**THOMAS JEFFERSON**

Game Rules: Read through the notes on these pages about Thomas Jefferson’s life. As you do so, underline or highlight key words, names, terms, and ideas. The class will then be divided into two teams. All persons on Team 1 will turn their papers face down. Someone from Team 2 will raise their hand and, when called upon by the teacher, ask any question about Jefferson’s life than can be answered with information from the worksheet. Team 1 has two chances to give the correct answer. A correct response on the first try earns ten points, and on the second try 5 points. If a person from Team 1 thinks they know the right answer, they will raise their hand and wait to be called on. The same person cannot respond twice in a row for their team. Team members cannot talk over possible answers. When Team 1 is finished with its turn, Team 2 places its papers face down. Team 1 can now look at the notes and ask a question. QUESTIONS MUST BE ANSWERABLE WITH ONE PIECE OF INFORMATION, AND MUST OTHERWISE BE JUDGED BY THE TEACHER TO BE FAIR. After both teams have taken their turns, everyone must put their papers face down. The teacher will now ask a question, and the first person on either team to raise their hand will be called on. A correct response is worth 10 points, when a wrong answer is given, the other team has one chance to give the right answer.

**Early Years**

* Born in 1743 at Shadwell, the family farm, in Virginia.
* Six sisters and four brothers.
* Father Peter Jefferson had been a surveyor, sheriff, commander of the militia, and member of the House of Burgesses.
* Mother Jane Randolph Jefferson was from one of Virginia’s oldest families.
* Father taught him to read and write.
* Learned to play violin and developed a love for music.
* Became the head of the family at age 14, when his father died. Inherited Shadwell and its 30 slaves.
* After attending local schools, he entered the College of William and Mary at Williamsburg.

**Lawyer and Colonial Leader**

* As tensions increased between Great Britain and the American colonies, he listened to Patrick Henry’s famous “liberty or death” speech against the Stamp Act.
* Began practicing law at age 24.
* At Shadwell, he designed and supervised the building of a new home, Monticello.
* Although many of his relatives were aristocrats, he felt closer to the small farmers who were his neighbors.
* Served in the Virginia House of Burgesses from 1769 to 1775.
* At age 29, married Martha Skelton, the daughter of a well-known Virginia lawyer. They had one son and five daughters, but only two daughters lived beyond childhood.
* Joined a group which protested taxes imposed by the Townshend Acts. Was a leader in organizing a boycott of British goods. Argued that Parliament had no right to control the colonies.
* Became a member of the Second Continental Congress at the time of the Revolutionary War. Wrote the Declaration of Independence, which was adopted on July 4, 1776. A few months later, he left the Continental Congress and went back to Virginia where he became a lawmaker. Was governor of Virginia during the last years of the American Revolution.
* Jefferson’s wife died after only ten years of marriage. He raised two daughters, and never remarried.

**Statesman**

* When the Revolutionary War ended, he was elected to Congress. As a Congressman, his most important work was on the Land Ordinance of 1785.
* Congress chose him to be minister (representative) to France, succeeding Benjamin Franklin.
* When the United States Constitution was written in 1787, he urged that a bill of rights be added to it.
* Reluctantly accepted President George Washington’s invitation to join his Cabinet. Became Secretary of State, which put him in charge of relations between the United States and foreign countries.

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* Reluctantly accepted President George Washington’s invitation to join his Cabinet. Became Secretary of State, which put him in charge of relations between the United States and foreign countries.
* Political differences soon developed between Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton, the Secretary of the Treasury. Hamilton believed the government should be run by the rich and well-born. But Jefferson had faith in the wisdom of the “common man.” This and other differences led to the beginning of political parties. Hamilton’s followers became known as Federalists and Jefferson led the Democratic-Republicans.
* Resigned from the Cabinet in 1794, and returned home to Monticello.
* Became concerned over the development of a strong central government, which led him to accept the Democratic-Republican nomination for President in 1796. John Adams, the Federalist candidate, received 71 electoral votes to Jefferson’s 68. Because Jefferson had the second highest electoral vote total, he became Vice President.
* Relations between President Adams and Vice President Jefferson grew steadily worse.
* The Federalist-controlled Congress passed the Alien and Sedition Acts, which made it a crime to criticize the government. The law was clearly aimed at the Democratic-Republicans. Angry reactions to the Alien and Sedition Acts led to the collapse of the Federalist Party, election of Jefferson to the presidency in 1800, and Democratic-Republican control of Congress. Jefferson received 73 electoral votes to 65 for Adams. But Aaron Burr, Jefferson’s vice presidential running mate, was also given 73 electoral votes. Therefore, Jefferson and Burr were tied, and Jefferson was not yet President. The House of Representatives had to settle the election. The Federalists in the House threw their support to Burr, and it took 36 ballots before Jefferson won. This controversial election led to the 12th Amendment to the Constitution, which said the Electoral College would vote separately for President and Vice President.

**President**

* First term: 1801-1805. Second term: 1805-1809. Inaugurated in Washington, D.C.
* Believed the government should play only a small role in national affairs. The government spent less money, payments were made on the national debt, and taxes were lowered. The term “Jeffersonian Democracy” refers to the idea of citizens living under as little government as possible.
* Ordered the American navy against the Barbary pirates of North Africa. For many years, pirates had attacked trading ships and demanded tribute and ransom from all countries. The U.S. had paid $2 million in 10 years to Tripoli, the most hostile of the Barbary States. The American navy blockaded Tripoli’s ports, bombarded its fortresses, and forced the pirates to respect the American flag.
* Sent representatives to France to try to obtain an agreement which would allow American farmers to freely use the Mississippi River. The United States offered to buy New Orleans, a French settlement at the mouth of the Mississippi. Napoleon, the military leader of France, surprised the Americans by offering to sell the entire Louisiana Territory for $15 million. The Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the United States, gave the U.S. control of New Orleans and the Mississippi River, and ended fears that Napoleon might establish an empire in North America.
* Chose Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to explore the Louisiana Territory. Lewis and Clark, with the help of young Indian girl named Sacajawea, traveled through Louisiana keeping detailed records of what they saw. Zebulon Pike explored the upper Mississippi Valley and the southern part of the Louisiana Territory. A mountain in Colorado is name Pike’s Peak in his honor.
* Won re-election with 176 electoral votes to 14 for his Federalist opponent.
* During his second term, Great Britain and France were at war. Neither country wanted the United States to trade with the other. One out of every three American ships bound for England was seized by the warring nations, most of them by Great Britain. Yet American traders risked their ships and cargoes because of huge profits which could be made from successful voyages. But anger began to grow in the United States over the seizure of American ships and the impressment of American sailors. Jefferson asked Congress to pass the Embargo Act, which said American ships could not sail to foreign ports. Jefferson thought the British and French would change their policies in order to once again obtain American goods. However, the Embargo Act put thousands of Americans out of work and ruined the profits of merchants, especially in New England. The Embargo Act was repealed by Congress.
* Retired to Monticello when his second term ended in 1809.
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