

USA Studies Weekly

Ancient America to Westward Expansion

DISCOVER MORE!

 www.studiesweekly.com/online


Primary Source & Bonus Media

GRADE

5

City Mouse, Country Mouse

Click! ... “I wonder what happened. I thought I set the camera for 1787, but it says 1790.”

“Guess we took a wrong turn in the time travel tunnel.”

“Oh well, Jackson. It’s pretty cool to be sitting in the first president’s Cabinet, isn’t it?”

“We’re in a cabinet, Alana? This looks like a whole room to me!”

“Ha! Ha! Of course, you know the Cabinet is what we call the president’s advisors. This is where Washington’s advisors meet.”

“Look, there’s Henry Knox, the Secretary of War. And Thomas Jefferson is Secretary of State.”

“Why do they call them secretaries, Jackson? These aren’t the kind of secretaries who take notes and answer phones. That’s for sure.”

“Right, Alana. A Cabinet secretary is someone who’s in charge of a whole department for our country. Each one has an important job to do. That’s Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, and there’s Edmund Randolph, the first U.S. Attorney General.”

“I’m sure they talk about a lot of important things at their meetings.”

“Yeah, they talk about the United States, the Constitution, rules, policies ... Hey, listen. Sounds like an argument. Alexander Hamilton is saying that ordinary people shouldn’t get too much power. He wants businesses and industries to build our nation’s economy.”

“That’s because Hamilton is a Federalist, Jackson. He thinks the central government should have

more power than the people. He believes only a few people should be in charge of everything. Federalists believe that states’ rights aren’t nearly as important as national power.”

“Exactly. Federalists were one of the first political parties. Today the two main parties are Democrat and Republican, but there are other parties, too.”

“Listen, Jackson. Thomas Jefferson is disagreeing with Hamilton.”

“That’s Jefferson, alright. He didn’t want the central government to be too strong. He wanted power for the people. He was a farmer at heart and wanted landowners to keep control of the economy. He believed it took many people to run a country. Jefferson was an Anti-Federalist, but his party was called the Democratic-Republicans.”

“Which side do you think is right, Jackson?”

“It’s not so much about one side being right and the other being wrong, Alana. Both men had good points.”

“Okay then, which one did

George Washington listen to? Tell me that.”

“See for yourself. One reason Washington was such a good leader was that he listened to all his advisors. America was built on the best ideas from all sides. Think about it. We need farmers and industries. We need leaders and everyday citizens. This is what makes our country great. It doesn’t matter if you’re a country mouse or a city mouse, because we’re all in it together. Speaking of mice, cheese sounds pretty good right now.”

“Very funny, Jackson!” ... Click!



Connections

Constitutional Changes and Challenges

Did you know that when the Founding Fathers wrote the Constitution with plans for how many representatives would be allowed for each state, enslaved people weren’t counted as whole people? What? It’s true. The Three-fifths Compromise said that enslaved people counted as only three-fifths of a person. For example, if 500 enslaved people were living on a southern plantation, only

300 of them would count to determine how many representatives that state got.

Other surprising laws we once had were the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. These acts made it hard for immigrants to become citizens and easier to put them in jail for being troublemakers. That was the alien part. The sedition (rebellion) part involved speaking out against the government.

That was made a crime. While some states tried to uphold these laws, others believed they were unconstitutional. The acts were later cancelled.

What do you think? Should states be required to enforce laws they consider unconstitutional? What are some challenges to our Constitution that you see in the news today?

Florida Next Generation Sunshine State Standards: **SS.5.A.1.1:** Use primary and secondary sources to understand history. **SS.5.A.5.3:** Explain the significance of historical documents, including key political concepts, origins of these concepts and their role in American independence. **SS.5.A.5.10:** Examine the significance of the Constitution, including its key political concepts, origins of these concepts and their role in American Democracy. **SS.5.C.1.1:** Explain how and why the United States government was created. **SS.5.C.1.2:** Define a constitution, and discuss its purposes. **SS.5.C.1.4:** Identify the Declaration of Independence’s grievances and Articles of Confederation’s weaknesses. **SS.5.C.1.5:** Describe how concerns about individual rights led to the inclusion of the Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution. **SS.5.C.1.6:** Compare Federalist and Anti-Federalist views of government. **SS.5.C.2.5:** Identify ways good citizens go beyond basic civic and political responsibilities to improve government and society. **SS.5.C.3.2:** Explain how popular sovereignty, rule of law, separation of powers, checks and balances, federalism and individual rights limit the powers of the federal government as expressed in the Constitution and Bill of Rights. **SS.5.C.3.6:** Examine the foundations of the United States legal system by recognizing the role of the courts in interpreting law and settling conflicts. **SS.5.E.1.2:** Describe a market economy, and give examples of how the colonial and early American economy exhibited these characteristics. **SS.5.E.1.3:** Trace the development of technology and the impact of major inventions on business productivity during the early development of the United States. **SS.5.G.3.1:** Describe the impact that past natural events have had on human and physical environments in the United States through 1850. **SS.5.G.4.1:** Use geographic knowledge and skills when discussing current events.



