

Slide 1




**Using State Visits in the Classroom**

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NATIONAL ARCHIVES *and* RECORDS ADMINISTRATION 1

## Slide 2



### Today's Goals

- Discuss President Ford's visit to Japan, and the Imperial family's return visit as our focus in discussing the diplomatic impact of these events.
- Discuss the significance of U.S. state visits to other countries
- Discuss visits from dignitaries of other countries to the U.S.
- Discuss how you can use these events in your classroom.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES *and* RECORDS ADMINISTRATION 2

- Okay, so what are we going to talk about today? Hopefully you all came here after reading the description of the program, but just in case someone made a wrong turn, here it is:
- Sometimes diplomacy happens over the appetizer course, and sometimes it's all about going on the road. This session will focus on how the exchange of state visits plays a crucial role in international diplomacy, using President Ford's visit to Japan, and his hosting of the Emperor and Empress of Japan for their first U.S. state dinner in return, as examples. Finally, we'll discuss how you can utilize Presidential state visits as a research and learning tool in your classroom.



As the title states, in 1974, President Ford became the first sitting U.S. President to visit the nation of Japan.

As with most Presidential trips, he had a packed itinerary:

On November 18th – He arrives at Tokyo airport, then goes to Akasaka Palace (where he is staying) to meet with Prime Minister Tanaka

On November 19th –

- He had a reception with the Imperial family in the morning
- Followed by a second meeting with PM Tanaka
- In the afternoon, he received the Order of the Golden Pheasant from the Japanese Boy Scouts
- Then he was hosted for a state dinner with the Emperor and many guests.

On November 20<sup>th</sup>

- President Ford had a third meeting with PM Tanaka
- Followed by a Japanese Press Club reception
- Then he went to see a series of Japanese athletics demonstrations at the Budokan sports arena
- Following that, there was a meeting with members of the Japanese Diet
- And he finished the day by hosting a reciprocal dinner for Emperor Hirohito

On November 21<sup>st</sup>, he finally got to see some more of the country, when his party flew down to Osaka and then travelled to Kyoto

- They saw the old Imperial Palace
- Followed by Nijo Castle
- And the Gold Pavilion temple
- They capped off the day with an informal dinner party, complete with geisha and party games.

On the morning of November 22<sup>nd</sup> it was off to South Korea, then the Soviet Union.

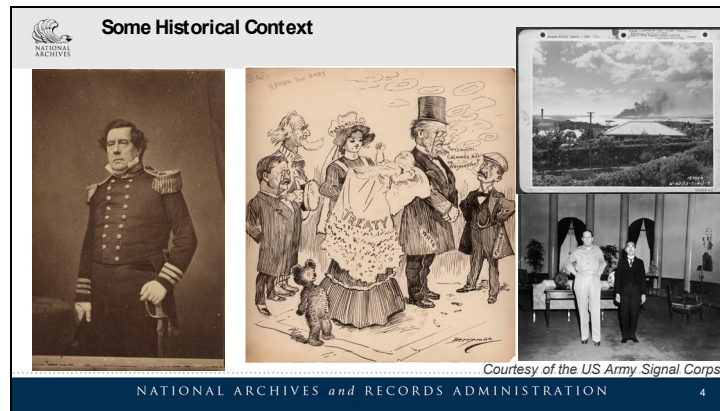
They really kept Ford moving! By the way, the official President's Daily Diaries are great fun to read.

Now, some of you may have noticed that there is an asterisk at the top of this slide. Well, an attempt by Eisenhower had to be cancelled in 1960 due to protests.

What's up with that?

Well, to be honest, the relationship between the U.S. and Japan has been in turns tense, problematic, distant, hostile, and friendly. It has really never been simple.

