

Rochester History Timeline Instructions

Length: 60 minutes

Audience: This activity can be modified for students in grades 3-7 (ages 8-12).

Objective: Students will use the “Rochester History” timeline from the Rochester Voices website (www.rochestervoices.org) to gain a better understanding of key historical events that took place in Rochester between 1789 and the present.

Set up (5-10 minutes): Divide the class into 5 even groups, allowing for diversity (mixing older and younger students, different skill sets, etc.) within each group. Assign each group to a computer/tablet station with access to the Rochester Voices website, www.rochestervoices.org. Have the students open the Rochester History timeline (or have it open for them). Ask each group to focus on a specific range of dates on the timeline, as follows:

Group 1: 1789-1834

- Indian Allen
- Nathaniel Rochester
- First permanent settlers
- Battle of Charlotte
- Rochesterville
- Erie Canal
- Reynolds Arcade
- Sam Patch
- Great Awakening
- The City of Rochester

Group 2: 1847-1863

- Frederick Douglass
- Women’s Rights Convention
- Rochester Rappings
- University of Rochester
- Bartholomay Brewing
- Michael, Sterns & Co.
- Western Union
- Rochester Free Academy
- Rochester Historical Society
- Abraham Lincoln
- Patrick O’Rorke

Group 3: 1865-1893

- The Great Flood
- Sibley, Lindsay & Curr
- Women Who Dared
- Buffalo Bill
- Driving Park
- Ontario Beach Park
- Jumbo the Elephant
- First Kodak Camera
- Rattlesnake Pete

Group 4: 1899-1934

- Helen Barrett Montgomery
- East High School
- Sibley Fire
- Lilac Sunday
- The Cinema
- Wegmans
- World War I
- Community Chest
- On the Air
- Genesee Brewing Company
- Eastman's death
- Centennial

Group 5: 1935-present

- Marion Folsom and the New Deal
- TV
- War Memorial
- Midtown Plaza
- Race Riots
- Ronald Reagan
- Ice Storm
- First African American Mayor
- Fast Ferry
- 175th anniversary (quartoseptcentennial)
- First Female Mayor

Implementation (20-25 minutes):

Give each group time to explore the timeline, asking that students pay particular attention to the entries that fall within their assigned date range. Distribute the Rochester History Timeline Worksheet to guide them in their exploration.

Debrief (20-25 minutes):

After students have had enough time to explore the timeline and complete their worksheets, have each group, starting with Group 1, share their discoveries and/or drawings with the entire class. Before dismissing the class, ask for volunteers to name one thing they learned about Rochester history.