidents who have had poets speak at their inaugurations, the poets who spoke, and the poems that were shared. Discuss the poems and talk about what makes a good inaugural poem. Then have students write their own poems, imagining they are writing and delivering the inaugural poem for any president of their choosing.

Resources:

Poetry and the Presidential Inauguration
<https://blogs.loc.gov/catbird/2017/01/poetry-and-the-presidential-inauguration/>

Inaugural Poems in History
<https://poets.org/inaugural-poems-history>





Pet Show

They were never elected, but lots of pets have lived in the White House! When students hold a Presidential Pet Show, White House pets will be collecting votes while students learn more about our country’s leaders and the creatures that lived with them.

In planning your Pet Show, you’ll need to make the rules about what kind of “contestants” can enter:

- photos or student drawings of White House pets
- stuffed animals or student-made sculptures that represent White House pets
- students dressing in costume as White House pets

Engage students in additional Pet Show planning, such as developing categories or classes for entrants—dogs, cats, birds, etc., and prizes—Best in Show, Best Presidential Look-Alike, Most Unusual Pet, Best Pet Name, etc.

To participate in the Pet Show, have each student choose a different presidential pet to enter. Using information found in Marilyn Singer’s poem about the pet, the illustrations, the biographical information, and the resources below, have students create a short presentation about their chosen pet and its owner. Depending on your Pet Show rules, have students get their contestant ready by finding a photo or stuffed animals to represent it or by making a drawing, sculpture, or costume of the pet.

Ask students to fill out a Pet Show entry form, complete with pet name, pet owner’s name, pet species, and pet class. Use the information on the entry forms to create a simple scoring sheet that all students can use to participate in the Pet Show judging.

Pet Name	Pet Owner	Pet Species	Pet Class	Student Name	Special Trait	Score (circle one) 1 is low, 5 is best
Old Ike	Woodrow Wilson	Sheep	Best in Show	Mary Lamb	Valuable Wool	1 2 3 4 5

Then it’s time for presidential pets to enter the ring! Have students make their presentations about the presidential pets and owners in front of the judges—your students and any special guest judges you invite. The end result should be that all the pets are awarded different honors for their unique qualities along with the highest-scoring crowd favorite—the Best in Show.

Resources:

Presidential Pets

<https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/presidential-pets/>

Presidential Pet Museum

<http://www.presidentialpetmuseum.com/whitehousepets-4/>

EXTRA! Consider inviting a local veterinarian or animal shelter staff to participate as a Pet Show judge and share information about caring for all kinds of pets.



Vote for Your Favorite President!

After learning more about our nation's leaders, their families, and their pets, which president is your students' favorite president of all time? Let students campaign for their favorite by creating posters that share details about what made their favorite president a great leader. Use the reproducible sheet below and have students cast their vote for their favorite president! Discuss election results as a class.

OFFICIAL BALLOT Favorite President Election

To vote, check the square next to your choice. Vote for only one candidate.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> George Washington | <input type="checkbox"/> Benjamin Harrison |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John Adams | <input type="checkbox"/> William McKinley |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thomas Jefferson | <input type="checkbox"/> Theodore Roosevelt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> James Madison | <input type="checkbox"/> William H. Taft |
| <input type="checkbox"/> James Monroe | <input type="checkbox"/> Woodrow Wilson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John Quincy Adams | <input type="checkbox"/> Warren G. Harding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Andrew Jackson | <input type="checkbox"/> Calvin Coolidge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Martin Van Buren | <input type="checkbox"/> Herbert C. Hoover |
| <input type="checkbox"/> William Henry Harrison | <input type="checkbox"/> Franklin D. Roosevelt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John Tyler | <input type="checkbox"/> Harry S. Truman |
| <input type="checkbox"/> James K. Polk | <input type="checkbox"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zachary Taylor | <input type="checkbox"/> John F. Kennedy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Millard Fillmore | <input type="checkbox"/> Lyndon B. Johnson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Franklin Pierce | <input type="checkbox"/> Richard M. Nixon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> James Buchanan | <input type="checkbox"/> Gerald R. Ford |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abraham Lincoln | <input type="checkbox"/> James Earl Carter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Andrew Johnson | <input type="checkbox"/> Ronald Reagan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ulysses S. Grant | <input type="checkbox"/> George Bush |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rutherford B. Hayes | <input type="checkbox"/> William J. Clinton |
| <input type="checkbox"/> James A. Garfield | <input type="checkbox"/> George W. Bush |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chester A. Arthur | <input type="checkbox"/> Barack H. Obama |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grover Cleveland | <input type="checkbox"/> Donald J. Trump |

Paper-Doll Presidents and First Ladies

In having students create their own paper-doll version of a president or First Lady, they'll get to build, then demonstrate their knowledge in a format that is fun!

