

Our First Ladies

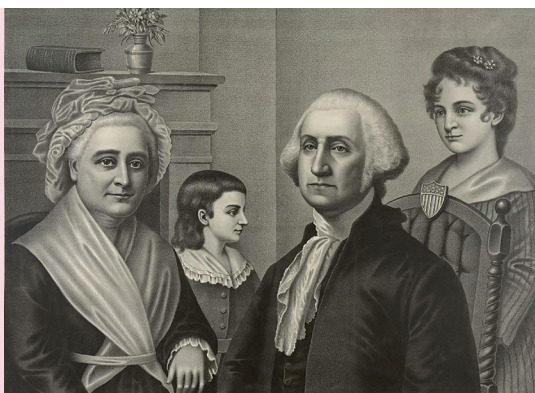


Image courtesy Library of Congress

Mini Fact:

Martha Washington was known as Lady Washington. The title "first lady" didn't really catch on until the 1930s.

In March, we celebrate Women's History Month in the United States. This year, we have a new first lady, Melania Trump, who is sure to make her mark on history. The Mini Page looks back at the roles of the first lady.

Who is the first lady?

We generally think of the first lady as the president's wife. But in a few cases, other women have filled the role.

For instance, President Andrew Jackson's wife died in the months before his inauguration. His niece, **Emily Donelson**, and his daughter-in-law, **Sarah Yorke Jackson**, helped him with hosting events in the White House.



Harriet Lane

President James Buchanan was the only president who never married. His niece, **Harriet Lane**, was his hostess for White House special occasions.

What's a first lady's job?

Every first lady has brought her own personal touch to her position. Many of them had important careers before their husbands became president. Most of them were mothers, perhaps raising children in the White House.

But being first lady offers new challenges to any woman, no matter what her background is. She is a **confidante**, or adviser, to her husband. She is a symbol of the United States to other countries. She is America's hostess,

welcoming people from all over the world to the White House. Today, first ladies are encouraged to have a special cause or project that they work on during their time in the White House.

For example, **Laura Bush**, a former teacher, was interested in **literacy**, or the ability to read and write. She started the Ready to Read, Ready to Learn program and hosted the White House Conference on Global Literacy in 2006.



Laura Bush



Michelle Obama

Michelle Obama was concerned about **obesity**, or being too heavy, among kids. She started the Let's Move! program to encourage kids to have more active lifestyles.

Eleanor Roosevelt became known as the first lady of the world for her work on humanitarian and women's issues. After being first lady, she was named an American delegate to the United Nations.



Eleanor Roosevelt



White House photo by Cecil Stoughton

Jacqueline Kennedy with her husband and children in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts.

First lady, first mom

When President John F. Kennedy won the 1960 election, **Jacqueline Kennedy** was pregnant with their second child, John Jr. He was born just two weeks after the election. His older sister, **Caroline**, was 4 years old when the family moved into the White House.

Mrs. Kennedy thought raising her children was her most important job. She said: "If you bungle raising your children, I don't think whatever else you do well matters very much."

Edith Roosevelt moved into the White House with six children! She and President Theodore Roosevelt read to their kids every day and let them have all kinds of pets, including a snake.



President and Mrs. Roosevelt and their children.

Resources



On the Web:

- firstladies.org
- whitehouse.gov/1600/first-ladies

At the library:

- "A Kids' Guide to America's First Ladies" by Kathleen Krull
- "What's the Big Deal About First Ladies" by Ruby Shamir

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Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of first ladies are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:



- CAREER, CHILDREN,
- CONFIDANTE,
- HISTORY, HOSTESS,
- HUMANITARIAN,
- LITERACY, MARTHA,
- MELANIA, MOTHER,
- NIECE, OBESITY,
- PETS, ROLE, SYMBOL,
- WASHINGTON, WHITE
- HOUSE, WIFE, WOMEN.

I R E E R A C F M A R T H A N
 T E L O R R S Y H E C E I N O
 O B E S I T Y T R O Q K K E T
 L C S Y M B O L E O S H L M G
 C H I L D R E N Q P T T T O N
 W E S U O H E T I H W S E W I
 I E T N A D I F N O C L I S H
 F I N A I R A T I N A M U H S
 E A I N A L E M W W G N X Z A
 Q C A R E T I L M O T H E R W

Cook's Corner

Apple Dip

You'll need:

- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

- 4 washed apples, sliced
- 1 cup orange juice



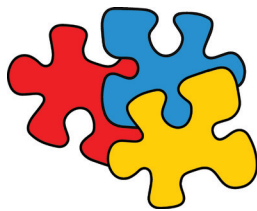
* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

What to do:

1. Let cream cheese sit out at room temperature until soft.
2. In a medium bowl, mix cream cheese, sugar and vanilla.
3. Place mixture in a small serving bowl and sprinkle top with cinnamon.
4. Put bowl in the center of a big plate, along with a spreading knife.
5. Dunk apple slices in the orange juice and place around the dip. Serves 4.

Puzzling

Unscramble the words below that remind us of families in the White House.



- aynslvanpien _____
- asmialn _____
- virtpae _____
- msega _____

Answers: Pennsylvania, animals, private, games.

Mini Jokes



Martha: What should you ask a camel when you're serving him tea at a tea party?

Abby: "One hump or two?"

Eco Note



A drought across East Africa has killed thousands of animals in the region. At least 15 hippos perished in Kenya's Lake Kenyatta. The small body of water is about half its 1980s size and is said to be shrinking by the day. A large number of flamingos have also died from the drought in Lake Nakuru, while predators such as lions are now venturing into populated areas in search of food.

adapted with permission from Earthweek.com

For later:

Look in your newspaper for stories about first lady Melania Trump and her son, Barron.

Teachers:

For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: bbs.amuniversal.com/teaching_guides.html

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