

## The Office of President of the United States of America

The United States of America is governed by three bodies: the legislative, judicial and executive branches. The legislative branch is composed of the **House of Representatives** and the **Senate**. Together they make up the United States Congress. The legislative branch is charged with making laws. The judicial branch, made up a system of state and federal courts, is charged with interpreting the laws - making sure the laws are applied in the manner in which they were intended and in accordance with the **United States Constitution**. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the land. The executive branch of government is given the job of **enforcing** the laws of the United States. The President is the chief **executive** of the United States. The three branch system was designed so that no branch would hold too much power in the governing of the country.

The Constitution of the United States states that the president, "...shall take care that the laws be faithfully **executed**." The president is further charged in the Constitution to "... from time to time give to the Congress information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and **expedient**." While the President cannot force the Congress to act, he can suggest a program for them to consider. When his political party holds the **majority** of seats in Congress, he can often see that his ideas are carried out. The President can also prevent the Congress from acting by using the presidential **veto**.

The President plays the main role in shaping **foreign policy**. With the Senate's approval, he makes **treaties** with other countries and appoints **ambassadors**. He can also make agreements with other nations without the approval of the Senate.

The President **nominates** Cabinet members, his closest advisors. He also nominates Supreme Court justices and many other high officials. He must get Senate approval for these, but he may fill many other important positions under his power alone. The President is Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and **commissions** officers in all branches of the service.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## The Office of President of the United States of America

True or False?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ The United States is governed by three bodies.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ It is the job of the President to interpret laws.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ The Supreme Court is part of the judicial branch.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ The three branch system spreads power around.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ The President is expected to report to Congress from time to time.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ If the President has an idea, he tells Congress what to do and they are required to do it.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ If the President doesn't agree with something Congress decides, there isn't anything he can do to prevent it.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ The President is involved in working with other countries.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ The President chooses Cabinet members and ambassadors, but they must be approved by the House of Representatives.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ The Armed Forces are led by the President.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Presidents' Day

Every year on the third Monday in February, a holiday commonly known as Presidents' Day is celebrated across the country. What has become a day to honor all United States presidents, was not always so. Presidents' Day has its origins in the celebration of the birthdays of two U.S. Presidents: George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.

Following President George Washington's death in 1799, his February 22 birthday became an annual day of remembrance. At the time, Washington was considered to be the most important figure in American history. The 1832 centennial of his birth and the 1848 start of construction on the Washington Monument were cause for national celebration. By an Act of Congress in 1879, George Washington's birthday became a federal holiday known as 'Washington's Birthday'. The first official holiday to celebrate the life of an individual American, it was celebrated on the date of his birth, February 22.

Considered to be another of the great presidents in United States history, President Abraham Lincoln (1809 – 1865) was also born in February, on the 12<sup>th</sup>. While Lincoln's birthday has never been recognized as a national holiday, several states, including Lincoln's home state of Illinois, have declared it a state holiday.

In 1971, the Uniform Monday Holiday Act took effect, placing several national holidays on Mondays in order to create three day weekends for federal workers. As a result, the date of the Washington's Birthday holiday was moved to the third Monday of February. Since this date always falls between the two presidents' birthdays, many people were led to believe that this was done to honor both Washington and Lincoln.

An attempt was made in 1951 to officially rename the holiday 'Presidents' Day'. This failed because many Americans thought that not all presidents are deserving of such special recognition. Several states, however, moved ahead and adopted the name anyway. When retailers began calling their sales around the holiday 'Presidents' Day' sales, Presidents' Day became the commonly used name for the holiday.

To this day the official name of the national holiday remains Washington's Birthday, a day set aside to honor our first president. For many Americans, it is a day to honor the contributions of all of our presidents.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Presidents' Day

1. How has Presidents' Day changed over time?

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2. Do you think all presidents should be honored on Presidents' Day? Why or why not?

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3. If you were in charge of your town's or city's celebration of Presidents' Day, what would you plan?

