



THE PEOPLE'S HOUSE VR & DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

OVERVIEW

Students will have the opportunity to see and hear a 360° tour of the White House from President Obama and the first lady. The history and information they present is the basis for the discussion activities.

MATERIALS

- Oculus Rift or Rift S
- Oculus Touch controllers
- Possibly posters and/or sticky notes for some discussion types.

CREDITS

www.cultofpedagogy.com/speaking-listening-techniques/

www.grinnell-k12.org

SYNOPSIS

“The People’s House” is a 360° video tour of the White House hosted by President Obama and the First Lady. They give a room by room tour and offer the historical perspective each one holds. The VR experience lasts a little over 20 minutes as the user is taken through various parts of the White House. Each room is narrated by the former First Couple, with accounts and descriptions of some of the most influential moments that took place in each one during our nation’s history.

This activity begins with each student going through the VR experience to gain perspective and a greater understanding of the White House and the history that has taken place within its walls. It may be helpful for students to work with partners to take notes on the historical significance of each room while going through the VR experience. The discussion formats and questions are meant to initiate conversation and spark thinking within the group.

TIMELINE

This activity is designed to take be completed in 2-45 minute sessions. Day 1 will allow all students to complete the VR experience. Depending on the number of devices, this may take longer and you will need to design accompanying activities for students to complete while not in the VR headsets.



DISCUSSION FORMAT SUGGESTIONS

Gallery Walk

a.k.a. Chat Stations

Basic Structure: Stations or posters are set up around the classroom, on the walls or on tables. Small groups of students travel from station to station together, performing some kind of task or responding to a prompt, either of which will result in a conversation.

Variations: Some Gallery Walks stay true to the term gallery, where groups of students create informative posters, then act as tour guides or docents, giving other students a short presentation about their poster and conducting a Q&A about it. In Starr Sackstein's high school classroom, her stations consisted of video tutorials created by the students themselves. Before I knew the term Gallery Walk, I shared a strategy similar to it called Chat Stations, where the teacher prepares discussion prompts or content-related tasks and sets them up around the room for students to visit in small groups.

Conver-Stations

Basic Structure: Another great idea from Sarah Brown Wessling, this is a small-group discussion strategy that gives students exposure to more of their peers' ideas and prevents the stagnation that can happen when a group doesn't happen to have the right chemistry. Students are placed into a few groups of 4-6 students each and are given a discussion question to talk about. After sufficient time has passed for the discussion to develop, one or two students from each group rotate to a different group, while the other group members remain where they are. Once in their new group, they will discuss a different, but related question, and they may also share some of the key points from their last group's conversation. For the next rotation, students who have not rotated before may be chosen to move, resulting in groups that are continually evolving.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are the differences you would see between living in the White House versus living in your personal residence?
- What was your favorite room and what made it stand out to you?
- Did you find that you had any misconceptions about the White House and daily life inside?
- What role does the White House play in the everyday duties of the President?
- Was there a historical fact given that you were unaware of before the VR experience?

