

Stations Activity: The George Washington Presidency (1789-1797)

❖ Station # 1: George Washington & Foreign Policy

- Based on the information, summarize the three goals of U.S. foreign policy during the Washington Presidency. In other words, summarize each law in one sentence.

1. Jay's Treaty:

2. Proclamation of Neutrality:

3. Pinckney's Treaty:

- Why would it be important for a new nation, like the United States, to have goals such as these?

- Which one does your group think is the most important? Why?

- Summarize the advice did President Washington left for the nation in his *Farewell Address*?

❖ Station # 2: Alexander Hamilton's Financial Plan

What were the four parts of Alexander Hamilton's financial plan?			
1)	2)	3)	4)

- Which part of Alexander Hamilton's plan does your group think is the best? Why?

- As a group, discuss "should Alexander Hamilton should be on the \$10.00 bill?" Why or why not?

❖ **Station # 3: George Washington: "The Precedent President"**

- What is a "precedent"?
- What do these actions say about George Washington as a person and as a leader?
- In the opinion of your group, which one of these precedents was the most helpful to the new government?
- Why do you think these things have continued on in our government?

❖ **Station # 4: George Washington & The Whiskey Rebellion**

- Who was opposed to the tax on whiskey? Why?
- Why was the Whiskey Rebellion important for the federal government?
- According to Washington's Proclamation on the Whiskey Rebellion, why did President Washington believe it was important to respond the way that he did?
- If the members of your group had been in President Washington's shoes, what decision would you have made?

STATION #1:

GEORGE WASHINGTON & FOREIGN POLICY

George Washington's presidency (1789-1797) was marked by the following foreign policy achievements:

- 1) **Jay's Treaty:** Relations with Britain, still smarting from the loss of her colonies, worsened in the early 1790s. Key provisions included: The withdrawal of British soldiers from posts in the American West A commission to be established to settle outstanding border issues between the U.S. and Canada A commission to be established to resolve American losses in British ship seizures and Loyalist losses during the War of Independence.
- 2) **Proclamation of Neutrality:** In spring 1793 a major war broke out between Great Britain, its allies and France, launching an era of large-scale warfare that engulfed all of Europe until 1815. Washington, with cabinet approval, proclaimed American neutrality. The proclamation is a formal announcement issued by President Washington on April 22, 1793, declaring the nation *neutral* in the conflict between France and Great Britain. The law threatened legal proceedings against any American providing assistance to any country at war.
- 3) **Pinckney's Treaty:** One of the most important diplomatic aims of the Washington administration was to secure recognition of American borders from the great powers established intentions of friendship between the United States and Spain. It also defined the boundaries of the United States with the Spanish colonies and guaranteed the United States navigation rights on the Mississippi River. Spain was a rival of Britain and noted the warming relationship between Britain and the U.S. as evidenced in Jay's Treaty. Therefore, Spain hoped to keep Britain off balance by establishing a positive relationship with America.

Before Washington left office in 1797, he wasn't done giving the new nation foreign policy advice. Read the following quotes from George Washington's *Farewell Address*:

"It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world..."

"Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all."

"The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible."

STATION #2:

ALEXANDER HAMILTON'S FINANCIAL PLAN

Alexander Hamilton served as George Washington's cabinet as the first secretary of the treasury. Hamilton set out to put the government on a sound economic footing.

4 Key Elements of Alexander Hamilton's Financial Plan:

1) **Pay Off The National Debt:** Hamilton wanted the national government to pay off American Revolution war debts run up by the Continental Congress as well as wartime debts of the states. This was called the "assumption plan" and Hamilton believed that this plan would establish the credit of the nation.

2) **Create a National Bank:** Hamilton wanted Congress to create a national bank, which he believed would win the government the support of the business community. Such a bank would also help the government in all of its financial dealings. Even though some people and government leaders thought that the national bank was unconstitutional, Congress chartered (agreed to) the national bank anyway, and was established in 1791.

3) **Place a Tax on Whiskey:** Hamilton proposed that the government raise operating revenues through an excise tax on whiskey. When you think of the word "excise" think: "extra". People who purchased Whiskey had to pay the extra tax on whiskey, people who didn't buy it, didn't have to pay the tax.

4) **Tax on Foreign Goods:** Hamilton called for a protective tariff to shield products of the nation's infant industries from foreign competition. Remember, a tariff is a tax, a tax on imports. Congress rejected the protective tariff but passed other tariffs to generate income for the new government.

Hamilton's plan raised some controversy, but it put the new nation on sound financial footing. It also encouraged the wealthy to support the government and built a solid foundation for the nation's future as an industrial power.

Did you know? Alexander Hamilton is the guy on the \$10.00 bill!



STATION # 3:

GEORGE WASHINGTON: "THE PRECEDENT PRESIDENT"

As president, George Washington set many important precedents. A precedent is any act, decision, or case that serves as a guide or justification (reason) for later situations and events. These precedents have become known as the unwritten constitution. Your Regents book defines the unwritten constitution as "a combination of executive and legislative actions and interpretations and judicial decisions, especially judicial review, as well as customs and traditions such as development of political parties."

Establishing A Cabinet:

Washington appointed four men to give him advice as President: Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson; Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton; Secretary of War Henry Knox; and Attorney General Edmund Randolph

Precedents of

Inaugural and Farewell

Address: Every president since Washington has given an inaugural address at the beginning of their presidency and a farewell address at the end of their presidency. Washington's farewell address is perhaps one of the most famous.

