

Watergate Oral History

Student handout

Article Citation: Butterfield, Alexander P. and David Thelen. "Conversations between Alexander P. Butterfield and David Thelen about the Discovery of the Watergate Tapes." *The Journal of American History* 75.4 (1989): 1245-1262
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1908639> (June 24, 2012).

Directions: Read the attached article and answer the following questions in your notebook.

1. What were Thelen's expectations?
2. What did he find?
3. How does he describe the difference between his expectations and Butterfield's story?
4. Describe the two elements about Butterfield's experience that made an impression on Thelen.
5. Identify Butterfield's job title in January 1969.
6. Who was Bob Haldeman and what was his job?
7. How did Butterfield describe his job? What was he responsible for in the Nixon White House?
8. What surprised Butterfield while working in the Nixon White House? Explain the examples he used to illustrate his point.
9. Describe what is happening in the picture on page 1249. How do the people look? What can you infer about what is happening?
10. When, where, and how was the taping system installed? According to Butterfield, who installed the system, and what was their opinion of taping systems in general? (see footnote 1 page 1251)
11. What did Butterfield think of John Dean's testimony? Did Butterfield think the taping system would confirm Dean's testimony?
12. What personal reason did Butterfield have for telling the truth?
13. According to Butterfield, how extensive was the recording system? (be specific)
14. How did Butterfield preface his response to Don Sanders's question, and why?
15. How was Butterfield treated by the Nixon White House after he testified before the Senate Watergate Committee? The Ford White House?
16. Did revealing the taping system change Butterfield's life? How?

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