



George Washington

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☑ **Lesson Objectives**

Core Content Objectives

Students will:

- ✓ Identify George Washington as the first president of the United States
- ✓ Explain the sacrifices George Washington made for the country

Language Arts Objectives

The following language arts objectives are addressed in this lesson. Objectives aligning with the Common Core State Standards are noted with the corresponding standard in parentheses. Refer to the Alignment Chart for additional standards addressed in all lessons in this domain.

Students will:

- ✓ With prompting and support, describe an illustration of George Washington and use pictures accompanying “George Washington” to check and support comprehension of the read-aloud (RI.K.7)
- ✓ With assistance, categorize and organize facts and information about George Washington into a timeline depicting significant points in his life (W.K.8)
- ✓ Use language to express temporal relationships (*first, next, last*)
- ✓ Sequence pictures illustrating events from the life of George Washington

Core Vocabulary

convince, v. To make someone believe something is true

Example: Sasha and her brother tried to convince their parents to send them to summer camp.

Variation(s): convinces, convinced, convincing

defeated, v. Beaten in a game, contest, or battle

Example: Zhou's soccer team defeated its opponent in the last game of the year.

Variation(s): defeat, defeats, defeating

monarchy, n. A form of government led by a king or queen

Example: Great Britain used to be a monarchy and was ruled by King George III during the Revolutionary War.

Variation(s): monarchies

rule, n. The control over an area or a group of people


Example: The British king or queen's rule includes control of the countries of England, Scotland, Wales, and part of Ireland.

Variation(s): none

spectacles, n. Eyeglasses

Example: Gerald put on his spectacles to read the small print.

Variation(s): none

At a Glance	Exercise	Materials	Minutes
Introducing the Read-Aloud	What Have We Already Learned?		10
	Purpose for Listening		
Presenting the Read-Aloud	George Washington		10
Discussing the Read-Aloud	Comprehension Questions		10
	Word Work: Convince		5
 Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day			
Extensions	George Washington Timeline	Image Cards 2, 6, 11; chart paper, chalkboard, or whiteboard	15



George Washington

4_A

Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

What Have We Already Learned?

Remind students that they have learned about how George Washington led the American Continental Army in fighting the American Revolution against the British armies and king. Tell students that it is General Washington's dedication to the American people that helps him in today's read-aloud.

Ask students to describe what they have learned so far about George Washington's character, or personal qualities. Have them give examples of his honesty, bravery, and cleverness from previous read-alouds. Remember to repeat and expand upon each response, using richer and more complex language, including, if possible, any read-aloud vocabulary. If a student's response includes inaccurate information, refer back to earlier read-alouds and/or illustrations to correct any misunderstandings.

Purpose for Listening

Tell students to listen for the way in which George Washington's spectacles, or glasses, helped him to lead others to take his side. Ask them to notice how people in the crowd seem to feel when Washington starts speaking and how they feel when he is finished speaking.

Note: Please be aware that one of Washington's slaves, Billy Lee, is mentioned briefly in this read-aloud. If students raise questions about slaves or slavery, you may wish to explain that they will hear about slaves and slavery in a later read-aloud (Lesson 6). You may also wish to tell them that, although slavery was widely accepted throughout the United States at this point in the country's history, we now know that slavery was terribly wrong.



George Washington

◀ Show image 4A-1: 18th-century spectacles

- 1 Spectacles are eyeglasses. How do you think his spectacles help George Washington talk to his friends?

Sometimes even close friends can disagree with one another. But even when you disagree, it helps to remember that the other person *is* your friend. Friends are people with whom you can disagree while you still trust and like one another. Here is a true story about friendship and trust between a group of soldiers and their general, George Washington. In this story, George Washington uses his **spectacles** to help him talk to his friends.¹



- 2 [Ask students to describe the way George Washington looks in this picture.]

◀ Show image 4A-2: Fatigued George Washington²

George Washington's slave, Billy Lee, was worried. He had never before seen a look such as this one on Washington's face. Billy thought, "For the first time, General Washington looks old. It's this hard war he's been fighting, I guess, but he has never looked like this."