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- In 1603, Japan entered a period of cultural seclusion. Though there was significant trade, it was done via extremely narrow channels in order to limit cultural contact. When Japan cut itself off from the world, it was a nation on a level with many of its peers, but it proceeded to then miss the Industrial Revolution.
- In 1853, in 100% “gunboat diplomacy,” U.S. Admiral Matthew C. Perry forces Japan’s borders open. In 1854, Perry coerced Japan into signing the very one-sided Treaty of Peace and Amity.
- Then in 1854, discovering how much they have missed, and now feeling like a third-class nation, Japan went into a modernization frenzy.
- By 1905, Japan defeated Russia in the Russo-Japanese War. Suddenly seeing a spike in regional respect, Japan nevertheless felt that they were shortchanged by the peace treaty negotiated by President Theodore Roosevelt. These factors, combined, lead to the rise of the military to political power in Japan.
- As we know, in 1941 Japan attacks Pearl Harbor, bringing the United States into World War II. This will have a direct impact not only on U.S. / Japan relations, but also on Japanese-Americans.
- In 1945, the war ends and American occupation of Japan begins. After the war, we enter a new phase of relations, which continued to be imbalanced. A fitting image for this is the photo of *Douglas MacArthur with Emperor Hirohito, from September 1945. Courtesy of the US Army Signal Corps.*)
- In the next three decades, Japan would rebuild, and would have what is known as the “Economic Miracle,” rising in global political prominence. It was time for the relationship to change.

**What Was the Response to President Ford's visit?**

**THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON**

**MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT**  
**From: Henry A. Kissinger**  
**Subject: Your Visit To Japan**

**Setting**  
Your visit to Japan, the first in history by an incumbent American President, will be an event of major symbolic significance to the Japanese. The fact that it was the first foreign visit announced after you took office has served to underline the importance which we attach to our relationship with Japan. In addition to providing a forum for discussions of major global and regional issues, the visit will serve to dramatize to both the Japanese and American peoples the mutual interdependence of our two countries. The joint communique will highlight the principles of US-Japan cooperation in a global setting. This document and the spirit of goodwill fostered through your public appearances will set the tone of US-Japan relations in the coming years.

**THE MAINICHI NEWSPAPERS**  
Mainichi Daily News

It has been customary for recent American presidents to visit many countries around the world. There is hardly any country having friendly relations with the United States which has not welcomed a visit by an American president. Japan is the sole exception. There is a need to reflect on why this is so.

The President's visit here looks even more impressive in retrospect than it did at the time. The Japanese nation is now treating that visit as it would a fine art object. It places the visit in a conspicuous niche among its prideful possessions and points to it regularly and with pride whenever the occasion permits. The President simply couldn't have done a more effective job of laying a foundation for favorable relationships for years to come.

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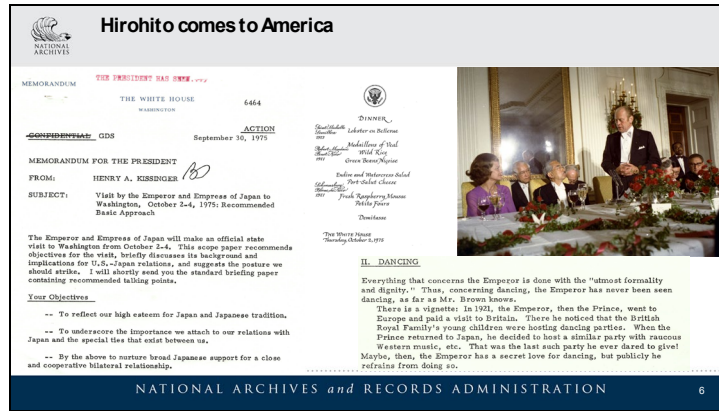
So, President Ford went to Japan. It was seen as an important diplomatic step, in the U.S., setting a new tone for the relationship between our countries, and quietly closing the books on World War II.

What was the Japanese response?

In Japan, it was viewed with far, far more fervor, as the United States had influenced Japan's politics and culture for over a century. On the one hand, the Mainichi newspapers were excited about the visit. On the other hand, tens of thousands of protestors, some of them armed and prepared to cause violence, were kept entirely out of Ford's view. In October, various left-leaning organizations claimed that over 2 million people had protested Ford's trip. In November, the Japanese government announced it was mobilizing an extra 160,000 police to protect Ford.

Afterwards, however, U.S. Ambassador to Japan James D. Hodgson related it as a success.

