



Name: _____

George Washington: Anecdotes from the Life of the Founding Father

George Washington, the first President of the United States, was not only a historic figure but also a man of unique character and experiences. Let's look at some anecdotes that offer a glimpse into the personality of this remarkable leader.

An **anecdote** is a short, interesting, or amusing story about a person or event.

The Cherry Tree Incident

One of the most famous stories about George Washington is the "Cherry Tree Incident." As a young boy, George was given a hatchet, and, being curious, he decided to try it out on his father's cherry tree. When confronted about the damage, young George truthfully admitted, "I cannot tell a lie, I did it with my little hatchet." This tale, whether entirely true or not, emphasizes Washington's reputation for honesty.

Crossing the Delaware

During the harsh winter of 1776, Washington faced a difficult decision. The Continental Army was about to give up, and a bold move was needed. On Christmas night, Washington led a daring crossing of the ice-filled Delaware River. The surprise attack that followed at Trenton marked a turning point in the Revolutionary War and showcased Washington's brilliance.



Washington crossing the Delaware River.

Valley Forge Endurance

The winter of 1777-1778 at Valley Forge was a challenging time for the Continental Army. Lack of supplies, harsh conditions, and diseases were hard on the soldiers. Washington, however, stayed with his troops, going through the hardships alongside them. His commitment and leadership during this trying period played a crucial role in the ultimate success of the Revolutionary War.

Farewell Address

In his Farewell Address, Washington shared timeless wisdom with the nation. He cautioned against political parties and talked about the importance of unity. Washington's decision to voluntarily step down from the presidency after two terms further showed his commitment to the principles of a democratic republic.



Name: _____

Abraham Lincoln: Stories from the Life of Honest Abe

Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, was not only known for his towering stature but also for his wit, compassion, and honesty. Let's explore some anecdotes that offer a glimpse into the life of the man often referred to as Honest Abe.

An **anecdote** is a short, interesting, or amusing story about a person or event.

Splitting Rails

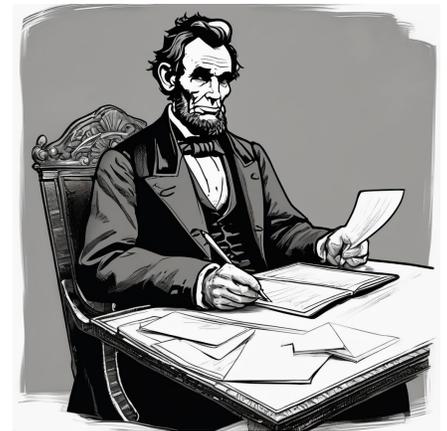
In Lincoln's early years, he was often found working on his family's farm, splitting rails for fences. One day, a man passing by challenged him to a rail-splitting contest. Lincoln accepted, and after hours of hard work, he had split more rails than his competitor. This encounter not only showcased Lincoln's physical strength but also his determination to rise to a challenge.

Saving the Money

During Lincoln's time as a store owner, he once realized that he had mistakenly weighed a customer's purchase, and the customer had paid too much. Closing the store, Lincoln walked several miles to return the extra money. His honesty, even in a small matter like this, earned him the nickname "Honest Abe."

Lincoln's Response to Criticism

Abraham Lincoln faced criticism and ridicule throughout his political career. In response to one particularly insulting letter, Lincoln wrote a thoughtful and humorous reply. Instead of responding with anger, he cleverly diffused the situation, showcasing his ability to handle criticism with grace and humor.



The Gettysburg Address

At the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery in Gettysburg, Lincoln delivered the famous Gettysburg Address. In just a few minutes, he expressed profound thoughts on equality and democracy. Despite its short length, the address remains one of the most powerful speeches in American history.

The Compassionate President

Lincoln's compassionate nature extended beyond the battlefield. In response to a widow who had lost five sons in the Civil War, he personally wrote a letter expressing his condolences. This act of empathy showcased Lincoln's deep understanding of the human cost of war.

These anecdotes offer a glimpse into Abraham Lincoln's character - a man of integrity, compassion, and wisdom. His stories not only reflect the challenges he faced but also highlight the qualities that have made him an enduring symbol of leadership and humanity in American history.



Name: _____

1. What did the "Cherry Tree Incident" show about George Washington? _____

2. What did the "Farewell Address" show about Washington? _____

3. What did "Splitting Rails" show about Abraham Lincoln? _____

4. What did "Saving the Money" show about Lincoln? _____

5. What did "The Compassionate President" show about Lincoln? _____