◀ Show image 4A-3: Heroic George Washington

Billy was right. George Washington looked tired. Before the war, George Washington had been known for his strength and bravery. On horseback, he could jump over logs or fences that were too risky for other horsemen, and he could bend an iron horseshoe with his bare hands. For eight years now, Washington had led the Continental Army, trying to free America from having to follow the orders of the king of Great Britain. All this time, although he became more and more tired, Washington had seemed like a man whose courage would always be strong. With Washington leading them, his soldiers kept going even when they lost some battles, or when they did not have enough food or blankets during freezing cold winters. Finally, Washington had led them when they **defeated**³ the biggest army the British king had sent to fight against them. Now George Washington was not only tired, but also restless. He thought, "How strange! We defeated our enemies, but now my *friends* may ruin everything I have worked for."⁴

- 3 or won a victory over

- 4 What do you think George Washington meant by this?



← **Show image 4A-4: Billy Lee gives Washington his spectacles**

- 5 George Washington began wearing glasses because he was getting older and his eyesight was getting worse. Some people, even younger people, wear glasses for many different reasons.

Washington picked up some papers from his desk and slipped them into his pocket. He asked impatiently, “Where are my spectacles, Billy?” Billy handed him the reading glasses Washington had begun using only a week before.⁵ Placing them in his coat pocket, Washington went outside where a soldier had his horse ready. Billy watched the general and the soldier ride away.



← **Show image 4A-5: General Gates’s speech**

- 6 or got down from his horse

- 7 [Point to the man on the stage.]

- 8 You learned about a chief in our study of Native Americans. What is a chief? (the person in charge of a group)

- 9 Gates was trying to lead the soldiers to think the way he did.

Soon they reached a large building, where Washington dismounted.⁶ Handing the reins of his horse to the soldier, Washington entered the building through a side door. He could hear the loud voice of General Horatio Gates,⁷ who was a very important officer in the army. General Gates thought that he, not Washington, should be the army’s chief.⁸ Now General Gates was trying to **convince** the other soldiers to change the way their new nation, the United States of America, would work.⁹

Washington wanted to stop this from happening. He thought, “I hope I am not too late,” as he stepped onto the stage where General Gates was standing.



← **Show image 4A-6: Washington takes center stage**

Facing the stage were many soldiers who had been with Washington through the long, dangerous war. When they saw him, they gasped in surprise. “Why has he come?” they wondered.

General Gates was surprised, too, and left the stage. Washington looked out at the soldiers he knew so well. “They look angry,” he thought.

He was right. For years, these soldiers had been away from home, risking their lives to win the American Revolution so that they, their families, and their friends would be free to start a new country.



← **Show image 4A-7: Washington and his men**

The soldiers missed their families, but they knew this was important work, so they had kept at it. George Washington had led them the whole time. Now they had defeated, or beaten, the largest group of British soldiers yet. Some of Washington's friends were meeting with British leaders to end the war. But Washington thought, "The British still have one army left. Until they sign the paper agreeing that we are free to begin our own country, they could change their minds and attack again. We have to make sure the war is really over before we all go home."



← **Show image 4A-8: Unhappy men**

But while all this had been happening, something else had *not* happened. The new American government had not paid the soldiers in a long time. Some soldiers had been unpaid for as many years as you have been alive! Now some of them, led by General Gates, were mumbling, "Maybe we should take over the new country. Then we *know* we'll be paid. We have our guns. We could make everyone do what we want them to do."¹⁰

10 Do you think that the soldiers taking over the country would be a good idea?

George Washington had heard about this. He thought, "I am proud of being a soldier, but I do not want soldiers to use their guns to tell other people what to do. That would be no better than the old kind of **rule**¹¹ of a **monarchy** or a king. We want a country in which the people decide together what to do, not kings or queens or armies. I will work to make sure my soldiers get paid, but first I must stop them from trying to take over our government."

11 or leadership



← **Show image 4A-9: Washington takes center stage**

Washington took out some of the papers he had brought along and began to read them aloud. When he finished, no one cheered or clapped. "I failed!" he thought. "They are too angry to listen to what I say." Then he remembered something. "Wait!" he told the soldiers, "I have one more paper to read to you."

He took out that paper, but the writing was smaller than on the other papers, and he could not see it clearly. He held it away from himself, then closer, but nothing helped.