Perhaps the greatest outcome of it, though, was the return visit by Emperor Hirohito and Empress Nagako.



A year later, the Emperor and Empress came to visit, spending two weeks in the US, from September 30 - October 13, 1975.

They had previously met President Richard and First Lady Pat Nixon during a stopover in Alaska in 1971.

The next (and also most recent) Imperial visit to the United States would be 1994.

The trip would include a formal state dinner at the White House (October 2<sup>nd</sup>), and the reciprocal dinner (October 3<sup>rd</sup>), of course.

Extensive preparations were made for the dinner. Secretary of State Kissinger again prepared a briefing for the President.

The menu was chosen carefully.

There was extensive research on protocol.

The evening came off without a hitch, and everyone seemed to have a good time.

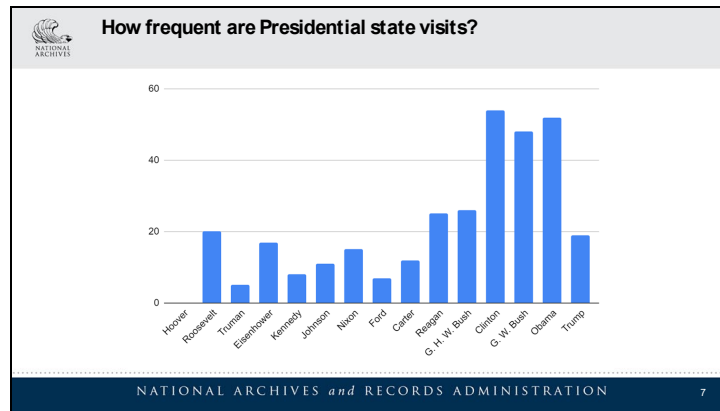
By the way, it's worth pointing out just how much collateral material the National Archives possesses, so that you know when you are researching something like this, you can find the photos, the daily diaries, the menus, and so much more.

After their stay in DC, the Imperial family also visited New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Disneyland, and Honolulu on their way back home. Yes, he did get pictures taken with Mickey Mouse. He also received a very nice Mickey Mouse watch.

Thirty years prior Emperor Hirohito was the leader of one of the Axis nations, one of the most hated men in America. Also in our collection, the National Archives has WWII propaganda materials with caricatures of the Emperor which are simply too racist to feature here.

However, these two visits, one in each direction, helped stabilize relationships between these two countries at long last. Building that kind of stability is what state visits (U.S. Presidents traveling abroad) and state dinners (hosting foreign dignitaries) are all about.





As U.S. citizens, we vaguely hear about the President going on these trips, but we very rarely think about it when it happens. To us, it is not really news. So, how often does it actually happen?

Believe it or not, the first President to leave the country while in office was Teddy Roosevelt in 1903.

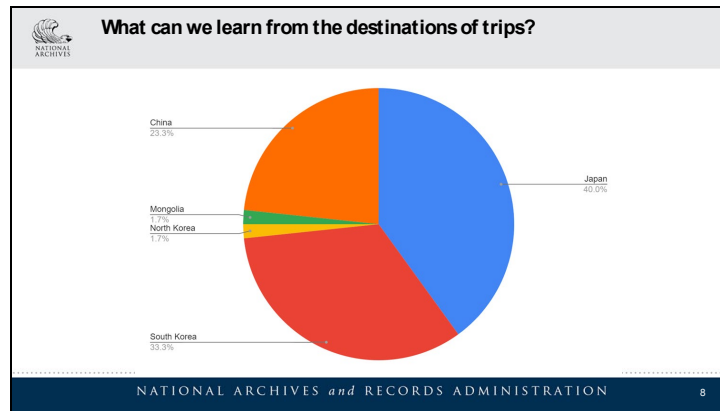
Then it was no more than 1-2 state visits per President (sometimes zero) until Franklin Roosevelt. That's when it really took off.