Plans for the New Government

The wrong turn Jackson and Alana took in the time travel tunnel gave us a chance to see the results of some of the hard work the Founding Fathers did to set up the government of our country — a new president and four advisors with strong opinions. Let's take a look at that hard work.

How Soon We Forget

Not long ago you learned that Congress didn't need more events like Shays' Rebellion to persuade them that the Articles of Confederation weren't strong enough. You read about states issuing their own money, starting their own militias and making their own rules about trade. What a mess! The Articles of Confederation were not working. What about that long list of complaints in the Declaration of Independence? Didn't anybody remember that? It included:

- The king taxed the colonies and disrupted their ability to trade freely.
- The king kept armies in the colonies even when there wasn't a war.
- The king made rules without the people's consent.

Some of the things on the list sounded a lot like what was going on in the new states. The leaders decided they had to take action quickly.

Plan, Plan, Everywhere a Plan

In May 1787 a meeting began, with 55 delegates coming from the 13 states. Congress chose George Washington to be the president of the convention. Before long, the representatives knew that rewriting the Articles would not be good enough. They decided to write something new and improved, like a constitution (a written plan for government). But there was a lot of arguing about that! The delegates argued about what this new document should be called. They argued about who should have the most power: the central government or the states. They argued about the details of setting up the government.

Edmund Randolph had an idea. He presented the Virginia Plan, which called for three branches of government. Do you remember what they are? He

suggested the legislative branch be based on states' populations. Small states didn't like that part of his plan, because they would have less representation. Then, William Paterson presented the New Jersey Plan. He wanted three branches too—an executive board, a Supreme Court and a legislative branch with equal representation for every state. Large states didn't like that idea. Since they had more people, they thought they should have more representatives. Finally, Roger Sherman presented his idea, to have the three branches we know today with a bicameral (two parts) Congress. In the Senate each state gets two representatives. In the House of Representatives, population determines how many representatives come from each state. There were more arguments, but on Sept. 17, 1787, 39 delegates signed the document that contains the master plan of our government and our laws—the Constitution of the United States of America. Can you name the three sections of the Constitution?

The Father Who Wouldn't Give Up

Many know James Madison as the Father of the Constitution. He took a very active part in the Constitutional Convention. He took notes, kept records and made more than 150 speeches. Along with Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, he also wrote 85 newspaper articles that became known as the Federalist Papers. The articles strongly promoted the ideas of the Constitution.

