

Teaching American History  
**Lesson Two: American Legislators in History: Creating Facebook profiles for Edward “Ted”  
Kennedy and John Boehner**  
From Lindsey Hepple

Grade: 11

Length of Class Period: 48 minutes

Inquiry – (What essential question are students answering, what problem are they solving, or what decision are they making?)

-How do legislators have an impact on American government and politics?

Objectives (What content and skills do you expect students to learn from this lesson?)

- Students will describe and discuss the major accomplishments and biographical information of either Kennedy or Boehner by completing the primary and secondary source reading activities.
- Students will construct a Facebook “page” to document the major contributions and biographical information of their chosen Senator and incorporate key quotes from the primary source materials for the “quotation” section of the Facebook “page.”

Materials (What primary sources or local resources are the basis for this lesson?)

- Primary & Secondary Source Packets (for Kennedy and Boehner)
- Facebook “page” (Handout 1)
- Exit Ticket (Handout 2)

Activities (What will you and your students do during the lesson to promote learning?)

1. Students begin by brainstorming the role and responsibilities of Senators in our federal government (this is a concept that has been previously introduced to students).
2. Students will then receive the directions for the class activities: they will choose which Senator to examine, read/highlight the packet for that Senator, and complete the Facebook “page.”
3. After completing their Facebook “page” students will respond to an exit ticket closing question: How did the Senator you learned about impact American government and politics? Explain your response using examples.

How will you assess what students learned during this lesson?

1. Students will be assessed through their Facebook “page” handout, which will include the major accomplishments of the Senator and key quotes from the primary sources.
2. Students will also be assessed through their Exit Ticket Response.

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards:

- 1.1: Demonstrate an understanding of significant events and themes in U.S. history.
  - o GLE – Evaluate the role and impact that significant individuals have had on historical events.
- 2.1: Assess and gather information from a variety of primary secondary sources (maps, charts, graphs)
  - o GLE – Find relevant information to answer a history/social studies question.

## Primary & Secondary Source Packet: Edward “Ted” Kennedy

*“I grew up in a large Irish Catholic family as the youngest of nine children. By their words, their actions, and their love, our parents instilled in all of us the importance of the ties that bind us together – our faith, our family, and our love of this great country.”*

**Senate Years of Service:** 1962-2009

**Party:** Democrat

**KENNEDY, Edward Moore (Ted)**, (brother of John Fitzgerald Kennedy and Robert Francis Kennedy, grandson of John Francis Fitzgerald, uncle of Joseph Patrick Kennedy II, and father of Patrick J. Kennedy), a Senator from Massachusetts; born in Boston, Suffolk County, Mass., February 22, 1932; graduated, Milton Academy, Milton, Mass., in 1950; graduated, Harvard College 1956, the International Law School, The Hague, Holland, 1958, and the University of Virginia Law School 1959; served in the United States Army 1951-1953; admitted to the Massachusetts bar in 1959; appointed assistant district attorney in Suffolk County 1961; elected in a special election on November 6, 1962, as a Democrat to the United States Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the 1960 resignation of his brother, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, for the term ending January 3, 1965; reelected in 1964, 1970, 1976, 1982, 1988, 1994, 2000, and 2006, and served from November 7, 1962, until his death; unsuccessful candidate for the Democratic nomination for President of the United States in 1980; Democratic whip 1969-1971; chair, Committee on the Judiciary (Ninety-sixth Congress), Committee on Labor and Human Resources (One Hundredth through One Hundred Third Congresses), Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (One Hundred Seventh Congress [January 3-20, 2001; June 6, 2001-January 3, 2003], One Hundred Tenth and One Hundred Eleventh Congresses); died in Hyannis Port, Mass., on August 25, 2009; interment in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va.

Source: <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=K000105>

### Hate Crimes Speech

*Facing a veto threat from the President of the United States and an uncertain vote in the U.S. Senate, Senator Kennedy fought to pass the Matthew Shepard Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act. Eventually signed into law in a later Congress, this legislation broadens existing law to prohibit hate crimes against women, gays, lesbians, and transgender persons; and gives prosecutors enhanced ability to charge and penalize those who commit hate crimes.*

### Senator Kennedy on the Matthew Shepard Act

September 25, 2007 | Standing Against Hate

I'd like to speak for a moment regarding the Hate Crimes Amendment -- at a time when our ideals are under attack by terrorists in other lands, it is more important than ever to demonstrate that we practice what we preach, and that we are doing all we can to root out the bigotry and prejudice in our own country that leads to violence here at home. Now more than ever, we need to act against hate crimes and send a strong message here at home and around the world that we will not tolerate crimes fueled by hate.

Since the September 11th attacks, we've seen a shameful increase in the number of hate crimes committed against Muslims, Sikhs, and Americans of Middle Eastern descent. Congress has done much to respond to the vicious attacks of September 11th. We're doing all that we can to strengthen our defenses against hate that comes from abroad. We've spent billions of dollars in the War on Terrorism to ensure that international terrorist organizations such as al' Qaeda are not able to carry out attacks within the United States. There is no reason why Congress should not act to strengthen our defenses against hate that occurs here at home.

