Fourth Grade

DISCOVER AMERICA

Teacher Guide



Democracy, Faith, and Freedom: Tocqueville's American Journey

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Key Themes

- American Exceptionalism
- Democracy and Self-Governance
- Local Government as a Foundation for Liberty
- Religious Freedom
- The Importance of Civic Virtue and Engagement
- The Role of Religion in a Free Society



Core Values

- Community
- Faith
- Liberty
- Life

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to

- Define self-government and explain how it allows citizens to make decisions and shape their communities.
- Identify the core principles outlined in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, including natural rights and the importance of democracy.
- Describe Alexis de Tocqueville's observations about how American society functioned in 1831, including the role of local government and religion.
- Analyze how Tocqueville's observations helped him understand the relationship between faith and democracy in America.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to

- Explore how local governments, such as town councils, discuss and vote on issues, contributing to a strong, democratic society.
- Reflect on how personal responsibility and participation in local government help create a fair and free community.
- Compare and contrast Tocqueville's observations of democracy in the United States with what he experienced in his home country of France.
- Connect Tocqueville's views on democracy, religion, and self-governance to American exceptionalism, recognizing how these values shaped the nation's development.



Key Terms

01 **balance of power:** refers to how power is shared between different branches of government so that no one branch or person has too much control.

02 **Christianity:** a religion based on the teachings of Jesus Christ.

03 **citizens:** members of a community who have rights and responsibilities.

04 **criminal justice system:** the group of laws, courts, and leaders that help keep people safe and make sure rules are followed.

05 **Declaration of Independence:** a very important document that was created by the Founding Fathers to tell Great Britain that the colonies were free and were going to govern themselves.

06 **democracy:** a type of government where the people help make decisions by voting for their leaders and laws.

07 **egalitarian:** in this context, a place where people are treated equally.

08 **equality:** when people are treated the same, regardless of their background or who they are.

09 **Federalist Papers:** a collection of essays written by James Madison and Alexander Hamilton that defended the Constitution, explained how the new government would work under it, and how the new government would protect people's rights.

10 **government:** a group of leaders who help make rules and decisions for a community, state, or country.

11 **"habits of the heart":** the way people naturally behave and treat one another.

12 **local government:** the group of leaders in a town or city who help make rules and decisions for the community.

Key Terms

13 **majority:** the larger group of people who agree on something or share the same beliefs.

14 **minority:** the smaller group that has different ideas or beliefs from the majority.

15 **monarchy:** a type of government where a single person, like a king or queen, has the power to make all the decisions.

16 **moral:** describing ideas about what is right and wrong.

17 **observation:** something you notice by looking, listening, or paying close attention.

18 **religion:** a system of beliefs about God and the world, which often includes worship, prayer, and teachings about how to live a good life.

19 **responsibility:** taking care of things that need to be done and making good choices.

20 **Second Great Awakening:** a time of religious revival that took place from the late 1700s to the early 1800s.

21 **self-control:** stopping to think before you act, and acting only when it is the right thing to do.

22 **self-government:** a type of government where people in a community, state, or country get to make their own rules and choose their own leaders instead of being controlled by a king or ruler.

23 **self-improvement:** working to become better at something, like learning new skills, being kinder, or making good choices.

24 **United States Constitution:** the set of rules that created our country's government. It was written in 1787 by the Founding Fathers to make sure that the government would be fair and protect the rights of the people.

