

# 1: Let's Do A Biography!

## Based on the District of Columbia quarter



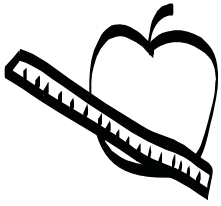
### OBJECTIVE

Students will understand how to read and create a timeline. Students will correctly sequence a series of events. Students will examine the lives of people who have influenced the District of Columbia.



### MATERIALS

- 1 overhead projector
- 1 overhead transparency of each of the following:
  - “District of Columbia Quarter Reverse” page
  - “Where In Time” worksheet
  - “Tell Me About Yourself” worksheet
- Copies of each of the following:
  - “Where In Time” worksheet
  - “Tell Me About Yourself” worksheet
  - “Timeline Outline” worksheet
- 1 class map of the United States
- 1 copy of an age-appropriate text that gives information about Duke Ellington, such as:
  - *Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra* by Andrea Pinkney
  - *Duke Ellington (Getting to Know the World's Greatest Composers)* by Mike Venezia
  - *Duke Ellington* by Richard Terrill
- Biographies of famous Washingtonians
- Computers with Internet access
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Recordings of Duke Ellington compositions
- Pencils and paper
- White construction paper (11x14)
- Colored pencils



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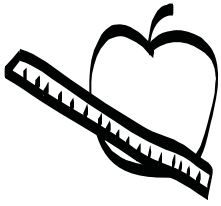
## PREPARATIONS

- Make an overhead transparency (or photocopy) of each of the following:
  - “District of Columbia Quarter Reverse” page
  - “Where In Time” worksheet
  - “Tell Me About Yourself” worksheet
- Make copies of each of the following:
  - “Where In Time” worksheet (1 per student)
  - “Tell Me About Yourself” worksheet (1 per student)
  - “Timeline Outline” worksheet (1 per student)
- Prepare a K-W-L chart called “Duke Ellington.”
- Locate a text that gives information about Duke Ellington (see examples under “Materials”).
- Gather recordings of various music compositions featuring Duke Ellington for Session 1. (Make sure that playing the recordings aligns with laws and school policy.)
- Create a list of people who have been connected with Washington, D.C. The list could include such people as Pierre L’Enfant, Frederick Douglass, and John Philip Sousa. You can search for lists online at sites like [www.factmonster.com/ipka/A0108620.html](http://www.factmonster.com/ipka/A0108620.html) and [www.soulofamerica.com/index.php?id=7327,0,0,1,0,0](http://www.soulofamerica.com/index.php?id=7327,0,0,1,0,0).
- Arrange a time for the students to visit the library in Session 2.
- Reserve the computer lab for one session.
- Bookmark Internet sites about people who were born in or had an influence on Washington, D.C.
- Gather texts about people who influenced Washington, DC, for Session 2. (**Note:** this is a good lesson to coordinate with your media and technology specialist and music teacher.)



## GROUPINGS

- Whole group
- Pairs
- Small groups
- Individual work

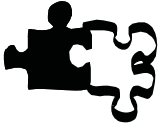


# Let's Do A Biography!



## CLASS TIME

Three 30- to 45-minute sessions



## CONNECTIONS

- Social Studies
- Language Arts
- Music



## TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- Quarter
- Capital
- Composer
- Timeline
- Obverse (front)
- Jazz
- Origins
- Biography
- Reverse (back)
- Genre
- American Culture



## BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Students should have a basic knowledge of:

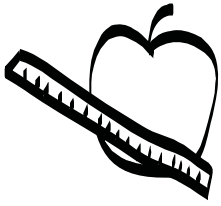
- Sequencing
- Compare and contrast



## STEPS

### Session 1

1. Describe the 50 State Quarters® Program and the District of Columbia and U.S. Territories Quarter Program for background information, if necessary, using the example of your own state's or territory's quarter. Then display the "District of Columbia Quarter Reverse" overhead transparency or photocopy. Tell the students that this quarter is part of the District of Columbia and U.S. Territories Quarter Program. Tell the students that the back of a coin is called the reverse, and "Obverse" is another name for the front.
2. Locate the District of Columbia on a classroom map. Note its position in relation to your school's location. Tell the students that the District of Columbia is very special to our country because it is the capital of the United States.
3. Ask the students to examine the coin image and tell you what they know about the image. If necessary, explain to the students that the design features an image of Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington seated at a grand piano. Ask the students what