After the Constitution was

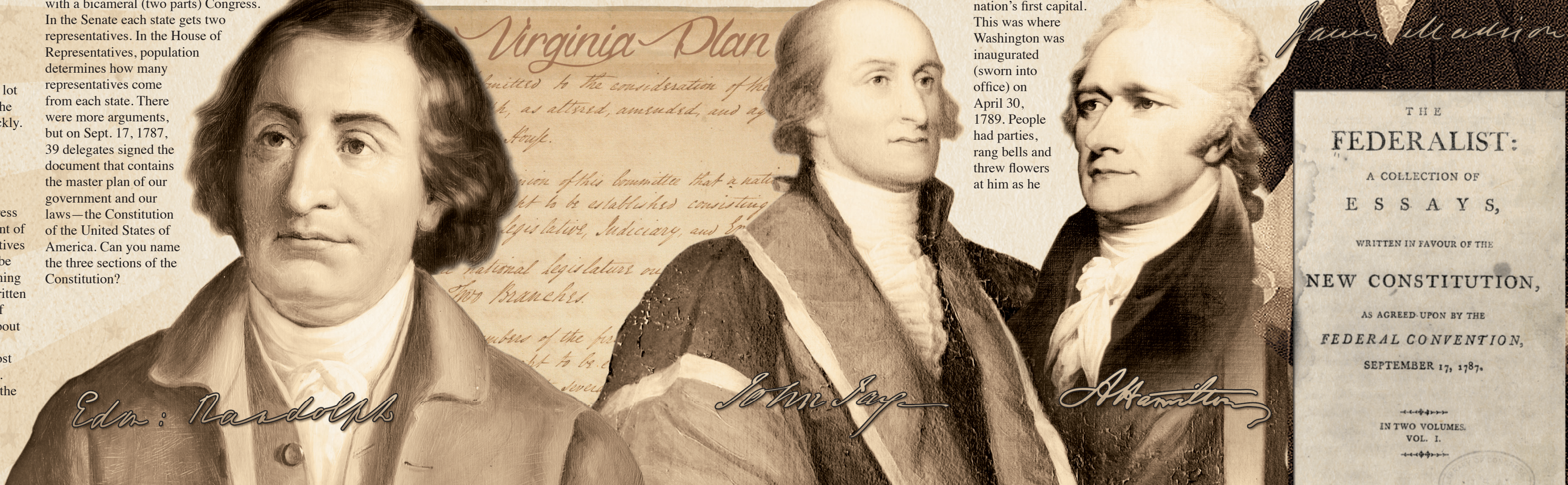
ratified (approved), Madison became a representative in Congress and continued to support the Constitution. James Madison and the other Federalists were certain that the system of checks and balances would keep the three branches of government working the way they should. Of course, there were still people who didn't believe the Constitution would work at all. These Anti-Federalists were certain that states' and individuals' rights were not adequately addressed by the Constitution. James Madison kept working on a compromise. His ideas eventually became the first 10 amendments, or Bill of Rights. Congress ratified the Bill of Rights in December 1791. It's only fitting that Madison is called the Father of the Constitution, because fathers are usually good at finding solutions.

Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch ...

You may recall that part in the Constitution about the executive branch. Well, the nation needed its very first executive, the president of the United States (or POTUS in Secret Service lingo). The Constitution decided a special group of representatives would elect our presidents. Each state would choose its electors. (We call them the Electoral College today.) There were 69 electors present for the first election, and every one chose George Washington to be our first president! There has not been a unanimous vote by electors since. John Adams became vice president.

Washington had already retired to Mount Vernon after the Constitutional Convention. A messenger brought him the news that he had been elected president. Although he had plenty of land, he had to borrow money to get to New York City, the new nation's first capital. This was where Washington was inaugurated (sworn into office) on April 30, 1789. People had parties, rang bells and threw flowers at him as he

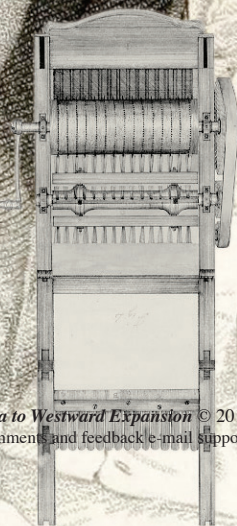
passed by. On the balcony of Federal Hall, Washington said the words every U.S. president says on inauguration day: "I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of president of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." Washington served two terms as U.S. president but turned down a third term.



Trades & Technology

The Cotton Gin

In 1794, Eli Whitney patented the first cotton gin. The cotton gin is a machine that cleans the seeds from cotton fibers after the plants have been harvested. Before the cotton gin, it took many hours for workers to pick the seeds out of the cotton by hand. Whitney's new machine made it possible to clean 50 pounds of cotton in one day, with no hand picking at all! The cotton gin helped make many southern cotton growers rich by making cleaning cotton fibers fast and easy. Because of the cotton gin, the production of raw cotton doubled every 10 years after 1800. By 1860, the United States was providing two-thirds of the world's cotton.



Numismatic Mania

What is numismatics? It's the study or collecting of currency—coins, medals and paper money. Cool, right? Numismatists say that America's oldest gold coin is worth over six million dollars today! Of course, you already know that Thomas Jefferson proposed a coin system for the country's currency in the 1780s. The Constitution states that "... a mint for the purpose of national coinage be ... established." The first mint was built in 1792, in Philadelphia. The first coins included half-cents, half-dimes (half-dimes), quarter-eagles (\$2.50), half-eagles (\$5.00) and eagles (\$10.00). There wasn't much gold and silver available back then, so only the small copper coins were popular at first. Coin engravers carved decorations like wreaths or eagles on one side and images that stood for liberty or of presidents on the other. Heads is the obverse (front) side and tails is the reverse (back). Collecting coins and bills is a fun hobby! Have you collected state quarters or presidential dollars?

Obverse (top),
reverse (bottom)

Obverse (top),
reverse (bottom)



Economics

Red, White, Blue ... and Yellow?