Introduction

TELL Students

Okay, patriots! I am going to give you a word, and you have to tell me the opposite of that word. Ready? What's the opposite of dark? (Light) What's the opposite of up? (Down) What's the opposite of noise? (Silence) What's the opposite of speak? (Listen) What's the opposite of read? (Write) Wait a second…what do we call a person who writes stories, books, or poems? (Kids shout out "Author!") That's right! Reading and writing go hand in hand, and the people who write the stories we read are called authors. Today, on our journey to learn more about the founding of our country, we are going to have an author join us. We are going to make a lot of observations, just like he did, and later we will combine our observations into a book! So, get your notebook (or journal) and pencil ready to go. [Give students a few minutes to get a notebook or paper and a writing utensil]. An **observation** is something you notice by looking, listening, or paying close attention. It's the information you gather about the world around you. In Latin, it means to watch what is before you. For example, if you see that the sky is cloudy, hear birds singing, or feel that the air is cold, those are all observations. Today, we are going to learn about a visitor from another country who traveled across the United States in 1831. He made a lot of observations about how Americans lived, worked, and governed themselves. His name was Alexis de Tocqueville, and he wrote a book called *Democracy in America* to share what he learned. [Print a photo of Tocqueville and have him "travel" alongside you as you teach the lesson today.] We will do something similar! As we learn about Tocqueville's journey, you will write your own observations in your notebook, and at the end, we will combine them to create our own book about how America works! Let's get started!

ASK Students

What do you think it would be like to travel to a new place and make observations about how people live, work, and govern themselves? If you had the chance to visit another country, what are some things you would want to observe or learn about?

TELL Students

Before we dive in, let's take a moment to revisit some important concepts we've learned. We've been studying our Founding Fathers—the courageous leaders who played a key role in establishing the United States. These leaders wrote important documents that continue to shape our country and its government. Two of the most significant documents are the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution.

Introduction

TELL Students (continued)

The **Declaration of Independence** was written to announce to Great Britain that the colonies were free and were going to govern themselves. **[Reference Declaration of Independence Image]** It was based on the idea that all people have natural rights—fundamental rights they are born with. These rights include life, liberty (freedom), and the pursuit of happiness. The Founding Fathers believed that these rights came from God, not a king or government. The Declaration of Independence was adopted, or accepted, on July 4, 1776, which is why we celebrate Independence Day on the Fourth of July every year! **[Reference Fourth of July Image]**

ASK Students

Why do you think the Founding Fathers believed that natural rights came from God and not from a king or government? How do you think this idea helped shape the United States?

TELL Students

After the Revolutionary War, the Founding Fathers knew they needed to create a strong and clear plan to guide how the new country would operate. They wanted to make sure the United States had fair rules and leaders who would protect the rights of everyone. That's why they wrote the United States Constitution in 1787. The **United States Constitution** is a set of rules that formed the foundation of our government. **[Reference U.S. Constitution Image]** You might think of it as an instruction manual or rule book for the government and people of the United States. It explains how laws are made, who has what power, and how power is shared to prevent any one person or group from having too much control. An important part of the Constitution is the Bill of Rights, which protects essential natural rights, such as freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the right to be treated fairly. These freedoms ensure that everyone can express their thoughts, practice their beliefs, and make choices about their own lives. The Constitution is still the highest law in the United States today, and it continues to guide our country. Remember, in our last lesson, we learned about freedom of religion and freedom of speech, two important rights protected by the Bill of Rights. In your notebook, write about why you think the Constitution and the Bill of Rights are important. Think about how the Bill of Rights allows you to speak freely and believe what you choose.

ASK Students

How do these freedoms help protect you and others in your community?

Introduction

TELL Students 📷

Have you ever been on a field trip to learn something new? Maybe to a museum, a farm, or a science center? Just like you take field trips to explore and discover, Tocqueville took a trip across the United States in 1831 to learn about how Americans lived and how their government worked. We've already learned about the Founding Fathers and the important decisions they made to help build our country. But today, our focus is on Alexis de Tocqueville. **[Reference Tocqueville Image]** While he wasn't a Founding Father, he is still very important. He was from France, which is a country much older than the United States. America was still a young country that had just won its independence from Britain. Tocqueville wanted to know why America was so successful in creating a new kind of government and society, even as a young country. During his journey, Tocqueville made many observations—he carefully watched and listened to everything he saw. He wanted to understand how the people made decisions, how the government worked, and how they lived their everyday lives. Later, he wrote his book called *Democracy in America*, where he shared his observations and thoughts. **[Reference *Democracy in America* Image]** As we explore what Tocqueville learned, remember to write down your own thoughts in your notebook.