What can be fascinating is where Presidents "choose" to go. I put choose in quotes because these trips are politically-determined,

- Hoover: 0
- FDR: 20
- Truman: 5
- Eisenhower: 17
- JFK: 8
- LBJ: 11
- Nixon: 15
- Ford: 7
- Carter: 12
- Reagan: 25
- GHWB: 26
- Clinton: 54
- GWBush: 48
- Obama: 52
- Trump: 19
- Biden: 8



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Let's revisit the Ford trip for some perspective on this one. To date (starting with President Eisenhower in 1952) there have been 58 official Presidential visits to East-Asian nations.

24 to Japan

20 to South Korea

14 to China (including one to Taiwan in 1960 and one to Hong Kong in 1998)

1 to Mongolia

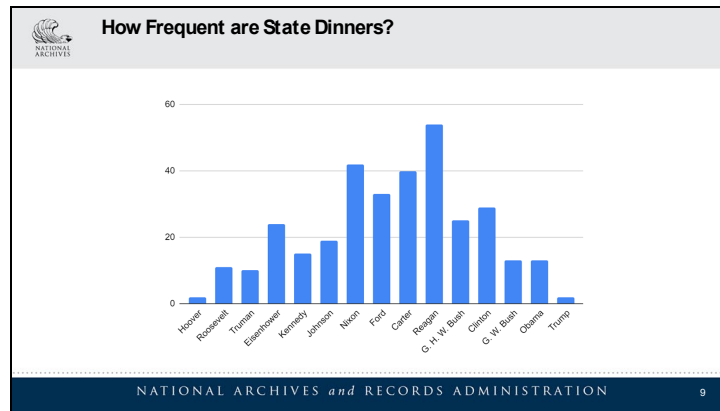
1 to North Korea

From this you can see the closeness of relationships between nations and the importance we place on time spent with each nation.

Japan, by the way, comes in 7th overall (behind UK, Canada, France, Mexico, Germany, Italy)

There are 195 countries in the world today. U.S. Presidents have been to 126 countries (counting some that no longer exist)... 28 of those countries have only been visited once.

What about the history of state dinners, then?



Okay, but how frequent are state dinners?

The answer is “not actually that frequent”.

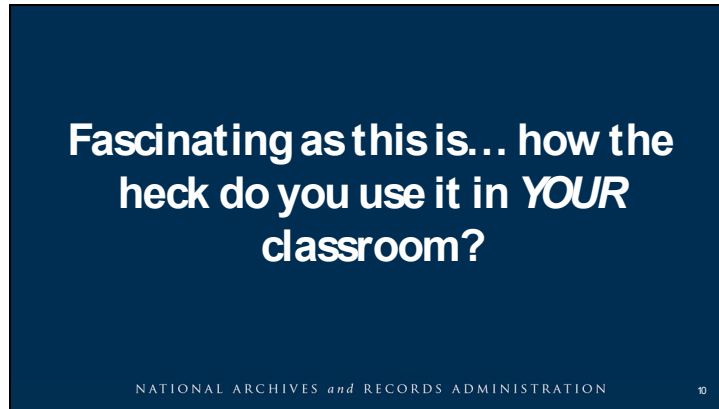
Ulysses S. Grant hosted the first one in 1874 for King Kalākaua of the small nation of... Hawaii.

The next one was held by President Hoover in 1931, almost sixty years later.

Again, things didn't pick up until FDR, and then they blossomed... for a while. We'll talk about why that drop-off might have happened later.

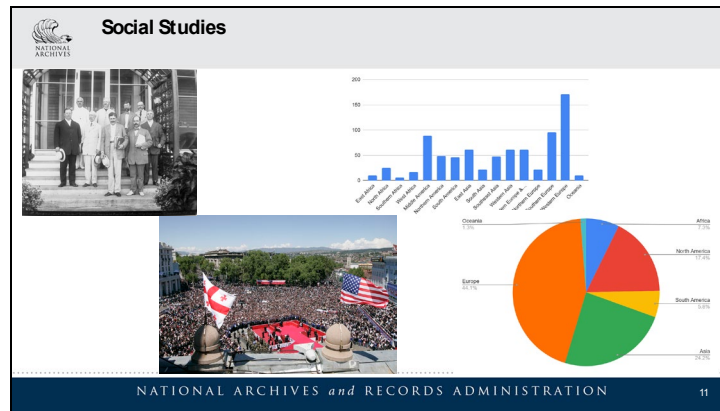
- Hoover 2
- Roosevelt 11
- Truman 10
- Eisenhower 24
- Kennedy 15
- Johnson 19
- Nixon 42
- Ford 33
- Carter 40
- Reagan 54
- G. H. W. Bush 25
- Clinton 29
- G. W. Bush 13
- Obama 13
- Trump 2





