

# Remembering a Forgotten President

George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were the first and third U.S. presidents. Monuments in Washington, D.C., honor both men. But do you know who the second president was?

If not, don't worry. Many people don't know who our second president was. No monuments have been built in our nation's capital to honor him. And he is not pictured on a coin or a bill, as Washington and Jefferson are.

You should remember the second president, however. He was a patriot who helped the 13 Colonies win their independence from Great Britain in the Revolutionary War. His often forgotten name is John Adams.

Throughout his life, Adams was fearful that people would forget him. In 1760, Adams wrote that he would be "totally forgotten within 70 years."

## A Congressional Honor



*whitehouse.gov*  
John Adams

Adams may soon be proved wrong, however. A monument may be built in Washington, D.C., to honor him. In 2001, Congress passed a bill to build a monument that would honor John Adams and his son, John Quincy Adams. John Quincy Adams was the sixth U.S. president. The bill passed by Congress calls John Adams a leader of the American Revolution. However,

there still aren't any specific plans in place because a location for the monument has yet to be agreed upon.

U.S. Rep. Tim Roemer, who supports the monument, said that the Adamses were a "historic, dazzling, brilliant family." After his presidency, some people called John Adams "the founder of the American republic."

Recently, historian David McCullough wrote a book about John Adams. He says that a monument should be built to honor Adams. "There is no other American... with the exception of George Washington, who did more toward winning the Revolution and establishing [our] form of government than John Adams," McCullough said.

## A Historic Controversy

Not everyone agrees that a monument should be built to honor John Adams and his family.

Many critics said that the National Mall, where a monument to Adams might be placed, is overcrowded with memorials and statues. Many national monuments are located on the Mall, a 2-mile-long strip of land that stretches from the U.S. Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial. Those critics argue that a new monument would spoil the Mall's beautiful views. In 2003, further construction along the Mall was banned.

Other critics believe a monument to John Adams should not be built. For instance, historian Richard Rosenfeld, says Adams does not deserve a memorial. He says Adams imprisoned some people simply because they disagreed with him.

Supporters of a monument to honor Adams, however, have little doubt that a monument should be built and placed on the Mall. Historian Edward Smith said, "There is no question Adams deserves a memorial and one on the Mall. There is always space there for someone like Adams."

## What Did John Adams Do?

- Signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776.
- Helped negotiate the Treaty of Paris in 1783, ending the Revolutionary War.
- Served as a U.S. ambassador to Great Britain.
- Became the first vice president of the United States, serving under George Washington.
- Became president in 1797.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. According to the passage, which number U.S. president was John Adams?
  - A first
  - B second
  - C tenth
  - D third
  
2. The passage presents two sides of an argument about building a monument for John Adams. Which of the following supports the building of a new monument?
  - A The National Mall is already overcrowded with memorials and statues.
  - B John Adams does not deserve a memorial because he imprisoned some people when they disagreed with him.
  - C A new monument would spoil the Mall's beautiful views.
  - D John Adams helped the U.S. win the Revolutionary War and established our form of government.
  
3. Based on the passage, how would historian Richard Rosenfeld most likely describe John Adams?
  - A cruel
  - B kind
  - C important
  - D jealous
  
4. Read the following sentence: "Monuments in Washington, D.C. honor both men."  
As used in the passage, **honor** means
  - A hide
  - B recognize
  - C forget
  - D share
  
5. The purpose of this passage is to provide
  - A arguments about what an Adams monument should look like
  - B arguments about whether or not John Adams had a son
  - C arguments about whether a monument for John Adams should be built
  - D arguments about whether or not Adams was actually the second president

6. According to the passage, what is one difference between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson?

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7. Based on the passage, why does historian Edward Smith think that the Mall would be the best place for an Adams monument?

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8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

Historian Edward Smith thinks that Adams deserves a memorial on the Mall, \_\_\_\_\_ critics say that there are already too many memorials and statues.

- A after
- B yet
- C because
- D so

9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

In 2001, Congress passed a bill to build a monument to honor John Adams and his son.

What? Congress

(did) What? \_\_\_\_\_

When? \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Read the vocabulary word and definition below to complete questions 10a, 10b, and 11.

Vocabulary Word: **establish** (es-tab-lish): to set something up, usually something new.

**10a.** Read the sentences below and underline all forms of the word **establish**.

1. Some historians think John Adams was responsible for establishing our government after the Revolutionary War.
2. Mom began establishing new rules about wearing shoes in the house after we got mud on the rug.
3. We began establishing our new club by deciding who would be in charge.
4. After the war, the country began establishing a new government to take over after the king was defeated.
5. We began establishing our new company by deciding on a name.

**10b.** Which image shows something that was established by the United States constitution?



**11.** If you join a club that has already been created, are you establishing it? Why or why not?

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## Teacher Guide and Answers

**Passage Reading Level:** Lexile 880

**Featured Text Structure:** Argumentative – the writer presents evidence for both sides of an argument

**Passage Summary:** This passage presents two sides of an argument about building a monument for John Adams. Some people think he deserves a monument because he was an important figure in the founding of the government. Others say there shouldn't be a monument because there are too many located on the Mall already.

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- A arguments about what an Adams monument should look like
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- D arguments about whether or not Adams was actually the second president

6. According to the passage, what is one difference between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson?

**Suggested answer:** Thomas Jefferson is featured on a coin or bill, unlike John Adams. [paragraph 2]

7. Based on the passage, why does historian Edward Smith think that the Mall would be the best place for an Adams monument?

**Suggested answer:** The Mall would be the best place for an Adams monument because that is where all the other important memorials and statues are located, and Edward Smith most likely thinks that Adams is an important figure since he states that Adams “deserves” a memorial on the Mall. [paragraph 11]

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

Historian Edward Smith thinks that Adams deserves a memorial on the Mall, \_\_\_\_ critics say that there are already too many memorials and statues.

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- B yet**
- C because
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9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

In 2001, Congress passed a bill to build a monument to honor John Adams and his son.

What? Congress

(did) What? **passed a bill to build a monument**

When? **in 2001**

Why? **to honor John Adams and his son**

**To the Teacher:** ReadWorks recommends that you teach this vocabulary word to the whole class out loud using the four steps listed below.

Vocabulary Word: **establish** (es·tab·lish): to set something up, usually something new.

**Step 1:** Introduce the word

- a. Teacher writes the word on the board and divides it into syllables: (es·tab·lish)
- b. Teacher says: “This word is establish. What is the word?” [All students reply together out loud: “establish.”]

**Step 2:** Provide a child-friendly definition

- a. Teacher says: “Establish means to set something up, usually something new.”
- b. Teacher says: “In the passage, a historian says that John Adams helped with establishing our form of government. That means Adams helped to set up or found a new government.”
- c. Teacher says: “What is the word?” [All students reply together out loud: “establish.”]

**Step 3:** Practice the word

Teacher provides examples and additional opportunities to repeat the word. Read the first sentence out loud to your students. Begin reading it again and when you come to the vocabulary word prompt students to say the vocabulary word out loud. Then, finish reading the sentence out loud to your students.

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**Step 4:** Check for student understanding

**To the Teacher:** This step can be completed as a whole class activity or as an independent practice.

**10b.** Which image shows something that was established by the United States constitution?



**11.** If you join a club that has already been created, are you establishing it? Why or why not?

**Suggested answer:** No, you are not establishing it because you are not setting it up.

*Suggested Additional Vocabulary:* honor, monuments, patriot, overcrowded, historic, dazzling, brilliant