<p>Two Term Limit: Washington willingly stepped down as president after serving two, four year terms and did not seek reelection.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">President George Washington (1789-1797)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">...none of these things are written in the Constitution.</p>	<p>Addressing the President as "Mr. President": When the country was founded, there was debate over how the chief executive should be addressed. Rejecting "His High Mightyness, Washington settled on the phrase "Mr. President"</p>
<p>Neutrality in Foreign Affairs: Washington believed that the new nation needed time to grow and develop. He also believed a young nation should not get involved with the problems and issues with other countries.</p>		<p>Good Relationships with other Nations: Washington believed it was good for the new nation to have positive relationships with other countries based on "peace and harmony".</p>
<p>Adding The Words "so help me God" after the presidential oath: Although some historians say that he didn't, Washington is credited with adding the words "so help me God" to the end of the presidential oath of office repeated at the inauguration ceremony.</p>		<p>Political Parties: Debate at the Constitutional Convention over ratification revealed differences of opinion about how the government should be run. Two political parties emerged during the Washington years: the Federalists and Democratic-Republicans. We continue to have a two-party system.</p>

STATION # 4:

GEORGE WASHINGTON & THE WHISKEY REBELLION

Alexander Hamilton, the first secretary of the Treasury, and a member of George Washington's cabinet proposed a tax on whiskey as part of his financial plan. The tax was meant to generate revenue (income or profit) for the new nation.

▪ **What Happened?**

The federal government passed a tax on whiskey in 1794 in order to generate revenue (income, profits). Because corn was too bulky to carry across the Appalachian Mountains, small frontier farmers in Pennsylvania distilled corn into whiskey which could be more easily sent to markets on the backs of mules. So, whiskey was main source of cash for these frontier farmers.

When farmers in western Pennsylvania refused to pay the tax, saying it was like the Stamp Act all over again, they beat up federal marshals in Pittsburgh. Farmers also stopped court proceedings, robbed the mail, and destroyed supplies used to make whiskey.

When President George Washington heard about the rebelling farmers, he called up 15,000 troops to help bring an end to the rebellion. The federal troops marched over the mountains and scattered the rebels without a fight or the loss of a single life. However, many people were arrested, but all were later pardoned or found not guilty.

▪ **Results:**

The Whiskey Rebellion was the first real test of the new U.S. government's authority and Washington's actions demonstrated that the new government intended to enforce federal law. The federal government's use of troops against their own countrymen produced much fear among the people.

PRIMARY RESOURCE DOCUMENT:

Washington's Proclamation on the Whiskey Rebellion, August 7, 1794

"Whereas it is in my judgment necessary under the circumstances of the case to take measures for calling forth the militia in order to suppress the combinations aforesaid, and to cause the laws to be duly executed; and I have accordingly determined to do so, feeling the deepest regret for the occasion, but withal the most solemn conviction that the essential interests of the Union demand it, that the very existence of the Government and the fundamental principles of social order are materially involved in the issue, and the patriotism and firmness of all good citizens are seriously called upon, as occasions may require, to aid in the effectual suppression of so fatal a spirit."

WHO ENDED THE WHISKEY REBELLION?

ON THE BATTLE OF THE FEDERALISTS VS. THE DEMOCRAT-REPUBLICANS, FEDERALIST ALEXANDER HAMILTON SAYS:



THE NEW CONSTITUTION GIVES THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT THE RIGHT TO TAX. LET'S TAX!!


HAMILTON GETS AN EXCISE TAX. AN EXCISE TAX IS ONE PUT ON A SPECIFIC PRODUCT.



THIS ONE IS PUT ON WHISKEY, A STRONG DRINK MADE FROM GRAIN.

Bryd '01


SETTLERS WEST OF THE APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS GET UPSET. THEY WILL NOT PAY A TAX ON SOMETHING THEY MAKE THEMSELVES FOR THEMSELVES.



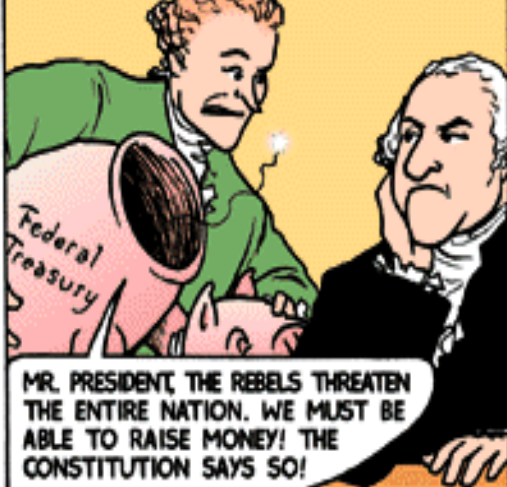
EASTERNERS ARE STEALING OUR MONEY!

WASHINGTON D.C.

FEDERAL TAX COLLECTORS ARE ATTACKED IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA.



WE HAVE TO OBEY ONLY OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT. THE CONSTITUTION SAYS SO.



Federal Treasury

MR. PRESIDENT, THE REBELS THREATEN THE ENTIRE NATION. WE MUST BE ABLE TO RAISE MONEY! THE CONSTITUTION SAYS SO!

WHAT WILL WASHINGTON DO? THIS IS THE FIRST BIG TEST FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. WILL IT BE ABLE TO ENFORCE ITS OWN LAWS??

?

WASHINGTON PUTS HIS MILITARY UNIFORM ON AGAIN. HE CALLS FOR 13,000 MILITIAMEN TO END "THE WHISKEY REBELLION" IN 1794.



Washington's force arrests 150 Pennsylvanians. Two are condemned to die, but Washington pardons them. The rebellion is over.

Washington's thought: "Sigh: HERE WE GO AGAIN."

America is finally strong enough to go on without me.

GW LEAVES THE PRESIDENCY IN 1797. HE DIES JUST TWO YEARS LATER. **END**