

The Era of Thomas Jefferson

Primary Source**Jefferson's Inaugural Address**

When Thomas Jefferson was elected President in 1800, many expected the nation to divide again, with some supporting Federalists who contested Jefferson's election and others siding with Republicans who were happy with the election. It was feared this would lead the nation into civil war. However, Jefferson's calm words and peacemaking attitude during his inaugural address went a long way toward calming his angry opponents.

Directions: Read the following passage from Jefferson's inaugural address. Then answer the questions.

Friends and Fellow Citizens:

During the [election] through which we have just passed, the liveliness of discussions has sometimes [taken a form] which might make a strong impression on strangers unused to thinking freely and to speaking and writing what they think. But this [election] now [having been] decided by the voice of the nation, all will, of course, unite in common efforts for the common good. All, too, will bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, the minority possesses their equal rights, which equal law must protect, and to violate would be oppression. Let us, then, fellow citizens, unite with one heart and one mind. Let us restore to social [relationships] that harmony and affection without which liberty and even life itself are but dreary things.

We have called by different names brothers of the same principle. We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists

I go, then, fellow citizens, to the post you have assigned me. I have no pretensions to that high confidence you placed in [George Washington] I ask so much confidence only as may give firmness and effectiveness to the legal administration of your affairs. I shall often go wrong through defect of judgment. When right, I shall often be thought wrong by those [who do not know all the facts]. I ask your indulgence for my own errors and your support against the errors of others.

1. What does Jefferson ask his fellow citizens to do?

2. (a) What facts does Jefferson state? (b) What opinions does he express?

3. What does the passage suggest about what happened during the election campaigns?

4. **Draw Inferences** Why does Jefferson think unity and harmony are important?

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Connections With Economics

Mandan Traders

Directions: Read the passage and study the illustration. Then answer the questions that follow on a separate sheet of paper.

Lewis and Clark were lucky to meet up with the Mandans during the winter of 1804. The Mandans were a prosperous people, with a rich and ancient culture. Living in neatly laid out villages high above the Knife River, they grew corn and other crops. They also hunted game that roamed the surrounding hills. Most important, however, they engaged in trade.

Since prehistoric times, the Mandans had been at the center of a vast trading network. They controlled the trade in Knife River flint, a hard, glassy stone prized for making strong tools and weapons. Native Americans from far and wide gave the Mandans exotic items such as shells and copper in return for the precious flint. As their farming prospered, the Mandans also traded surplus crops to wandering peoples for buffalo skins, dried meat, and other items.

In the 1600s, European goods entered the trading network. The Mandans proved themselves shrewd traders in these products as well. They acted as agents for exchanges between Europeans and other Native Americans. By the mid-1700s, Crows, Assiniboines, Cheyennes, Arapahoes, and Kiowas all traveled to the Mandans' Knife River villages to exchange horses for European guns, metal pots, hatchets, and knives.



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1. What was the most important part of the Mandan economy?
2. What role did the Mandans play in the lives of other Native American groups?
3. **Draw Inferences** How do you think most Native Americans traveled to Mandan villages?

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Creating a Chart

Jefferson Addresses Foreign Conflict

Creating a chart can help you organize information and see it more clearly.

Directions: Fill in the following chart with information about each action in the left column. For example, identify at least one risk and one benefit to the United States of overseas trade. Do the same for neutrality and for the Embargo Act.

United States Action	Risks	Benefits
Overseas Trade		
Neutrality		
Embargo Act		

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Creating a Chart

Jefferson's Conflicts Overseas

Creating a cause-and-effect chart can help you organize information and see the relationships between pieces of information more clearly.

Directions: Fill in the cause-and-effect chart below. Where a cause is given, provide the effect. Where the effect is given, provide the cause.

Cause	Effect
1. Thomas Jefferson stopped paying tribute to the Barbary pirates.	
2.	The United States sent warships to the Mediterranean Sea for protection and later captured Tripoli.
3. The United States declared its neutrality in the conflict between Britain and France.	
4.	Britain impressed American sailors to serve in the British navy.
5. Thomas Jefferson used an embargo to punish Britain and France.	

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Dolley Madison

Dolley Madison, the wife of President James Madison, is one of the best-known First Ladies in American history. She was well respected in her day for her charm and tact. While James Madison was President, the United States fought the War of 1812 against Great Britain. In August 1814, as the British army approached the capital of Washington, D.C., the First Lady quickly wrote a letter to her sister.

Directions: Read the letter below and answer the questions that follow on a separate sheet of paper.

Three o'clock.—Will you believe it, my sister? We have had a battle, or skirmish, near Bladensburg, and here I am still, within sound of the cannon! Mr. Madison comes not. May God protect us! Two messengers, covered with dust, come to bid me fly; but here I mean to wait for him. . . . At this late hour a wagon has been procured [acquired], and I have had it filled with plate and the most valuable portable articles, belonging to the house. Whether it will reach its destination, the "Bank of Maryland," or fall into the hands of British soldiery, events must determine. Our kind friend, Mr. Carroll, has come to hasten [hurry] my departure, and in a very bad humor with me, because I insist on waiting until the large picture of General Washington is secured, and it requires to be unscrewed from the wall. This process was found too tedious [taking too long] for these perilous [dangerous] moments; I have ordered the frame to be broken, and the canvas taken out. It is done! and the precious portrait placed in the hands of two gentlemen of New York, for safe keeping. And now, dear sister, I must leave this house, or the retreating army will make me a prisoner in it by filling up the road I am directed to take. When I shall again write to you, or where I shall be tomorrow, I cannot tell!

Dolley

—Dolley Madison, "Letter to Her Sister," quoted in *Letters in American History: Words to Remember, 1770 to the Present*, ed. H. Jack Lang.

1. What is the danger that Dolley Madison is in? _____

2. Why did Dolley Madison want to save the portrait of General Washington?

3. Draw Inferences What can you tell about the character of Dolley Madison from her letter? _____

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Skills for Life**Detecting Historical Points of View**

When you study history, it is important to understand the points of view of people in the past. When you are detecting historical points of view in a document, start by identifying when it was written and the events of that time. Next, identify the writer or speaker's main idea. Then, look for any key words or phrases that help show the writer's or speaker's point of view. Using those key words and phrases and other material from the document, identify the writer's or speaker's point of view on the subject. Finally, relate the point of view to events in its historical context.

During the War of 1812, Tecumseh and his followers fought alongside the British to stop American advances into Native American lands. After the British lost the Battle of Lake Erie in 1813, they decided to abandon Detroit. In the excerpt from a speech below, Tecumseh argues passionately against the retreat.

Directions: *Read the passage below and then answer the questions on a separate piece of paper.*

Father, listen! . . . You always told us to remain here and take care of our lands. It made our hearts glad to hear that was your wish. Our great father, the King, is the head, and you represent him. You always told us that you would never draw your foot off British ground; but now, Father, we see you are drawing back, and we are sorry to see our father doing so without seeing the enemy. We must compare our father's conduct to a fat animal that carries its tail upon its back, but when affrighted, it drops between its legs and runs off. . . .

Father! You have got the arms and ammunition which our great father sent for his red children. If you have an idea of going away, give them to us. . . . Our lives are in the hands of the Great Spirit. We are determined to defend our lands, and if it is His will, we wish to leave our bones upon them.

—Tecumseh, 1813

1. (a) When was this speech given? (b) To whom was it addressed? (c) Why was it given?
2. What is the main point of this speech?
3. What is an example of a key word or phrase that sums up Tecumseh's point of view?
4. What was Tecumseh's point of view about the British withdrawal?
5. How was Tecumseh's point of view influenced by the events of the time?