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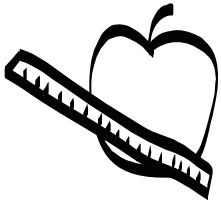
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they know about Duke Ellington. Record the student responses in the “K” column of the K-W-L chart.

4. Ask the students what else they would like to learn about Duke Ellington and record the responses in the “W” portion of the chart.
5. Ask the students who Duke Ellington was and why they think he is on the District of Columbia quarter. If necessary, tell the students that Duke Ellington was a famous pianist and composer who was born in Washington, D.C., in 1899. Add the definition of “composer” (a person who writes music) to the chart.
6. Tell the students that Ellington wrote more than 1,000 compositions, including ballet music, film music, orchestral suites, songs, and musicals. He began playing in the genres (a musical genre is a category that has a distinctive style, form, or content) of ragtime and jazz. Write this information under “L” on the chart.
7. Introduce the students to the selected text about Duke Ellington. As a group, preview the text. Read the selected text to the class and attend to any unfamiliar vocabulary and concepts. During the reading, the students should attend to any clues about Duke Ellington. Chart the students’ ideas in the “L” column of the chart.
8. After concluding the selected text, review the students’ ideas and add to the “L” column. Explain to the students that they will be doing further research on people who helped influence Washington, D.C.
9. Ask the students to write a journal entry based on how they feel when they hear a piece of music composed by Duke Ellington. Play a recording of such a piece.

## Session 2

1. Display the “District of Columbia Quarter Reverse” transparency and the K-W-L chart from session 1. As a class, review the material covered.
2. Ask the students what a timeline is. If necessary, tell the students that timelines show events in the order they happened.
3. Draw a vertical timeline on a piece of chart paper titled “Class Timeline.” Add the definition of “timeline” to the chart.
4. End the timeline with the current year and add the year most of your students were born. Ask them to think of major events that have happened in their lives.
5. As a class, fill in the timeline with events from the student responses. Review the timeline with them. Explain that a timeline can show large or small lengths of time and can include pictures to go with the events.
6. Display the “Where In Time” overhead transparency and distribute a “Where In Time” worksheet to each student. Discuss the events from Duke Ellington’s life that are listed on the worksheet.
7. Divide the class into pairs and have them complete the worksheet.



# Let's Do A Biography!

8. Review the “Where In Time” worksheet, writing the answers on the overhead transparency.
9. Explain to the students that they will be working in pairs to research and complete a biography page and timeline about a person who was important to the District of Columbia. The person can be someone known for music like Duke Ellington, or for their work in other fields such as government, art, architecture, writing, or sports.
10. If necessary, remind the students that a biography is a story that provides information about a particular person other than the writer. Add the definition of “biography” to the chart paper.
11. Display the “Tell Me About Yourself” overhead transparency. Review the categories with the students. Remind the students that they will be choosing a person who was or is famous for how they have helped the District of Columbia. Tell the students they will research the person and then complete the worksheet and a timeline.
12. Display the list of people from which the students can choose, giving some information about each and the various texts of possibilities for the students to look through.
13. Distribute a “Tell Me About Yourself” worksheet to each student. Have the students note the name of their selected person on the worksheet. Collect the worksheets.