In Iraq and Afghanistan, our soldiers are fighting for freedom and liberty -- they are on the front line fighting against evil and hate. We owe it to our troops to uphold those same principles here at home.

Hate crimes are a form of domestic terrorism. They send the poisonous message that some Americans deserve to be victimized solely because of who they are. Like other acts of terrorism, hate crimes have an impact far greater than the impact on the individual victims. They are crimes against entire communities, against the whole nation, and against the fundamental ideals on which America was founded. They are a violation of all our country stands for.

We're united in our effort to root out the cells of hatred around the world. We should not turn a blind eye to acts of hatred and terrorism here at home. We should not shrink now from our role as the beacon of liberty to the rest of the world. The national interest in condemning bias-motivated violence in the United States is strong, and so is our interest in condemning bias-motivated violence occurring world-wide. When the Senate approves this amendment, we will send a message about freedom and equality that will resonate around the world.

Mr. President, hate crimes violate everything our country stands for. They send the poisonous message that some Americans deserve to be victimized solely because of who they are. These are crimes committed against entire communities, against the nation as a whole and the very ideals on which our country was founded.

The time has come to stand up for the victims of these senseless acts of violence - victims like Matthew Shepard, for whom this bill is named, and who died a horrible death in 1998 at the hands of two men who singled him out because of his sexual orientation. Nine years after Matthew's death - nine years - we still haven't gotten it done. How long are we going to wait?

Senator Smith and I urge your support of this bipartisan bill. The House has come through on their side and passed the bill. Now it's time for the Senate to do the same. This year, we can get it done. We came close twice before. In 2000 and 2002, a majority of Senators voted to pass this legislation. In 2004, we had 65 votes for the bill and it was adopted as part of the Defense Authorization Bill. But - that time - it was stripped out in conference.

The President has threatened to veto this legislation, but we can't let that threat stop us from doing the right thing. Let's display the same kind of courage that came from David Ritcheson, a victim of a brutal hate crime that scarred him both physically and emotionally. This spring, David testified before the House Judiciary Committee. He courageously described the horrific attack against him the year before - after what had been an enjoyable evening with other high school students near his home in Spring, Texas.

Later in the evening however, two persons attacked him and one attempted to carve a swastika into his chest. He was viciously beaten and burned with cigarettes, while his attackers screamed terrible epithets at him. He lay unconscious on the ground for 9 hours, and remained in a coma for several weeks. After a very difficult recovery, David became a courageous and determined advocate. Tragically, though, this life-changing experience exacted its toll on David and recently, he took his own life. He had tried so hard to look forward, but he was still haunted by this brutal experience.

My deepest sympathy and condolences go out to David's family and friends coping with this tragic loss. David's death shows us that these crimes have a profound psychological impact. We must do all we can to let victims know they are not to blame for this brutality, that their lives are equally valued. We can't wait any longer to act.

Our amendment is supported by a broad coalition of 210 law enforcement, civic, disability, religious and civil rights groups, including the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Anti-Defamation League, the Interfaith Alliance, the National Sheriff's Association, the Human Rights Campaign, the National District Attorneys Association and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights. All these diverse groups have come together to say now is the time for us to take action to protect our fellow citizens from

the brutality of hate-motivated violence. They support this legislation, because they know it is a balanced and sensible approach that will bring greater protection to our citizens along with much needed resources to improve local and state law enforcement.

Our bill corrects two major deficiencies in current law. Excessive restrictions require proof that victims were attacked because they were engaged in certain "federally protected activities." And the scope of the law is limited, covering hate crimes based on race, religion, or ethnic background alone.

The federally protected activity requirement is outdated, unwise and unnecessary, particularly when we consider the unjust outcomes of this requirement. Hate crimes now occur in a variety of circumstances, and citizens are often targeted during routine activities that should be protected. All victims should be protected - and it's simply wrong that a hate crime - like the one against David Ritcheson - can't be prosecuted federally because it happened in a private home.

The bill also recognizes that some hate crimes are committed against people because of their sexual orientation, their gender, their gender identity, or their disability. Passing this bill will send a loud and clear message. All hate crimes will face federal prosecution. Action is long overdue. There are too many stories and too many victims.

We must do all we can to end these senseless crimes, and I urge my colleagues to support cloture on this amendment and to support its passage as an amendment to the DOD authorization bill.

Summary and Speech from <http://tedkennedy.org/>

## Primary & Secondary Source Packet: John Boehner

**BOEHNER, John Andrew**, a Representative from Ohio; born in Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio, November 17, 1949; graduated from Moeller High School, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1968; B.S., Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1977; United States Navy, 1968; businessman; business executive; Union Township, Ohio, board of trustees, 1981 and president, 1984; member of the Ohio state house of representatives, 1985-1990; elected as a Republican to the One Hundred Second and to the ten succeeding Congresses (January 3, 1991-present); House Republican Conference Chairman, 1995-1999; chair, Committee on Education and the Workforce (One Hundred Seventh through One Hundred Ninth Congresses); majority leader (One Hundred Ninth Congress); minority leader (One Hundred Tenth and One Hundred Eleventh Congress); Speaker of the House (One Hundred Twelfth Congress).