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PREVIEW

# Presidents and Their Years in Office

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Years Served</u>     | <u>Name</u>            |
|------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1          | 1789-1797               | George Washington      |
| 2          | 1797-1801               | John Adams             |
| 3          | 1801-1809               | Thomas Jefferson       |
| 4          | 1809-1817               | James Madison          |
| 5          | 1817-1825               | James Monroe           |
| 6          | 1825-1829               | John Quincy Adams      |
| 7          | 1829-1837               | Andrew Jackson         |
| 8          | 1837-1841               | Martin Van Buren       |
| 9          | 1841                    | William Henry Harrison |
| 10         | 1841-1845               | John Tyler             |
| 11         | 1845-1849               | James Knox Polk        |
| 12         | 1849-1850               | Zachary Taylor         |
| 13         | 1850-1853               | Millard Fillmore       |
| 14         | 1853-1857               | Franklin Pierce        |
| 15         | 1857-1861               | James Buchanan         |
| 16         | 1861-1865               | Abraham Lincoln        |
| 17         | 1865-1869               | Andrew Johnson         |
| 18         | 1869-1877               | Ulysses S. Grant       |
| 19         | 1877-1881               | Rutherford B. Hayes    |
| 20         | 1881                    | James Garfield         |
| 21         | 1881-1885               | Chester A. Arthur      |
| 22 & 24    | 1885-1889 and 1893-1897 | Grover Cleveland       |
| 23         | 1889-1893               | Benjamin Harrison      |
| 25         | 1897-1901               | William McKinley       |
| 26         | 1901-1909               | Theodore Roosevelt     |
| 27         | 1909-1913               | William H. Taft        |
| 28         | 1913-1921               | Woodrow Wilson         |
| 29         | 1921-1923               | Warren G. Harding      |
| 30         | 1923-1929               | Calvin Coolidge        |
| 31         | 1929-1933               | Herbert Hoover         |
| 32         | 1933-1945               | Franklin D. Roosevelt  |
| 33         | 1945-1953               | Harry S. Truman        |
| 34         | 1953-1961               | Dwight D. Eisenhower   |
| 35         | 1961-1963               | John F. Kennedy        |
| 36         | 1963-1969               | Lyndon B. Johnson      |
| 37         | 1969-1974               | Richard M. Nixon       |
| 38         | 1974-1977               | Gerald R. Ford         |
| 39         | 1977-1981               | Jimmy Carter           |
| 40         | 1981-1989               | Ronald W. Reagan       |
| 41         | 1989-1993               | George H.W. Bush       |
| 42         | 1993-2001               | Bill Clinton           |
| 43         | 2001-2009               | George W. Bush         |
| 44         | 2009-                   | Barack H. Obama        |