The best way to think of this is as an untapped source of information, which can be looked at in several ways using different lenses:

- It's a series of well-documented historical events, with writings, photos, films, even dinner menus!
- It involves the relationships between two countries,
- It is also a mathematic data set.



Let's start with the obvious field, Social Studies

- Country reports - How many of you ask your students to do a report on a country? Tired of getting the same encyclopedia facts? Assign the students the following questions: Who was the first President to visit your country? Who was the most recent? What did they do while they were there? (Panama Canal President Taft, Col Goethals, and Board of Consulting Engineers Culebra, CZ Feb 1909)
- History - How often a President visits another country, or their leaders visit the U.S. for a state dinner, fluctuates throughout history. We have seen the relationship between the U.S. and Japan today, but what about Germany and Italy, the other Axis powers? What about the Soviet Union, and the former member nations once the USSR breaks up? For example, thousands of people showed up to see George W. Bush make the first (and so far only) U.S. Presidential visit to the nation of Georgia back in 2005. (Thousands Gather in Freedom Square to Hear President George W. Bush Speak in Tbilisi, Georgia, May 10, 2005)
- Geography – With your students, look at how the world is broken into regions, and talk about the concentration of Presidential visits. Then look by continents.

**Language Arts**

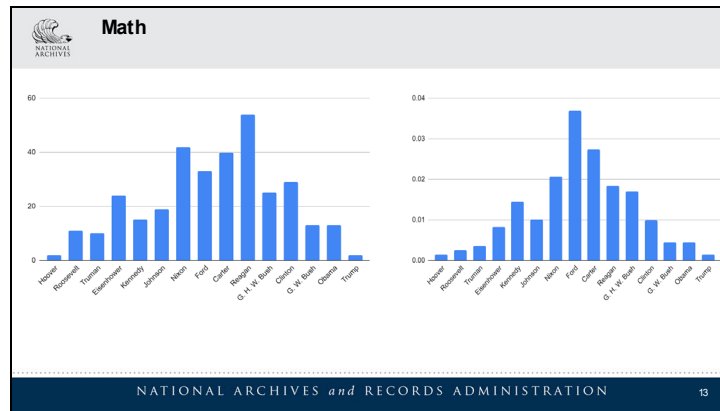
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For Language Arts, there are a lot of opportunities here, especially in research and creative writing:

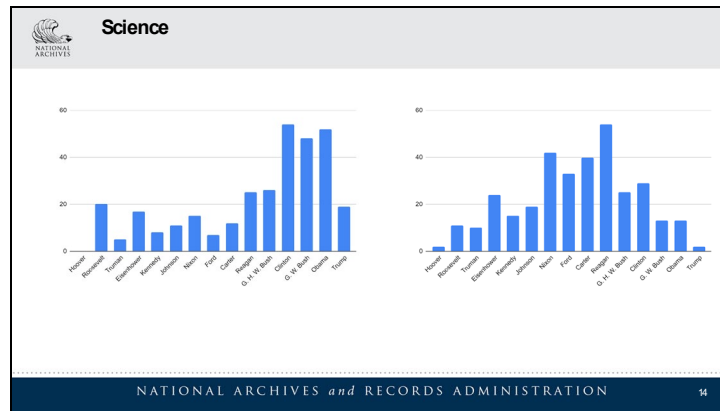
- Students can research what a President did on their trip to any certain country, then write as if they were either a local reporter, covering the President’s visit, or as a member of the President’s staff. What’s going on in this photo?
- Or, they could be one of the students at the Budokan demonstration of traditional and modern sports. What was their sport? Judo? Fencing? Volleyball?
- Alternatively, they can be assigned any one of the guests at a State Dinner. Have the students research who that person was, and then write about the dinner from their perspective. Did they like the food? What did they think of the President’s speech? (You can find at the National Archives, of course.)
- If you really want to challenge your students, “Sen. Inouye” on the seating plan here is Daniel K. Inouye, who was the first Hawaiian member of the House of Representatives before switching to the Senate. A second-generation Japanese-American, he lost his arm fighting in Germany during WWII as a member of the 442 Infantry Division. What was he thinking and feeling, having dinner at the White House with Emperor Hirohito?





