

WRIGHT ON THE TIMELINE

GRADE: 9-12

TIME: Two 50-minute sessions

This lesson will provide students an opportunity to place historical events and figures into context by exploring two timelines and creating their own. By using the lifespan of one person, Frank Lloyd Wright, students can reflect on how historical events may have impacted him and his work, as well as how his work may have impacted history.

INTEGRATED SUBJECTS: Social Studies, Media Literacy, Visual Arts

OBJECTIVES

MATERIALS | RESOURCES

Large paper
Pencils
Colored pencils
Internet access for independent student research
Glue sticks
Scissors

For additional resources, visit:

<https://teachinghistory.org/teaching-materials/teaching-guides/24347>

1. Understand what is meant by “historical context” and its implications.
2. Make connections between Frank Lloyd Wright and the era in which he lived.
3. Challenge students to make similar connections between current events and public figures.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to put something “into context”?
2. Why might it be important to consider historical figures within the context of when they lived?

LESSON PROCEDURE

EXPLORE

Session One

- **Introduce Frank Lloyd Wright and his iconic architectural designs. Ask students about the style of buildings in their own community.**
 - ◇ Optional: Before the lesson, encourage students to ask older family members to describe a historical event they may recall. Example: The Moon landing in the summer of 1969, Fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989

LESSON PROCEDURE *(continued)*

ENGAGE

Session One

- Direct students to [teachingbydesign.org](https://www.teachingbydesign.org) to use the interactive timelines on the site (<https://www.teachingbydesign.org/timeline/>). Have students read and explore the timeline of Frank Lloyd Wright's life and creations, Frank Lloyd Wright and Major Historical Events, and Frank Lloyd Wright and the History of Art.
- Once students have independently explored the timelines, facilitate a discussion using the following questions for students:
 - ◇ How many decades did Frank Lloyd Wright live?
 - ◇ What are some national and global events that Frank Lloyd Wright was alive to witness?
 - ◇ Did the timing of any historical events surprise you? Why or why not?
 - ◇ Does Wright's historical context change how you think of him as a historical figure? Why or why not?

DESIGN

Session One

- Let students know that they will be creating a timeline, either on their own or within a small group. Instruct students to select one Frank Lloyd Wright architectural site. Ask students to consider the events of Frank Lloyd Wright's life and important national and global historical events that may have influenced Wright to design the selected site. Students can self-select events, dates, and figures of importance that they believe are relevant to the Wright design of their choice. Encourage students to focus on the 5-10 years leading up to the Frank Lloyd Wright site's design, allowing flexibility as needed.
- Students can choose from a large swath of historical events including American and world history, pop culture, movies and music to use as touch points to contextualize Wright's life and seventy-year career. Allow ample research time.

DESIGN

Session Two

- Give students additional research time, as needed. Once students have selected the events that will form their timeline, distribute colored pencils.
- Instruct students to use pencils and colored pencils to draw the events on their timeline. If students have access to printing, students can print images to include on their timeline as well.
- After gathering or creating timeline images, provide large blank paper, scissors and glue sticks to students for them to create their timeline.

LESSON PROCEDURE (continued)

CRITIQUE & INTERPRET

Session Two

- **Have students review and reflect upon the lesson by displaying their timelines. Allow for students to share and compare their personal timelines.**
 - ◇ Optional: Direct students to display their timelines either on their desks or on the walls around the room. Instruct students to complete a gallery walk, where students move around the room to view their classmates' work.
- **Use the following questions to lead a concluding discussion:**
 - ◇ How did Frank Lloyd Wright's style evolve over time?
 - ◇ What connections did you notice between major historical events and Frank Lloyd Wright's designs?
 - ◇ What connections did you notice between major historical art movements and Frank Lloyd Wright's designs?
 - ◇ Does knowing the context of when Wright's buildings were designed change how you experience them? Why or why not?
 - ◇ Why is it important to understand historical events in context?