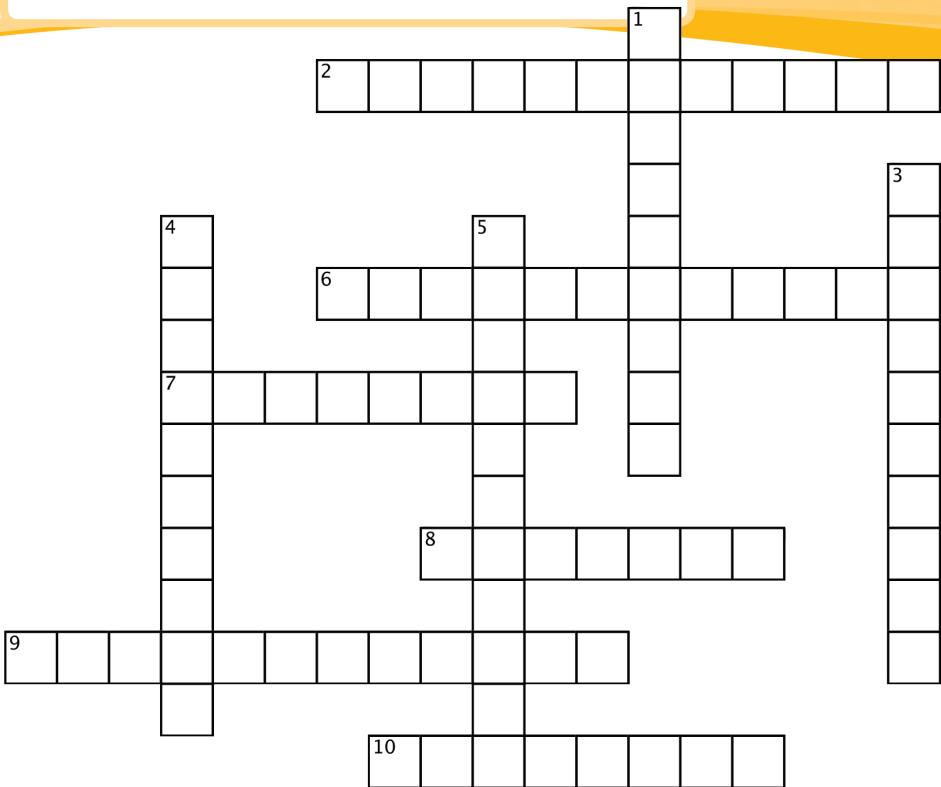
By the 1790s, Philadelphia was America's largest city. Its docks bustled with trade from around the world. But with the goods brought in on ships came some unwanted guests. Mosquitoes carried diseases from the Caribbean, and one disease was yellow fever. A mosquito would bite an infected person, and then the insect would bite someone else and transfer the disease. First, the victim would get a terrible headache. Then the backaches started. After that, a high fever set in, with vomiting and a frightening yellow tinge to the skin and eyes. Most victims died within a few days. Over 4,000 people died in the Philadelphia-Baltimore area in late summer of 1793. Dr. Benjamin Rush, a Philadelphia physician and a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was at a loss. Medical knowledge and technology was very basic in the 1700s. Doctors didn't always understand how diseases spread. The doctors never guessed that mosquitoes had anything to do with the epidemic (widespread outbreak of a disease). Doctors took care of the sick and told healthy people to leave town. Congressmen and even

President George Washington fled to the countryside to escape. Dr. Rush received a letter from a Baltimore doctor, who wrote:

The first case of yellow fever, that I saw, was on the 7th of August. The patient was in the fourth day of the disease, and had been harassed several hours with the vomiting ... His eyes had been very red, but were now, together with his skin, yellow: the latter was dry and cool; his pulse was slow and full. He was either oppressed with stupor - or deranged with a mild delirium. In a few hours he was dead.

When the weather turned cold in October, the epidemic stopped almost as quickly as it started. Today there is still no treatment for yellow fever, and about 200,000 people a year are infected with it in Africa and South America. Fortunately, doctors have developed a vaccine to prevent yellow fever. If you're traveling to foreign countries in the tropics, it's a good idea to get the vaccine before you leave.

Name _____



ACROSS

- 2. city where the first mint was built in 1792
- 6. ceremony to swear in the president
- 7. a widespread outbreak of a disease
- 8. the Father of the Constitution: James _____
- 9. a written plan for government
- 10. insect that spreads yellow fever

DOWN

- 1. Anti-Federalist who believed power should be held by many people: Thomas _____
- 3. meeting to create the Constitution: Constitutional _____
- 4. political party that believed in power held by a few people
- 5. the study or collecting of coins, medals and paper money

Time for American Trivia!



