John Fitzgerald Kennedy  
1917 - 1963

- John F. Kennedy was born at 83 Beals Street in Brookline, Massachusetts on May 29, 1917.
- He had three brothers and five sisters. He was the second of nine children. His family called him Jack.
- Although he was a healthy infant, Jack endured many illnesses during his childhood.
- Reading was Jack’s favorite pastime. He especially liked adventure books. His favorites were *Billy Whiskers* and *King Arthur and the Round Table*.
- Jack’s father, Joe Sr., held high expectations for his children, especially his two eldest sons. He wanted the boys to win at sports and be successful at everything they tried.
- Jack attended several schools growing up: Edward Devotion School (grades K - 2), Dexter School (grades 3 - 4), Riverdale Country School (grades 5 - 7), Canterbury School (grade 8), and Choate School (grades 9 - 12).
- Jack was not the best student and didn’t always work as hard as he could. His father once wrote to him, "...if I didn’t feel you had the goods I would be most charitable in my attitude toward your failings. After long experience in sizing up people I definitely know you have the goods and you can go a long way...I am urging you to do the best you can."
- Jack attended and graduated from Harvard College (1936 - 1940).
- During World War II, Jack joined the Navy and was assigned to the South Pacific. While commander of a patrol torpedo boat, the PT-109, he helped save crew members after the boat was destroyed by a Japanese warship. Jack was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for his leadership and courage.

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• Jack began his political career in 1946 by running for and winning a seat in Massachusetts' eleventh congressional district. He served three terms (six years) in the House of Representatives.
• In 1952, Jack was elected to the US Senate.
• At age thirty-six, Jack married Jacqueline Bouvier, a photographer for the Washington Times-Herald.
• While recovering from back surgery, Senator Kennedy wrote Profiles in Courage. The book was about several senators who had risked their careers to stand up for what they believed. Profiles in Courage was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for biography in 1957.
• As Kennedy's popularity grew, he decided to run for president. In 1960, the Democratic Party nominated him as its candidate.
• John F. Kennedy defeated Richard Nixon by a slim margin on November 8, 1960. President Kennedy delivered his inauguration speech the following January.
• John F. Kennedy was the 35th president of the United States.* He held the office for almost three years. During this time, he molded a sweeping Civil Rights bill, launched the Peace Corps, promoted the Space Race, and negotiated a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.
• John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, TX on November 22, 1963.


* He was the youngest and the first Catholic president ever elected to the office of president.