ASK Students

What do you think Tocqueville was most curious about when he came to America? Do you think he expected to see things that he may not have seen? Or, do you think he saw things that he didn't expect to see?

TELL Students 🔑

During his visit to America, Alexis de Tocqueville closely observed how the government operated. A **government** is a group of leaders who make decisions and create rules for a community, state, or country. Their job is to protect people's rights, and that includes keeping them and their property safe and treating them fairly. To do this, they pass laws that people must follow to help keep the people safe and treat them fairly. One important type of government is a **democracy**. In a democracy, the people have the power to make decisions about how their country is run. They do this by voting to choose their leaders and deciding on key laws. The United States has a democracy, meaning that the people play a role in shaping the government and ensuring that their voices are heard. This system was something Tocqueville found fascinating, as it gave people more power and participation than what he had seen in his home country of France.

Introduction

ASK Students

What is a democracy? Why is it important to you?

TELL Students

In 1831, Alexis de Tocqueville traveled across the United States for 10 months. He and his friend, Gustave de Beaumont, were officially sent by the French government to study how America's criminal justice system worked. A **criminal justice system** is the group of laws, courts, and leaders that help keep people safe and make sure rules are followed. However, Tocqueville also took this opportunity to study our country's unique government. He was especially interested in how democracy worked in the United States because, at that time, France was struggling to shift from a **monarchy** (where the king had all the power) to a democracy after the French Revolution. Tocqueville wanted to understand how **equality** (treating everyone fairly and equally) and liberty (freedom) worked together in the United States. He was curious about how America's government protected people's rights and prevented the abuse of power, unlike what happened in France during and after its revolution, which led to chaos and instability. The observations Tocqueville made during his trip became the foundation for his book, *Democracy in America*. This book is still one of the most important works about the political and social life of the United States.

ASK Students

In your journal, think about why Tocqueville was so interested in how democracy worked in the United States. How do you think the differences between the revolutions of the United States and France helped shape his observations? What do you think Tocqueville learned about how equality and liberty work together in America?

TELL Students

When Tocqueville wrote about societies, he said that people had "two conflicting passions": the desire "to be led" (to have a leader or ruler) and the "wish to remain free." He admired the United States because it satisfied both of these desires. Tocqueville saw the U.S. as an **"egalitarian"** country, which means a place where people are treated equally. He also noticed that the government worked to protect people's freedoms while avoiding too much control by one powerful leader. Tocqueville believed that this balance was made possible by two main factors: local town hall governments (where people had direct control over their communities) and the role of religion in American society, which helped support democratic values.

Introduction

TELL Students (continued)

Religion is a system of beliefs about God and the world, and it often includes worship, prayer, and teachings about how to live a good life.

ASK Students

In your journal, think about Tocqueville's "conflicting passions": his desire to be led and his wish to remain free. How do you think these two desires helped him understand the balance of power in the United States? Why do you think local governments and religion were important in creating this balance? We will talk more about balance of power later in our lesson.

TELL Students

Let's start by talking about local governments. **Local government** refers to the group of leaders in a town or city who help make rules and decisions for the community. Tocqueville believed that towns, or "villages," were naturally formed whenever people lived close to each other. He argued that towns are important because they make a nation stronger and help protect freedom. Tocqueville said that local meetings, like school board or town hall meetings, are important to liberty. These meetings help people understand how to use and enjoy their freedom. In other words, local government is like a school that teaches us about freedom and how the government works. Just like at a real school, local governments take on projects. Town leaders have ideas, make choices, raise money, and complete projects for the community, such as new sidewalks or an updated fire station. The effect of their work remains close to us in our everyday lives, which makes it easier for us to participate and help make decisions. Tocqueville believed that a country can't be free without strong local governments, because they teach citizens about liberty and fairness. **Citizens** are members of a community who have rights and responsibilities.