Form two teams named the Federalists and Anti-Federalists. You will compete by answering trivia questions. After reading each fact on the list below, reword them as questions for the other team to answer. Each team must write 15 questions. Write each question on the front of a strip of paper or index card, with its correct answer on the back. Make sure you write the questions so they can't be answered with a simple yes or no. Then, study your facts and get ready for the game! The moderator (your teacher or a delegate) will put all the strips in a container and pull them out one by one to ask during the trivia game. The team that gets the most correct answers gets to run the country for a day! (OK. That's not really going to happen, but maybe your teacher will let you line up first for lunch. Be sure you get there before Jackson does!)

American Trivia

- George Washington never went to college.
- Only President George Washington has been unanimously elected.
- George Washington never lived in Washington, D.C.
- George Washington never chopped down a cherry tree. Mason Weems made up the "honesty" story.
- George Washington is the Father of our Country, but he never had children. He had two stepchildren.
- Washington declared Nov. 26, 1789, a "thanksgiving" holiday to give thanks for the Constitution.
- George Washington used enslaved people but freed them in his will.
- George Washington had scars on his face from smallpox.
- President Jimmy Carter promoted George Washington to a six-star general of the Armies of Congress so no one would ever out-rank him.
- George Washington married Martha Dandridge Custis.
- Washington served two

presidential terms, from 1789-1797.

- George Washington is the only president to be inaugurated in two different places—New York and Philadelphia.
- Five new states were added during George Washington's presidency—N.C. (1789), R.I. (1790), Vt. (1791), Ky. (1792), Tenn. (1796).
- The Constitution, at 4,400 words, is the shortest and oldest major government document in the world.
- There are spelling mistakes in the Constitution. "Pensylvania" is one.
- The Constitution is displayed at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. The four pages are under bulletproof glass, framed with titanium and kept at 67 degrees Fahrenheit. The cases are filled with argon gas to help preserve the documents.
- Constitution Day is Sept. 17.
- Ben Franklin, at age 81, was the oldest signer of the Constitution. He needed help to sign his name.
- The phrase "United States of America" was first used in the

Declaration of Independence.

- James Madison and George Washington were the two presidents who signed our Constitution.
- The Constitution has had 27 amendments.
- The first 10 amendments are the Bill of Rights.
- The Declaration of Independence says, "... all men are created equal."
- Our first money was only coins, no bills.
- Ben Franklin's image appears on the \$100 bill.
- When Franklin died in 1790, 20,000 came to the funeral, making it the largest gathering of its time.
- At one time, the U.S. had \$1,000, \$5,000 and \$10,000 bills, though they are no longer in circulation.
- James Madison's image appeared on the \$5,000 bill.
- Washington is the only president with a state named after him.
- George and Martha Washington's silver was used for some of the first official U.S. coins.

Did You Know?

Did you know there are not just two political parties today? Besides the Democrats and Republicans, there are more than 50 other political parties. Their views may surprise you! Some of them include the Green Party, Independents, Freedom Socialists, Tea Party, Communists, Florida Whigs, Progressive Labor, Workers and even the United States Pirate Party. What do you think they stand for?

If you started a political party, what would you name it? What would your party believe in? Who would your next presidential candidate be and why? Explain your reasons in an expository essay. Illustrate your essay with a drawing of your leader.

Let's Write



Teachers: Your FREE Studies Weekly online subscription is waiting for you! www.studiesweekly.com/register

Think&Review

- 1. Who were some of the first Federalists, and what did they believe?
- 2. Who were Washington's four Cabinet members, and what were their titles?
- 3. In what city did George Washington first work as president?
- 4. What were the first two political parties and what did they believe?
- 5. What were the Federalist Papers and who wrote them?
- 6. What does a numismatist do?
- 7. What is a cotton gin, and who patented it?
- 8. Describe Roger Sherman's compromise. Do you think it was a good idea? Why or why not?
- 9. What were the symptoms of yellow fever?
- 10. How can yellow fever be prevented today?

Have you ever heard that George Washington had wooden teeth? He only had one real tooth left in his mouth when he became President of the United States, but he wore dentures or false teeth. The dentures were not made of wood, they were made out of ivory from elephant and hippopotamus tusks, human teeth, cow bones, gold wire and springs, lead, and brass screws. Washington's dentures are in a collection at Mount Vernon. Ask an adult for permission to go online to check out Washington's "choppers"!