

Care Deeply
Citizenship

Dare Greatly

Nature
Think Boldly
Live
Passionately



Leadership
In the
Arena
Preservation

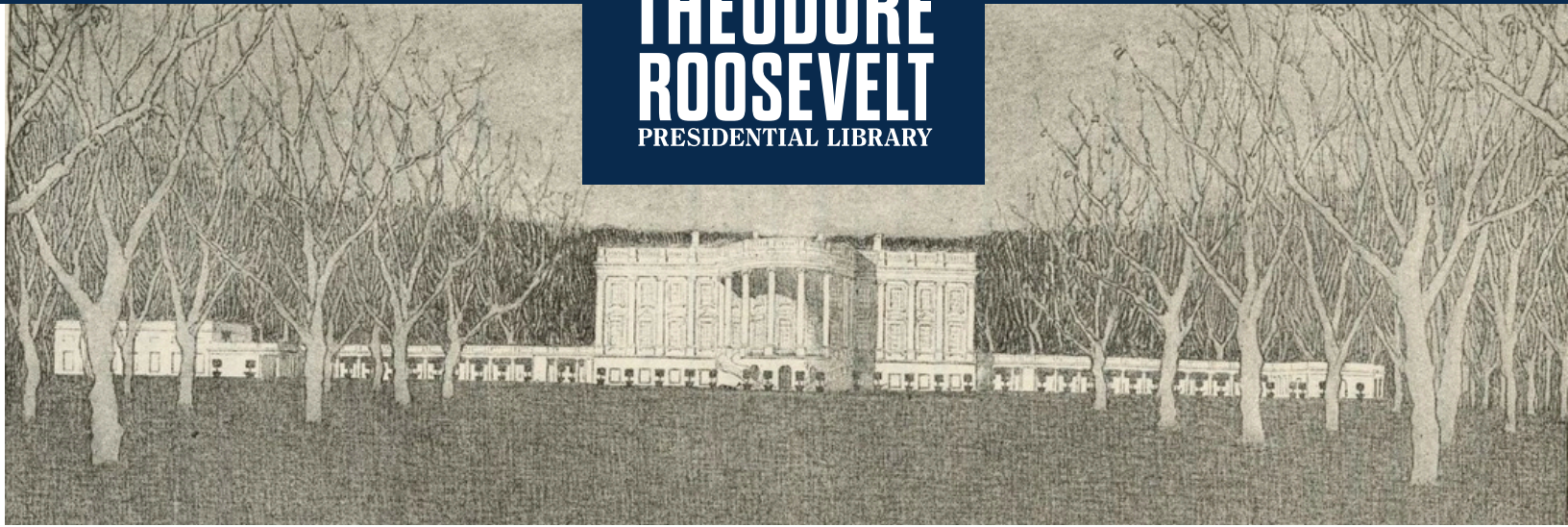
THEODORE ROOSEVELT

PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY

Hands-On History Activity

BUILD TR'S WHITE HOUSE

Conservation



Hands-On History Activity

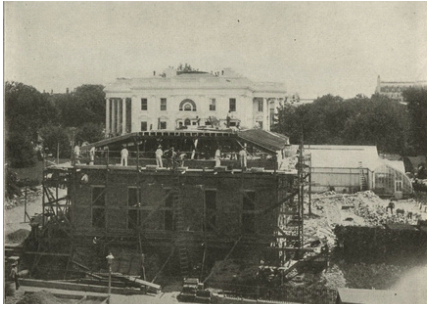
BUILD TR'S WHITE HOUSE

When Theodore Roosevelt assumed the presidency on September 14, 1901, he immediately gave the president's residence—known then as the Executive Mansion—a new name, calling it the “White House” in letters to friends and colleagues from his first day in office.

On October 17, 1901, Theodore Roosevelt made the change official, directing his secretary, George B. Cortelyou, to notify Secretary of State John Hay that “the headings, or date lines, of all official papers and documents requiring his signature [be changed] from ‘Executive Mansion’ to ‘White House.’”

When asked by a senator why he decided to make the change, one newspaper reported that Roosevelt “realized there were forty-five executive mansions in the different states of the United States and there was but one White House.”

Shortly after giving the president's residence a new name, Roosevelt set to work to modernize the White House, which had been in disrepair for some years. Work began in June 1902, and it was finished by the end of the year.



Temporary office building, 1902.



The principal White House stairway during the renovation process, 1902.