Let students choose a president or First Lady. Using information found in the corresponding poem, the illustrations, the biographical information, and the resources below, have students create a list of facts and details about their chosen president or First Lady. Some students might want to make lots of paper dolls, but let them know they will need to do research for each person they make a doll for.

Provide them with books, resources, and these questions to guide their research and help them build knowledge:

- What is the person's full name?
- When was this person born? When did this person die?
- When was this person president (or First Lady)?
- What are three interesting facts about this person?
- What style of clothing did this person wear?
- What did this person look like? Find an illustration, photograph, or portrait.

After they have finished their research, provide students with a paper doll template (use the one on the following page or find/create your own) and cardboard from empty cereal boxes. Have students glue their paper person to the cardboard, then cut the doll out. Students can draw a face for their president or First Lady or print and cut out an image of the person's face and glue it to the doll.

Depending on what materials you have available or your students' interest, have students make clothes, hats, and shoes for their dolls from paper or scraps of material and hair from paper, cotton balls, or yarn. Have them use glue to secure clothing on their dolls.

Once all dolls are appropriately dressed, students should share their creations and facts about the person represented by the doll with the class. Project or print out a White House for students to use as a backdrop to present their paper presidents and First Ladies.

EXTRA! If there is time and materials, some students might also be interested in making paper versions of White House pets. Students should research the animal and share information with the class when the pet is presented at the White House.

Resources:

Presidential Portraits

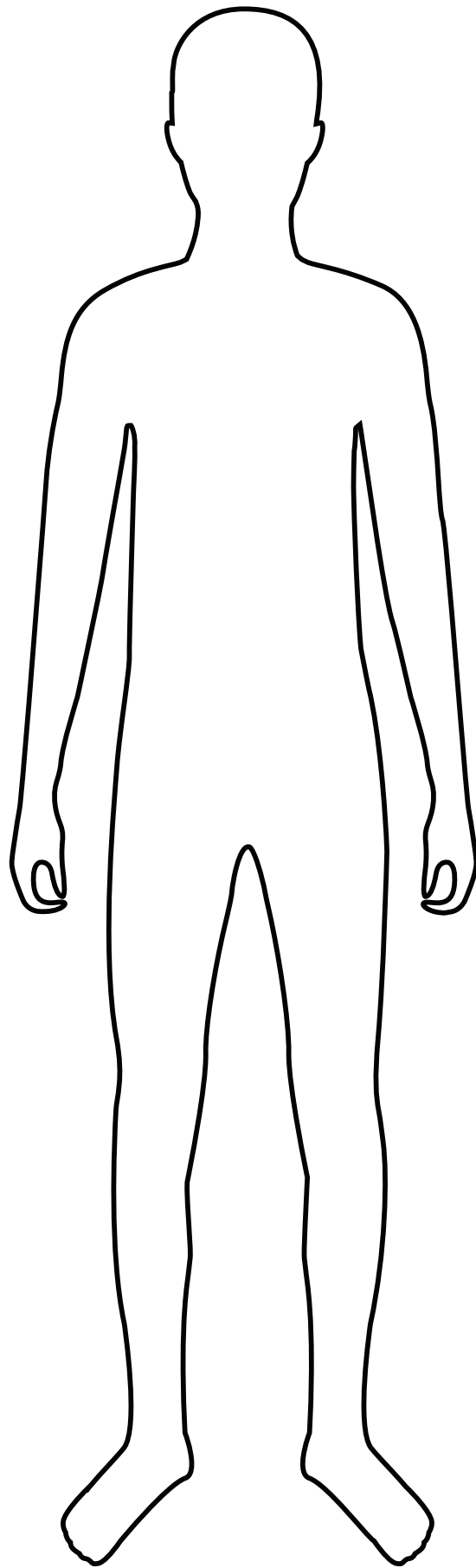
<https://americaspresidents.si.edu/gallery>

The Presidents and The First Ladies: Biographies and Portraits

www.whitehousehistory.org/collections/president-biographies

www.whitehousehistory.org/collections/first-lady-biographies





ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MARILYN SINGER is the author of more than one hundred books for children and young adults, including *Rutherford B., Who Was He?: Poems About Our Presidents*; *Have You Heard About Lady Bird?: Poems About Our First Ladies*; *Who Named Their Pony Macaroni?: Poems About White House Pets*; *Feel the Beat!: Dance Poems that Zing from Salsa to Swing*; *Mirror Mirror*; *Echo Echo*; and *Monster Museum*. She lives with her husband and a variety of creatures in Brooklyn, New York, and Washington, Connecticut. Visit her at www.marilysinger.net.