PREVIEW

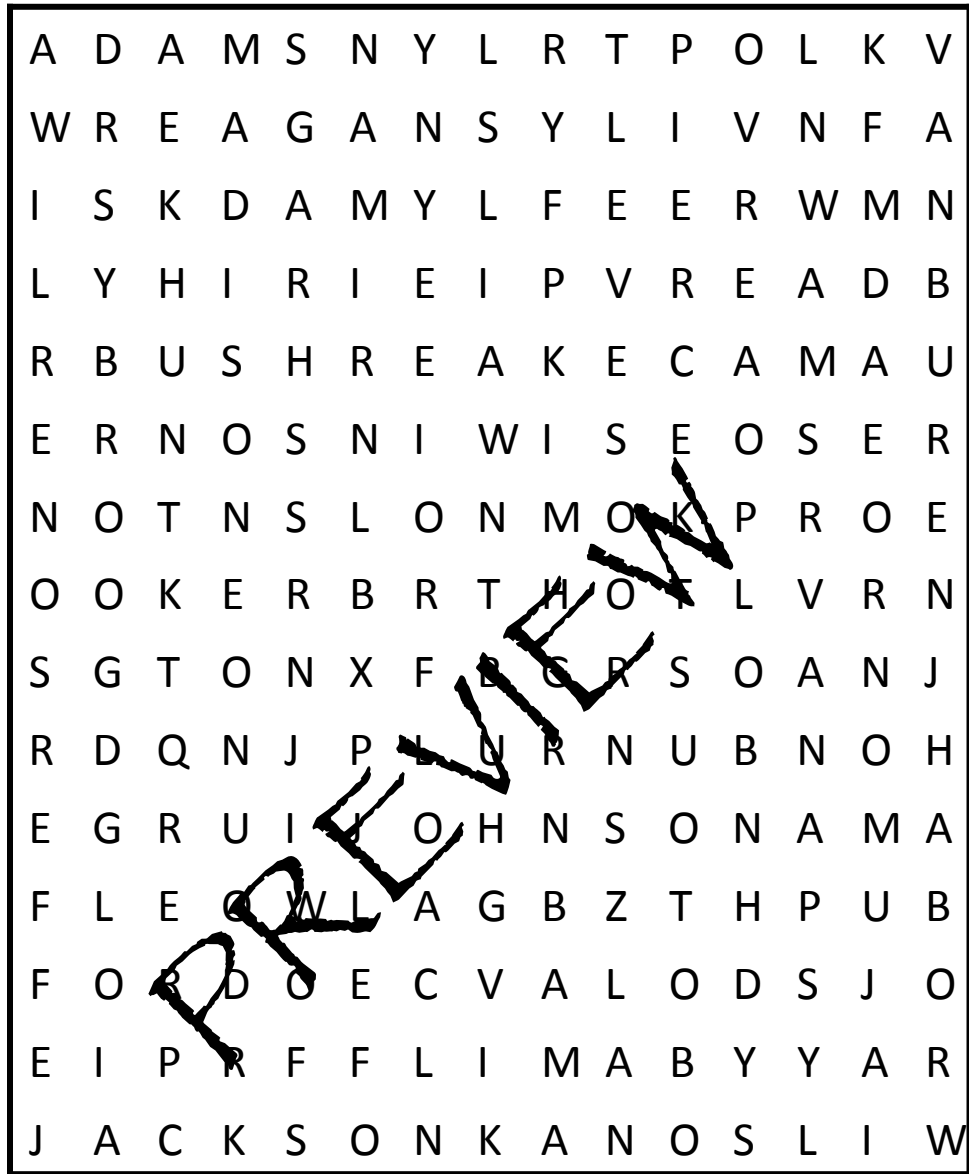
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Who Was President At the Time of These U.S. Events?  
Match the presidents to the important event in United States history that took place while they were in office. (Hint: One President has two matches; another has no matches.)

- A. The Battle of Gettysburg (1863) \_\_\_\_\_ Cleveland
- B. Thomas Edison patents the light bulb (1879) \_\_\_\_\_ Eisenhower
- C. The ratification of the Bill of Rights (1791) \_\_\_\_\_ G.W. Bush
- D. Armistice Day, ending World War I (1919) \_\_\_\_\_ Johnson
- E. The Civil Rights Act of 1957 signed into law (1957) \_\_\_\_\_ Lincoln
- F. The Dedication of the Statue of Liberty (1886) \_\_\_\_\_ F.D. Roosevelt
- G. The first flight of the Wright Brothers' Flyer (1903) \_\_\_\_\_ Wilson
- H. The September 11 Attacks (2001) \_\_\_\_\_ T. Roosevelt
- I. The bombing of Pearl Harbor (1941) \_\_\_\_\_ Washington
- J. The Cuban Missile Crisis threatens to start war with Russia (1962) \_\_\_\_\_ Hayes
- K. 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution is ratified, giving women the right to vote (1920) \_\_\_\_\_ Kennedy
- L. The Alaskan territory is purchased from Russia (1867) \_\_\_\_\_ Jefferson

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Presidents Word Search



ADAMS

JACKSON

FORD

MADISON

TYLER

PIERCE

REAGAN

JEFFERSON

BUSH

WILSON

OBAMA

CLINTON

WASHINGTON

POLK

MONROE

VAN BUREN

ROOSEVELT

JOHNSON