ASK Students

Now, take a moment to think about this. In your journal, write about how local governments help protect freedom. What role do you think local meetings play in helping people understand their rights and responsibilities?

TELL Students

Alexis de Tocqueville was very interested in how democracy worked in America, so he spent a lot of time studying how local governments operated in towns and cities.

Introduction

TELL Students (continued)

He observed that when people live near each other, they naturally form communities where they work together to make rules and decisions. Tocqueville believed that local government was very important because it gave people a voice and helped keep the country strong and free. He compared local government to a school, saying that just as schools teach subjects like reading and math, local governments teach people how to make fair decisions and work together. He saw that when people attended town meetings, voted for their leaders, and helped solve problems in their communities, they were learning how to be responsible citizens. Tocqueville believed that no country could be truly free unless it had strong local governments where citizens could participate and make their own decisions. Now, think about what we've learned and write an observation in your journal. Consider these questions as you write:

ASK Students

How does local government help protect our freedoms? Why is it important for people to have a say in their local government? How does attending town meetings or voting help citizens learn to be responsible?

TELL Students 📷

America has always been a country focused on small, local communities. When the colonists arrived in America, they were given special rules from England called Royal Charters. **[Reference Royal Charters Image]** These rules allowed them to create their own local governments to make decisions for their towns. Since England was far away, it was difficult for the king and leaders to govern the colonies closely. As a result, local government became an important part of life in the United States. In every community, the people are the source of power. This means that the citizens, or people who take their rights and responsibilities seriously and who live in the community, have the most influence over decisions. Tocqueville believed that local governments were essential for the success of America's democracy because they allowed people to directly participate in decision-making.

ASK Students

How do you think local governments in small communities helped shape the way America works today? Why is it important for citizens to have influence over decisions in their community? Write your thoughts in your journal.

Introduction

TELL Students

By participating in town meetings and local government, citizens learned self-governance, developed a love for liberty and order, and understood the balance of power. **Self-government** is a type of government where people in a community, state, or country get to make their own rules and choose their own leaders instead of being controlled by a king or ruler. The **balance of power** refers to how power is shared equally between different branches of government so that no one branch or person has too much control. **[Reference Balance of Power Image]** Tocqueville saw this as an important part of ensuring liberty and fair treatment for all. Tocqueville used the townships as an example of how local government works in America. He observed that citizens' involvement in local affairs helped strengthen their sense of loyalty to their community and ensured the safety and well-being of the town. By taking part in these decisions, citizens understood their rights and responsibilities and became responsible members of a democratic society.

ASK Students

Why do you think it's important for citizens to participate in local government? How does this help them understand their rights and responsibilities? Write your thoughts in your journal, and think about how local involvement helps protect liberty and fairness.

TELL Students

Tocqueville observed that responsibility is a key factor in maintaining a strong and healthy community. Being **responsible** means not only taking care of your own duties, like completing homework or helping a friend, but also considering how your actions impact others. It involves making choices that are thoughtful and fair. Responsibility helps keep everything running smoothly and ensures the well-being of the entire community. Reflect on how responsibility contributes to a successful society. Take a moment to write your thoughts in your journal, and consider the following questions to guide your writing:

ASK Students

What are some ways you show responsibility in your own life? How do your actions affect those around you? Why do you think being responsible is important for a community to stay strong?