For Math, the history of Presidential Visits and state dinners provides a manipulatable data set:

- Remember our chart on the number of state dinners per Presidency? Well, it's a little un-nuanced. That's per presidency, but doesn't take into account time in office. Adjusted for the number of days each of these men was President, it looks like this.
- Lean into the interpretive question, then, of why did President Ford need to have so many state dinners? ***What do you think?***
- You can also use a President's trip to figure out distances, and compare that to times. How long did it take President Clinton to get to Europe (8 hours by airplane), as compared to Woodrow Wilson (10 days by boat)?



For Science, you can look at the technological angles of state visits and dinners.

For State Visits:

- FDR was the first sitting President to have access to an enclosed airplane with a pressurized cabin. Prior to that, all presidential foreign trips were by boat. Can you imagine how hard it must have been for President Wilson to have been on a boat and mostly out of touch, for over a week?
- In 1990, they began using the military version of the Boeing 747, the VC-25, and Air Force One got a serious upgrade.

Then for State Dinners:

- If the same technological improvements made it easier for foreign dignitaries to come for state dinners, why do we see those on the decline after President Reagan? What technology blossomed in the late 1980s, early 1990s that might have reduced the need to invite foreign dignitaries for dinner? Or was it a social change (say, the end of the Cold War) that caused this shift? Have your students debate this.

 **Resources**

<https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/travels/president>      <https://catalog.archives.gov>

Daily Diary	Photos
<a href="#">Kennedy</a>	<a href="#">Kennedy</a>
<a href="#">Johnson</a>	<a href="#">Johnson</a>
<a href="#">Nixon</a>	<a href="#">Nixon</a>
<a href="#">Ford</a>	<a href="#">Ford</a>
<a href="#">Carter</a>	<a href="#">Carter</a>
<a href="#">Reagan</a>	<a href="#">Reagan</a>
<a href="#">George H. W. Bush</a>	<a href="#">George H. W. Bush</a>
<a href="#">Clinton</a>	<a href="#">Clinton</a>
<a href="#">George W. Bush</a>	<a href="#">George W. Bush</a>

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Daily Diary	Photos
<a href="#">Kennedy</a>	<a href="#">Kennedy</a>
<a href="#">Johnson</a>	<a href="#">Johnson</a>
<a href="#">Nixon</a>	<a href="#">Nixon</a>
<a href="#">Ford</a>	<a href="#">Ford</a>
<a href="#">Carter</a>	<a href="#">Carter</a>
<a href="#">Reagan</a>	<a href="#">Reagan</a>
<a href="#">George H. W. Bush</a>	<a href="#">George H. W. Bush</a>
<a href="#">Clinton</a>	<a href="#">Clinton</a>
<a href="#">George W. Bush</a>	<a href="#">George W. Bush</a>

Digging into the history of Presidential visits to other nations, and the state dinners that are held when foreign dignitaries visit the United States, can give you a lot of information about these significant, yet largely unnoticed, moments in international diplomacy. Plus, the data and information is just waiting for you.

The data about Presidential visits all came from the State department. The majority of the images came from The National Archives catalogue.

If you want to dig even deeper, there are two resources that I highly recommend. The first is checking out the Presidential Daily Diaries via each of the National Archives Presidential Libraries. The second is the photo galleries on each of those web sites. When possible, I have linked to the “contact sheets”, which show even the unpublished Presidential photographs.

Finally, if you have any questions, you can always reach out to me.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES

# Q&A

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