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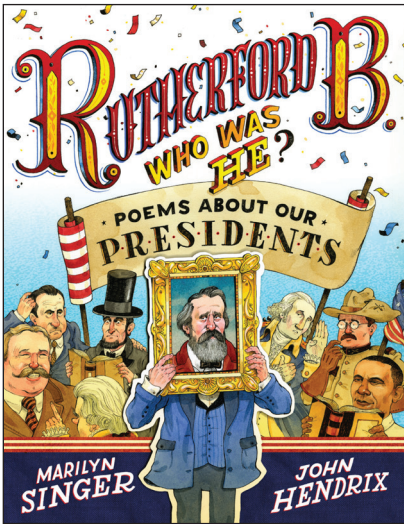
NANCY CARPENTER is the illustrator of more than sixty books for children, including *Queen Victoria's Bathing Machine* by Gloria Whelan, an ALA Notable Children's Book and CBC/NCSS Notable Social Studies Trade Book; *Apples to Oregon* by Deborah Hopkinson, an ALA Notable Children's Book and SCBWI Golden Kite Award winner; and *Lucky Ducklings* by Eva Moore, a Parents' Choice Gold Medal Award winner. Her unique multimedia approach to illustration has garnered numerous honors, including two Christopher Awards and the Jane Addams Children's Book Award. She lives in Brooklyn, New York, with her husband, daughter, son, and dog, Banjo. You can visit Nancy online at www.nancycarpenter.website.

RYAN McAMIS is a designer and illustrator whose clients have included the *Washington Post*, *British GQ*, *Esquire UK*, *Politico*, the *Wall Street Journal*, NYU, the *Observer*, *Glamour*, *New Statesman*, *InStyle*, *National Journal*, Soho House London, *Les Echos*, *La Vanguardia*, *Mother London*, *Apple*, and the *Economist*. Ryan is based in Brooklyn, New York, where he is currently at work building a miniature scale model of an Italian Gothic cathedral. Find out more at www.ryanmcamis.com.

Rachael Walker (belleofthebook.com) created this guide.

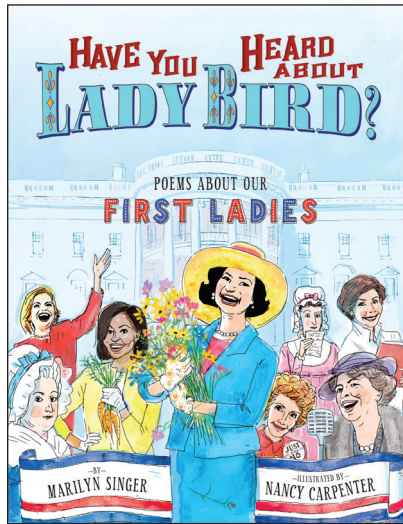
She consults on a wide variety of educational programs and multimedia projects, and develops educational materials and reading resources for children, parents, and teachers.

Many more guides can be found on the Disney • Hyperion website at www.disneybooks.com.



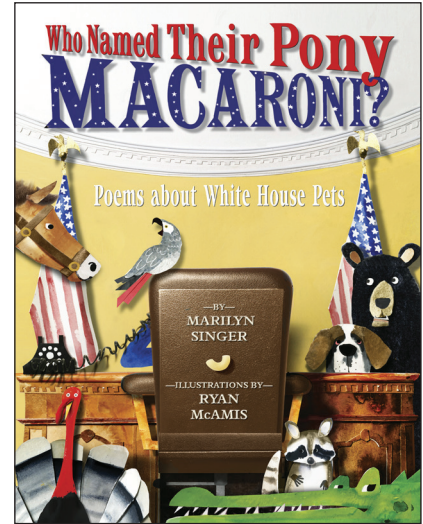
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