Introduction

TELL Students 📷

At the local level, people had the opportunity to improve their own lives while also contributing to the greater good of their community. Tocqueville believed that personal growth and helping others go hand in hand. He explained it a bit like this: helping others does just as much for the person making the sacrifice to help as it does for the one who receives the help. This idea shows that when individuals help others, they are also improving their own lives and becoming better citizens. In Tocqueville's view, local government in cities was the foundation for a strong state and federal government. Tocqueville also saw how local governments and Royal Charters (special rules given to the Pilgrims by England) played a role in shaping the American Revolution. **[Reference American Revolution Image]** He argued that the American Revolution was different from the French Revolution because it was not driven by an unclear desire for independence. Instead, it was the result of a well-thought-out desire for freedom. This contrast helped Tocqueville understand how local government contributed to the strength of the nation and its fight for freedom.

ASK Students

How do you think Tocqueville's idea that personal improvement and helping the community go hand in hand can strengthen a town or city? What do you think it means to sacrifice for the good of others, and how does that help build a strong community?

TELL Students

Tocqueville learned that when people work to improve their community, they are also helping themselves. He saw that by helping make their town a better place, people became responsible citizens. Remember, a citizen is someone who belongs to a community and has both rights and responsibilities. Citizens follow rules, treat others with respect, and work together to solve problems. They also take responsibility for the well-being of the entire community. Tocqueville believed local government was very important because it helps keep the community fair and safe. He also thought that by getting involved in local government, people could learn responsibility and protect their freedoms. Now, let's watch a Star Spangled Adventures cartoon to learn more about Tocqueville's journey. As you watch, think about what you see and hear. Write an observation in your notebook about what makes a good citizen and why local government is important. Use these questions to guide your thinking:

Introduction

TELL Students (continued)

- What are some things a good citizen does to help their community?
- How does working together in a town help everyone?
- Why is local government important for keeping people safe and making fair decisions?

Take some notes, and we'll discuss them after the video!

WATCH ▶

Star Spangled Adventures Cartoon Ep. 41:
Alexis de Tocqueville/Reflections on American Democracy



Lesson

TELL Students

Let's talk about what you observed in the cartoon. Alexis de Tocqueville had an exciting journey across America, didn't he? His trip was like an exploration to learn about how the country worked, especially in smaller towns and cities. While many people focus on national and global issues, Tocqueville realized that local government has a huge impact on people's everyday lives. Local governments take care of important things like schools, roads, neighborhood safety, clean water, and emergency services. These systems make sure everything in the community runs smoothly. Tocqueville saw that in America, people worked together to take care of their towns, and because of this, things like schools and churches were better maintained than in other places. Local governments help with everything from creating laws to maintaining safety. Today, there are about 3,144 counties, over 13,000 school districts, and more than 16,500 towns in the United States, which shows how important local government is for keeping communities strong and free. **[Reference U.S. Map]** Even though national and global issues may get the most attention, local governments have the biggest impact on daily life. They are in charge of things like schools, roads, and safety, all of which shape how well a community functions.

ASK Students

Think about how local government affects your life every day and how people in your community work together to make important decisions. What role does local government play in your life, and why is it important for your community to work together? [Give students three minutes to discuss with a neighbor and then discuss as a class.]

TELL Students

Local leaders have an important job in our community. They take care of things like schools, parks, roads, and fire stations. They make sure schools have teachers, parks are clean and safe, and roads are in good condition so people can travel easily. Local leaders also make sure we have police officers and firefighters to protect us and help in emergencies. Through local government, we learn how freedom works and how to make decisions that are fair for everyone. Because local government is involved in our everyday lives, we can also get involved by learning the rules, voting when we grow up, and working together to make our communities better. Without local government, a country cannot stay strong and free, because it helps make sure people take care of each other and that everyone is treated fairly. Now, take a moment to think about what we've learned. Write an observation in your notebook. Here are some questions to guide your thinking:

Lesson

ASK Students

How do local leaders help our community stay safe and strong? Why is it important for local leaders to make fair decisions? What role do you think local government plays in protecting our freedoms? How can you get involved in your community now or in the future?