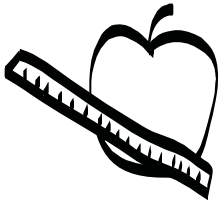
## Session 3

1. Redistribute the “Tell Me About Yourself” worksheets. Divide the class into pairs or small groups based on their choices of people to research.
2. Allow the students time to visit the computer lab, look through texts, and complete their worksheets. Be sure the students are filling in the “dates” column (for the timeline) as they complete their research.
3. After allowing time for their research, return to the classroom if desired, and distribute a “Timeline Outline” worksheet to each student. Allow the students time to complete the timeline and summary paragraph independently. Be sure the students include the reasons why their Washingtonian was important to the District of Columbia.
4. Have the students share their paragraphs and timelines with the class.
5. Collect the students’ worksheets. Display the “Timeline Outline” worksheets in the classroom.



## ASSESSMENT

Analyze the students’ worksheets and presentations to evaluate whether they have met the lesson objectives.



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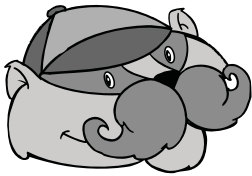
## ENRICHMENTS/EXTENSIONS

- Have students create a coin celebrating their selected Washingtonian to accompany their timeline and paragraph.
- Have students research a musician from another region of the country and complete a Venn Diagram comparing that person's life and musical style to Duke Ellington's.



## DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING OPTIONS

- Allow students to work in small groups to complete the research.
- Allow students to record the information using a scribe.
- Allow students to write the events for their timeline on large index cards for sequencing and the presentation.



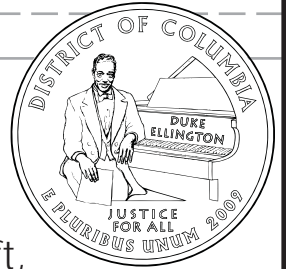
## CONNECTION TO [WWW.USMINT.GOV/KIDS](http://WWW.USMINT.GOV/KIDS)

- Have students learn more about the United States Mint using a timeline found at [www.usmint.gov/kids/campCoin/timeline](http://www.usmint.gov/kids/campCoin/timeline)
- Have students learn more about accomplished Americans by reviewing the Congressional gold medals at [www.usmint.gov/kids/campCoin/medalMania](http://www.usmint.gov/kids/campCoin/medalMania)



Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Where In Time

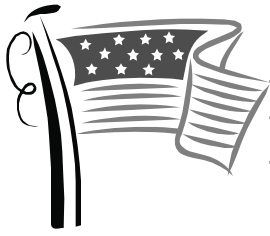


## ELLINGTON TIMELINE

- 1899 Born in Washington, DC
- 1906 Began studying the piano
- 1914 Heard piano player Harvey Brooks and was inspired to learn to play ragtime music
- 1917 Became a professional piano player in Washington, DC
- 1918 Married Edna Thompson
- 1923 Heard his first New Orleans jazz performance in the Howard Theater in Washington, DC
- 1923 Made his first recording
- 1926 Ellington and his band recorded their first signature song and composition
- 1933 The band visited London, England
- 1957 Performed a CBS TV special
- 1974 Died on May 24

**Directions:** Using the vertical timeline at left, answer the questions below.

1. In what year was Duke Ellington born?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. When did Ellington make his first recording?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What happened in 1917?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Who did Duke Ellington marry?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. When did the Ellington band visit London, England?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Which happened first: Duke Ellington heard his first New Orleans jazz performance or he made his first recording?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. On what date did Duke Ellington die?  
\_\_\_\_\_



Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Tell Me About Yourself

**Directions:** Use the chart below to complete your research. In the last column, circle whether the source was a book or an Internet site.

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BIOGRAPHY

Person \_\_\_\_\_

Focus Areas	Information	Dates	Source
Born (date and location)			Book or Internet
Childhood			Book or Internet
Family			Book or Internet
School			Book or Internet
Accomplishments			Book or Internet
Why this person is special to the District of Columbia			Book or Internet
Best known for			Book or Internet
Died			Book or Internet







# District of Columbia Quarter