12 Why does Washington need his spectacles?

◀ **Show image 4A-10: Washington puts on his spectacles**

Then, to the soldiers' surprise, Washington took out the spectacles they had never before seen him use.¹² Fumbling to open them, Washington said, "Gentlemen, you will permit me to put on my spectacles, for I have not only grown gray, but almost blind, in the service of my country."

In that moment, his soldiers felt ashamed. They remembered how strong George Washington had always been, and how he had always helped them. Like Billy Lee, they thought, "He has worn himself out fighting for our freedom. He has given up as much as we have." Many of the soldiers were so ashamed that they began to cry. They told one another, "If George Washington can wait a little longer to get paid, we can, too. He is right: the important thing is to make sure we start a country in which the people work together to help make decisions, not just a king or queen or an army."



13 How did Washington's spectacles show how much he had sacrificed for the country?

◀ **Show image 4A-11: 18th-century spectacles**

What the words written on those pages had not done, Washington had done by putting on his spectacles.¹³ The soldiers agreed to do as he asked, and later they did get paid.



◀ **Show image 4A-12: Portrait of George Washington**

A few years later, after the war was over and Americans were choosing the first president of the United States of America, people knew whom they could trust. They asked George Washington to be the first president. "We need you just a little while longer," they told him, "not as a general, but as our president." And, as always, when the American people needed him, George Washington said yes.

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

If students have difficulty responding to questions, reread pertinent passages of the read-aloud and/or refer to specific images. If students give one-word answers and/or fail to use read-aloud or domain vocabulary in their responses, acknowledge correct responses by expanding the students' responses, using richer and more complex language. Ask students to answer in complete sentences by having them restate the question in their responses.

1. *Literal* Describe what George Washington was known for *before* the war. (strength, bravery)
2. *Inferential* How did the war affect, or change, George Washington? (He became older, more tired, had graying hair, and was losing his sight.)
3. *Inferential* Why did the soldiers want to take over the country? (They were angry because they hadn't gotten paid; they wanted the power to do whatever they wanted to do.)
4. *Inferential* Why did George Washington think having the army take over the country was a bad idea? (The Americans had fought for their freedom from a king. He wanted to help create a country where the people decided things together. He did not want a country where a king, queen, or army forced people to do things.)
5. *Inferential* How did seeing George Washington's spectacles convince the soldiers to support his position? (The soldiers saw how much Washington had sacrificed for them and their country. They felt ashamed and realized that they should continue to follow Washington's leadership.)
6. *Literal* Who became the first president of the United States? (George Washington)

[Please continue to model the *Think Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

I am going to ask a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally, I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

7. *Evaluative Think Pair Share:* How do you think George Washington felt when the soldiers decided to follow him? (He felt happy, proud, and relieved.)
8. After hearing today's read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these questions.]

Word Work: Convince

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, "Now Gates was trying to *convince* the other soldiers to change the way their new nation, the United States of America, would work."
2. Say the word *convince* with me.
3. To *convince* means to make someone believe something is true.
4. I was able to convince my sister that I could run faster than she could.
5. Tell about a time you had to convince someone of something. Try to use the word *convince* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students' responses: "Once, I had to convince _____ to . . ."]
6. What's the word we've been talking about?

Use a *Making Choices* activity for follow-up. Directions: If you are immediately willing to do something I ask you to do, say, "okay." If you need me to try to convince you to do something I ask you to do, say, "You need to convince me." (Answers may vary for all. For any statements that students answer "You need to convince me," have students explain why they may be reluctant to perform the activity without being convinced to do so.)

1. Clap your hands twice.
2. Give me all the money in your piggy bank.
3. Look left, then right.
4. Come to school on Saturday.
5. Jump up and down.



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



George Washington

4_B

Extensions

15 minutes

George Washington Timeline

Tell students that you are going to ask them to help you create a timeline about George Washington's life. Write "George Washington" at the top of the chart paper, chalkboard, or whiteboard. Underneath his name, draw a horizontal line with three vertical notches. Tell students that each notch stands for an event on the timeline. Then ask the class to help you place a few events in George Washington's life in order from left to right on the timeline.

Show Image Cards 6 (Young Washington), 11 (General Washington in the American Revolution), and 2 (President George Washington) in random order. As a class, sequence the cards so that the events are in chronological order. Have volunteers tape up each event under the appropriate notch on the timeline. Go through the three events, using the terms *first*, *next*, and *last* to reinforce temporal order.