

U.S. Presidents: George Washington

by ReadWorks



George Washington is regarded as the Father of Our Country. He guided America and helped it evolve into the nation that it is today. Before becoming President, Washington led the Continental Army to victory, winning American independence from Britain during the Revolutionary War. After the war ended, he was a key player at the convention that drafted the United States Constitution. Finally, as President, Washington's leadership solved many problems. It showed people that the Constitution could work to govern a new nation.

America was a very different place back in Washington's time. The nation was small and weak. There were only 11 states in the U.S. when Washington took office. When he left after two terms there were 16. The country only stretched as far as the Mississippi River. Most people farmed and struggled to make a living. Many children never went to school. Most

adults could not read or write. Communication and transportation were slow and difficult. It took days for Washington to travel the distance covered in a couple of hours by car today.

Most Americans loved Washington for the way he handled hardship. As a general, he lost many battles and suffered greatly. Washington never gave up, even during the bitter winters when he and his troops had barely enough food or supplies to survive. Washington's officers admired his loyalty and strength so much that they wanted to make him king. Washington refused.

Today, George Washington is honored in many ways. His face adorns America's dollar bill and its quarter. Both Washington state and our nation's capitol, Washington, D.C., are named after the first President. The bridge that stretches across the Hudson River from New Jersey to New York is named the George Washington Bridge. It is located exactly where Washington crossed the Hudson with his troops to defeat British forces. Perhaps one of Washington's officers expressed America's feelings about Washington best: "He was first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. George Washington led soldiers in which war?
 - A. World War I
 - B. the Civil War
 - C. the Revolutionary War
 - D. World War II

2. What does the author describe at the end of the passage?
 - A. how George Washington became president
 - B. how America was different during Washington's time
 - C. how George Washington is honored today
 - D. how Washington helped win the Revolutionary War

3. America was very different during George Washington's lifetime. What evidence from the passage supports this conclusion?
 - A. Most adults could not read or write. Many children never went to school.
 - B. George Washington helped America evolve into the nation it is today.
 - C. Today Washington's face adorns America's dollar bill and its quarter.
 - D. The George Washington Bridge spans the Hudson River from New Jersey to New York.

4. How can America's feelings about George Washington best be described?
 - A. intimidated
 - B. divided
 - C. appalled
 - D. respectful

5. What is this passage mostly about?
 - A. how the United States was different during the time of George Washington
 - B. George Washington, the first President of the United States
 - C. why George Washington's face is on the dollar bill and the quarter
 - D. how George Washington helped defeat the British in the Revolutionary War

6. Read the following sentence: "[George Washington's] face adorns America's dollar bill and its quarter."

What does the word "**adorns**" mean as used in this sentence?

- A. loves
- B. peels
- C. shocks
- D. decorates

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

George Washington's officers admired him so much that they wanted to make him king, _____ Washington refused.

- A. so
- B. namely
- C. after
- D. but

8. Why did most Americans love George Washington?

9. What did Washington's presidential leadership show the people of America?

10. Explain how George Washington helped America evolve into the nation it is today. Support your answer with two examples from the passage.
