

First Leader



Mini Fact:

This famous painting shows the general crossing the Delaware River in 1776 to surprise British forces on the other side.

You know George Washington was our first president. You may even know that he was a general during the Revolutionary War.

There is much more to learn about President Washington! We celebrate Presidents Day, Feb. 18, by getting to know him better.

Early days

George Washington was born on Feb. 22, 1732, in Virginia. His great-grandfather had migrated to Virginia from England in 1657.

He studied geography and Latin, and he learned **surveying**, or taking measurements to determine the size and position of land holdings. He was also taught how to grow tobacco and raise animals.

Family life

Washington was 26 when he married Martha Custis on Jan. 6, 1759. She was a widow. Her son, Jacky, was 4 years old. Her daughter, Patsy, was only 2.

Mount Vernon, their home near Washington, D.C., had six rooms when George and Martha moved in, in 1759.

Washington increased the number to 20. He helped to design the house and grounds.

Washington loved to read. His library at Mount Vernon had about 1,100 books, and he wrote more than 40,000 letters in his lifetime.

Patsy died at the age of 17. Jacky died at the age of 27 while serving in the Revolutionary Army.



Martha Washington

Military man

George Washington's first experience as a military leader was as a colonel in the French and Indian War. The war was fought because the French wanted to take over more territory in the British colonies. Washington fought on the side of the British.

Although he made some battlefield mistakes, he learned much from them. One of the most important lessons was that the British could be defeated.

Washington was chosen to lead the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. He was known as a courageous leader who often won his victories by using surprise attacks.

Washington inspired his soldiers. His troops often fought against larger armies of better-equipped British soldiers. He became world-famous. Some people wanted to make him a king, but Washington refused.

Washington went home to Mount Vernon after the war, in 1783. After five years, he was elected as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention and served as president of the convention.



This likeness of Washington by Rembrandt Peale was painted in 1795 when Washington was 63. This is one of Washington's most famous portraits.

The first president

Washington was elected **unanimously**, or with all agreeing, as our first president in 1789. He served for two terms (1789-1797).

After his presidency, Washington returned to Mount Vernon. On Dec. 12, 1799, he went on a horseback ride. The day was cold and snowy. He became sick and died on Dec. 14.



This painting of Washington on the plantation was made by Junius Brutus Stearns in 1851.

Mount Vernon

Every year, about 1 million visitors tour Mount Vernon. Washington spent 45 years trying to improve the house and the land.

The plantation included stables, a **gristmill** for grinding wheat, gardens, greenhouses, an icehouse and other structures.

George Washington owned slaves. During his time, slavery was accepted by many. However, he changed his mind about it as he grew older. In his will, he asked that his slaves be freed after Martha's death.

Resources



On the Web:

- bit.ly/MPGeorge

At the library:

- "When Washington Crossed the Delaware: A Wintertime Story for Young Patriots" by Lynne Cheney
- "Our Country's Presidents: All You Need to Know About the Presidents, From George Washington to Barack Obama" by Ann Bausum

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Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of George Washington are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:



CONVENTION, DELEGATE,	P	S	U	O	M	I	N	A	N	U	R	W	Y	A	T
GEORGE, GRISTMILL,	L	L	I	M	T	S	I	R	G	A	A	E	H	N	
LEADER, LIBRARY,	A	S	L	I	B	R	A	R	Y	B	W	S	V	T	U
MARTHA, MOUNT,	N	I	H	V	L	E	A	D	E	R	U	H	R	R	O
PLANTATION, PRESIDENT,	T	N	O	I	T	N	E	V	N	O	C	I	U	A	M
REVOLUTIONARY,	A	G	T	N	E	D	I	S	E	R	P	N	S	M	A
SURVEY, UNANIMOUS,	T	N	O	N	R	E	V	A	I	N	I	G	R	I	V
VERNON, VIRGINIA, WAR,	I	W	L	E	T	A	G	E	L	E	D	T	K	Y	K
WASHINGTON.	O	W	Y	R	A	N	O	I	T	U	L	O	V	E	R
	N	I	G	E	O	R	G	E	B	S	Y	N	N	X	P

Cook's Corner

Raspberry Flummery

You'll need:

- 2 cups raspberries, fresh or frozen*
- 1/2 cup cold water
- 1 cup sugar

What to do:

1. Wash the raspberries. Remove stems and leaves.
2. Put berries in a 2-quart saucepan with 1/2 cup cold water. Cover and cook over medium heat until berries are soft, about 10 minutes.
3. Mix sugar, salt and cornstarch in a small bowl. Slowly add mixture to berries, stirring. Turn heat to low. Cook, stirring, until mixture thickens, about five minutes.
4. Spoon the flummery into pretty glasses. Chill in the refrigerator. Makes 4 servings.

* You can substitute other kinds of berries.

Flummerys were fruit puddings made with berries in George Washington's time.

- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 4 tablespoons cornstarch



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

7 Little Words for Kids

Use the letters in the boxes to make a word with the same meaning as the clue. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in the solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

1. at all times (6) _____
2. game Serena Williams plays (6) _____
3. places to visit animals (4) _____
4. marmalade-loving bear (10) _____
5. milk and butter (5) _____
6. person in charge in a courtroom (5) _____
7. collect (6) _____

ER	GA	DA	NIS
TEN	DING	GE	AYS
IRY	TON	JUD	OS
ZO	TH	ALW	PAD

Answers: always, tennis, zoos, Paddington, dairy, judge, gather.

Mini Jokes



- Garrett:** What does a laughing archaeologist find most often?
Grace: Funny bones!

Eco Note



Female butterflies lay their eggs on a plant for a good reason. The caterpillar that hatches from the egg uses the plant as food, eating almost enough for a lifetime. During the chrysalis stage, the caterpillar transforms into an adult. Then, the adult butterfly feeds on fruits or the nectar of flowers. You can plant a butterfly garden to attract the beautiful insects. Find a book or website describing the native plants of your location. Then, find a nursery or website that sells the seeds or the plants.

adapted from climatekids.nasa.gov

For later:

Look in your newspaper for items about Presidents Day events.

Teachers: For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: bit.ly/MPstandards. And follow The Mini Page on Facebook!



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