

Teachers' Guide for Cobblestone

September 2012: Thomas Jefferson

By Debbie Vilardi

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Goal: To learn about the life and accomplishments of Thomas Jefferson.

*Always have a parent or trusted adult help with web research.

Before Beginning: Discuss what you know about Thomas Jefferson.

"Young Tom" by Harry Gardiner (Pages 4-6)

Vocabulary: plantation, surveying

Comprehension:

1. When was Thomas Jefferson born?
2. Why did the Jefferson family move?
3. What was Peter's profession?
4. How did young Tom receive an education?
5. What did Tom vow to do one day?
6. Why didn't Rebecca marry Tom?
7. How did Dr. Small and Mr. Wythe influence Jefferson?

Writing Activity: Thomas Jefferson loved to read and study. He also enjoyed trying new things. Think of something you'd like to learn more about or something you have never done but would like to do. Write an essay detailing why you are interested in this activity or topic.

Extension: If possible, complete the task you wrote about.

Map Skills: Locate the James River, the Blue Ridge Mountains, the Rivanna River and Williamsburg on a map of Virginia.

Research Topics: Shadwell plantation; Tuckahoe plantation; planter elite; College of William and Mary; Williamsburg, Virginia; natural philosophy; George Wythe

"Meet the Jeffersons" by Gloria R. Polites (Pages 7-9)

Vocabulary: chided

Comprehension:

1. Why were Thomas and Martha well-matched?
2. What tragedy occurred and how did Thomas react?
3. How did he stay in contact with his daughters when work took him far from home?
4. What kind of father was he?
5. What kind of grandfather was he?
6. What second tragedy faced the family?

Writing Activity: Look at Martha's schedule on page 9. Compare this to your own education. Which do you prefer and why? Support your statements with material from this article and the article "Young Tom" as well as your own experience.

Math Activity: If Jefferson was born in 1743 and married in 1772, how old was he when he married? The courtship began when he was 27. How long did it last?

Research: Martha Wales Skelton, Virginia House of Burgesses

"A Quiet Room" by Virginia Calkins (Pages 10-13)

Vocabulary: independence, unalienable, broadside

Comprehension:

1. Who proposed independence?
2. Why was the idea controversial?
3. Why was a committee drafted?
4. What experience did Jefferson have with writing?
5. What are some of the points Jefferson incorporated into the Declaration?
6. Why didn't Jefferson argue about the changes the Congress made to his document?
7. Who argued in his favor?
8. How was the declaration presented to the people and troops?
9. How did the British treat those who had signed?

Math Activity: How many days passed between Lee's resolution and the signing of the Declaration of Independence?

Discussion: Read and discuss the Declaration of Independence. Are its ideals being upheld today?

Research: Second Continental Congress, Richard Henry Lee, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, Robert R. Livingston, "A Summary View of the Rights of British America"

"In Search of Religious Freedom" by Karen E. Hong (Page 14-15)

Vocabulary: tyranny

Comprehension:

1. What was the role of the Anglican Church in Virginia?
2. How did Virginia respond to the Toleration Act of 1689?
3. What effect did Samuel Davies have?
4. How did the last section of Virginia's Declaration of Rights deal with issues of religious freedom?
5. What was Jefferson's response?
6. How did his resolution influence others?
7. Read "And a Bill of Rights ,Too? By Andrew Matthews on page 15. How did Jefferson influence the First Federal Congress?

Writing Activity: Consider the consequences of our religious freedom. How might your community be different if this right were not addressed?

Research: The Virginia Company of London, Toleration Act of 1689, Samuel Davies, Jefferson's Statue for Religious Freedom

"It's Not Personal, It's Just Politics" by Janine Richardson and Deborah Summer (Pages 16-18)

Vocabulary: disillusioned

Comprehension:

1. How did Jefferson feel about the American people?
2. How did this belief influence his views on a national government?
3. How did the Democratic-Republicans and Federalists differ?
4. In the 1790s, how many terms could a president serve?
5. When was this changed?
6. How did Jefferson become vice president?

7. How did Jefferson feel about John Adams?
8. Why did Jefferson consider his election as president in 1800 a "bloodless revolution"?
9. What was Adams' reaction to the election?

Discussion: Consider the two parties currently in control in the United States. What are their beliefs? Do you think Jefferson style compromise is possible? Why or why not?

Research: Founding Fathers, Federalist Party, Alexander Hamilton, Democratic - Republican Party, George Washington, John Adams

"The Twelfth Amendment" by Jerry Miller (Page 19)

Comprehension:

1. What were the rules for an election in 1800?
2. What provision existed for resolving a tie?
3. How did the House of Representatives decide on the new president?
4. How did the 12th Amendment change the existing system?

Research: Election of 1800, Twelfth Amendment

"In the Public Eye" by Betty H. Little (Pages 20-21)

Rewrite the timeline in a more traditional format.

"An Extraordinary Expedition" by Gaye Wilson (Pages 26-28)

Vocabulary: arduous, fossilized, flora, fauna

Comprehension:

1. What was the primary goal of the Lewis and Clark expedition?
2. What instructions were Lewis and Clark given?
3. What scientific information did Jefferson hope the expedition would gather?
4. Why was contact with Native Americans important?
5. How did the expedition help open the West to settlers?

Research: Meriwether Lewis, William Clark, Louisiana Territory, Louisiana Purchase, Corps of Discovery, Charles Wilson Peale

"Two-Term President" by Andrew Matthews (Page 28)

Vocabulary: impressment, embargo

Writing Activity: What was President Jefferson's greatest accomplishment in office? Why?

"Drafting and Designing" by Ann Feetham (Page 26-27)

Vocabulary: parquet floors, neoclassical

Comprehension:

1. How did Jefferson learn to be an architect?
2. How did Monticello differ from other homes of the time?
3. Describe some of the features of the house and grounds.
4. Why was Jefferson asked to find the architect for the Virginia state capitol?
5. What was the design conflict between Jefferson and L'Enfant?
6. How were architects selected to complete the President's House and Capitol?

Research: Andrea Palladio; Monticello; Charles Louis Clerisseau; Richmond, Virginia; Washington, D.C., Pierre Charles L'Enfant, architect James Hoban, Dr. William Thornton, University of Virginia

"Ideas and Improvements" by Shari Lyn Zuber (Pages 32-33)

Art Activity: Select one of Jefferson's improvements and create a poster advertising it.

Research: weathervanes, dumbwaiters, plow design

"Slavery at Monticello" by Charles F. Irons (Pages 34-36)

Vocabulary: dependencies, nailery

Comprehension:

1. What attitude toward slavery did Jefferson express publicly?
2. Did he own slaves?
3. What were some of the tasks completed by field slaves?
4. What were some of the tasks completed by house servants?

5. How did Sally Hemings come to belong to Jefferson?
6. Why might Jefferson have kept his slaves?
7. What happened to Jefferson's slaves after he died?

Writing Activity: The author states, "Life at Monticello could not work without enslaved people." Do you agree?

Research: Mulberry Row, Jefferson's views on slavery, Sally Hemings

Activity for the Entire Issue: You have just met President Jefferson for the first time and dined at Monticello. Write a letter home describing the man and your experience with him.