Not only were there updates made to the main residence, including adding bathrooms on the second floor and installing new electric lights, but additions were also made to move the executive office out of the president's residence and to create a social entrance connected to the White House via colonnades.

For the first time, the president had office space outside of his residence in the Executive Office Building known today as the West Wing. In addition to improving office space, Roosevelt championed the construction of the first small East Wing, turning it into a location where visitors from far and wide could enter.

Advised by New York architect Charles McKim, the creation of the East Wing was designed to match the West Wing and to serve as a secondary entrance to the White House for formal and public visitors. It was used primarily during large gatherings since it could accommodate many carriages and included a long cloak room for coats and hats.

In this Hands-On History activity, you will build your own White House modeled after Roosevelt's renovated residence and get a better feel for the place that President Roosevelt, his wife, Edith, and his six children called home for just under eight years.

SUPPLIES

Equipment Needed: You will need scissors, an adhesive (tape or glue), the White House template included below, and something to color with (colored pencils, markers, etc.).

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Using the template below, cut out the White House campus (each part is labeled on the template).
- 2 Attach the different pieces together with tape or glue based on the 1903 illustration of the White House (see below).
- 3 If interested, color or decorate the White House in the style you personally like best.

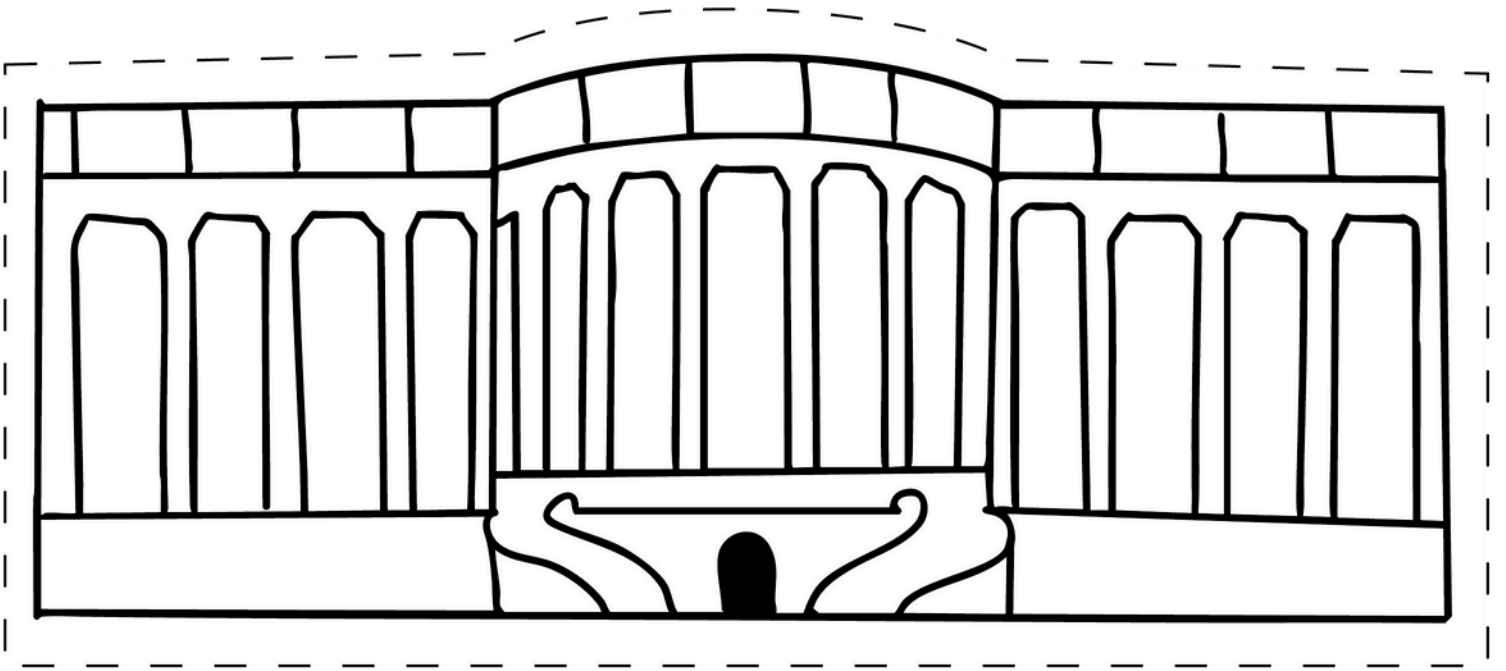
TIPS



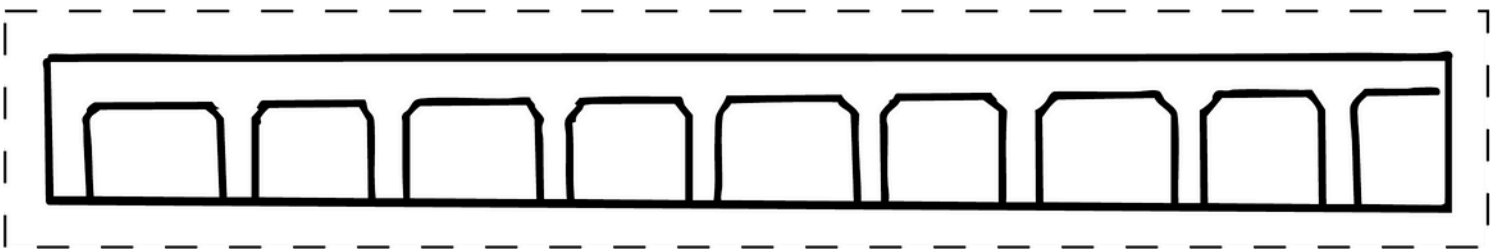
Turn it into a daily game: Instead of having students tape or glue their White House construction together, have them keep the pieces separate. Then, every day while you're studying the White House and the presidency, encourage them to put the White House together. See if they can do it without referencing the picture. This activity will give them the opportunity to internalize the design of the White House.



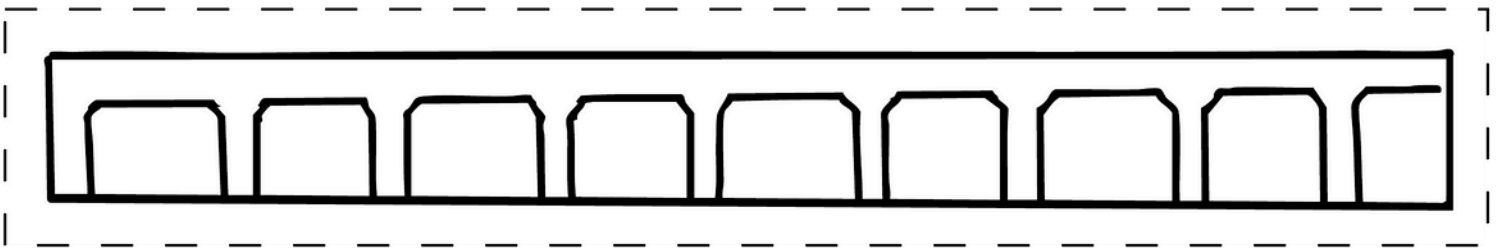
Imagine what it would be like to live in the White House: Imagine you lived in the White House. What rooms would you spend the most time in? What adventures would you have? Write a short paragraph describing your time in the White House or draw a picture of you in the White House.



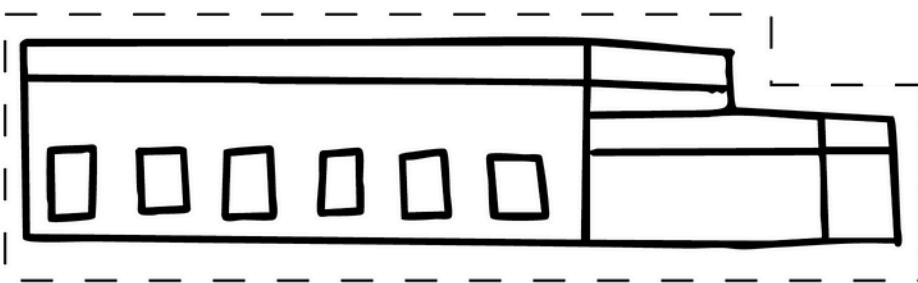
WHITE HOUSE



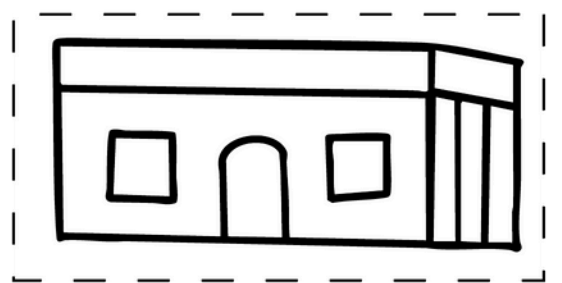
WEST PORTICO/WALKWAY



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EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING



EAST WING