<http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=B000589>

### John Boehner's Opening Remarks to the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress

"Madam Speaker, thank you for your kind words, and thank you for your service. I'd like to welcome our new colleagues and their families. My own family is here as well: my wife, Debbie, our daughters, Lindsay and Tricia; my brothers and sisters, brothers-and-sisters-in-law, and their children.

"I am honored and humbled to represent a great, hard-working community in Congress. The people of Ohio's Eighth Congressional District continue to afford me the privilege to serve, for which I am deeply grateful.

"We gather here today at a time of great challenges. Nearly one in ten of our neighbors are looking for work. Health care costs are still rising for families and small businesses. Our spending has caught up with us, and our debt will soon eclipse the size of our entire economy. Hard work and tough decisions will be required of the 112th Congress. No longer can we fall short. No longer can we kick the can down the road. The people voted to end business as usual, and today we begin carrying out their instructions.

"In the Catholic faith, we enter into a season of service by having ashes marked on our foreheads. The ashes remind us that life in all its forms is fragile – our time on this Earth, fleeting. As the ashes are delivered, we hear those humbling words: 'Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.'

"The American people have humbled us. They have refreshed our memories as to just how temporary the privilege to serve is. They have reminded us that everything here is on loan from them. That includes this gavel, which I accept cheerfully and gratefully, knowing I am but its caretaker. After all, this is the people's House. This is their Congress. It's about them, not us. What they want is a government that is honest, accountable and responsive to their needs. A government that respects individual liberty, honors our heritage, and bows before the public it serves.

"Let's start with the rules package the House will consider today. If passed, it will change how this institution operates, with an emphasis on real transparency, greater accountability, and a renewed focus on the Constitution. Our aim will be to give government back to the people. In seeking this goal, we will part with some of the rituals that have come to characterize this institution under majorities Republican and Democratic alike. We will dispense with the conventional wisdom that bigger bills are always better; that fast legislating is good legislating; that allowing additional amendments and open debate makes the legislative process 'less efficient' than our forefathers intended.

"These misconceptions have been the basis for the rituals of modern Washington. The American people have not been well served by them. Today, mindful of the lessons of the past, we open a new chapter.

"Legislators and the public will have three days to read bills before they come to a vote. Legislation will be more focused, properly scrutinized, and constitutionally sound. Committees, once bloated, will be smaller, with a

renewed mission, including oversight. Old rules that have made it easy to increase spending will be replaced by new reforms that make it easier to cut spending. We will start by cutting Congress' own budget. "Above all else, we will welcome the battle of ideas, encourage it, and engage in it – openly, honestly, and respectfully. As the chamber closest to the people, the House works best when it is allowed to work its will. I ask all members of this body to join me in recognizing this common truth.

"To my colleagues in the majority, my message is this: we will honor our Pledge to America, built through a process of listening to the people, and we will stand firm on the Constitutional principles that built our party, and built a nation. We will do these things, however, in a manner that restores and respects the time-honored right of the minority to an honest debate and a fair, open process.

"To my friends in the minority, I offer a commitment. Openness – once a tradition of this institution, but increasingly scarce in recent decades, will be the new standard. There were no open rules in the House in the last Congress. In this one, there will be many. With this restored openness, however, will come a restored responsibility. You will not have the right to willfully disrupt the proceedings of the People's House. But you will always have the right to a robust debate in open process that allows you to represent your constituents. . .to make your case, offer alternatives, and be heard.

"In time, this framework will, I believe, restore the House of Representatives as a place where the people's will is done. It will also, I hope, help rebuild trust among us and the people we serve, and in so doing, provide a guidepost for those who follow us in the service of our nation.

"To our new members – Democratic and Republican – as you take the oath today, I know you will do so mindful of this shared goal, and the trust placed in you by your constituents. As Speaker, I view part of my job as helping each of you do your job well, regardless of party. My hope is that every new Member – and indeed, every Member – will be comfortable approaching me with matters of the House.

"We will not always get it right. We will not always agree on what is right. A great deal of scar tissue has built up on both sides of the aisle. We cannot ignore that, nor should we. My belief has always been, we can disagree without being disagreeable to each other. That's why it is critical this institution operate in a manner that permits a free exchange of ideas, and resolves our honest differences through a fair debate and a fair vote. We may have different – sometimes, very different – ideas for how to go about achieving the common good, but it is our shared goal. It is why we serve.

"Let us now move forward humble in our demeanor, steady in our principles, and dedicated to proving worthy of the trust and confidence that has been placed in us. If we brace ourselves to do our duty, and to do what we say we are going to do, there is no telling what together we can accomplish for the good of this great and honorable nation. More than a country, America is an idea, and it is our job to pass on to our posterity the blessings bestowed to us.

"I wish you all the very best. Welcome to the people's House. Welcome to the 112th Congress."

**Source:** <http://www.johnboehner.house.gov/News/DocumentSingle.aspx?DocumentID=218986>