TELL Students

Please read the following passage to learn more. [Print and distribute fourth grade student text.]
During his trip across America, Tocqueville was amazed by how well local governments worked. He saw that towns and cities had schools, well-maintained roads, and churches where people could gather to worship. He also noticed that the people in each town worked together to make important decisions. This teamwork helped them learn how to be responsible and good citizens. Being a good citizen means helping others, following rules, and making thoughtful, fair choices. Today, we still have thousands of towns and schools all across the United States, each managed by local governments. This shows how important it is for people to work together to make decisions and take care of their communities. Local governments help make America strong and free!

ASK Students

What did Tocqueville notice about how towns and cities work together?

TELL Students 📷🔑

Earlier, we learned that Alexis de Tocqueville was fascinated by religion in the United States. He said, "The religious aspect of the country was the first thing that struck my attention." Tocqueville noticed that religion wasn't just a private matter for individuals but was deeply connected to the overall spirit and identity of America. This is especially interesting because Tocqueville visited the United States during the **Second Great Awakening**, a time of intense religious revival that began in the late 1700s and continued into the 1800s. **[Reference Second Great Awakening Image]** The Second Great Awakening was focused on morality, humility, and compassion, and led to many people joining churches. Tocqueville's observation about religion in America was very important to him because of the different perspective he had from his home country, France. Many people believed that religion, especially Christianity, was a problem for democracy in France because the church had too much power over French kings and queens for several hundred years. During the French Revolution, those who wanted freedom from the king also attacked Christianity, making it difficult for people who wanted both freedom and religion.

Lesson

TELL Students (continued)

Tocqueville noticed something different in America. During the Second Great Awakening, many Christians began to believe that all people should be treated equally. Remember, equality means that everyone, no matter their background, should be treated the same. Tocqueville saw that in the United States, Christianity did not conflict with freedom. Instead, it supported democracy and the freedoms Americans enjoyed. He believed that the ideas of freedom and equality worked together in America. Christianity helped people understand that everyone should be treated equally, and in the United States, people from all backgrounds could come together to support the idea that all people are free and equal. Tocqueville's ideas help us understand how religion and freedom can work together, and why this was important in building a strong country. Take a moment to write your thoughts and observations in your notebook. Consider these questions:

ASK Students

What do you think Tocqueville meant when he discussed how religion is deeply connected to the overall spirit and identity of America? How do you think the Second Great Awakening helped shape American culture during this time?

TELL Students 🔑

Tocqueville saw that, unlike in Europe, where religion often clashed with political freedom, Christianity and democracy worked together peacefully in America. He believed that religion provided a moral foundation, or a set of values, that helped support the democratic government. **Moral** describes ideas about what is right and wrong, and how people should behave. This was very different from what he had seen in Europe, where religion and government were often in conflict. It's important to note that earlier in America, during the First Great Awakening, religious movements also promoted important ideas like self-reliance and self-government. **Self-reliance** means being able to take care of yourself and make your own decisions without always needing help from others. These ideas influenced the American way of thinking and helped shape the country's founding principles. Tocqueville recognized that in America, religion and democracy worked together to help people live by values that promoted fairness, freedom, and responsibility.

ASK Students

What are some ways you can show self-reliance in your daily life? Can you think of a time when you solved a problem on your own without needing help from someone else?

Lesson

TELL Students 🔑

Tocqueville observed that Christianity and democracy worked together in a positive way in America. Many people during this time followed Christianity. **Christianity** is a religion based on the teachings of Jesus Christ. Many Americans believed that their faith helped guide them in making wise decisions. They felt that their faith encouraged them to be honest, kind, and respectful. Tocqueville noticed that this deep sense of faith helped make American communities stronger, more peaceful, and fairer. Now, take a moment to write down an observation in your notebook. As you think about what Tocqueville saw, reflect on these questions:

ASK Students

How do you think Christianity helped people make good decisions? What are some ways you think religion can make a community stronger? Why do you think honesty, kindness, and respect are important for a peaceful community?

TELL Students

Tocqueville learned many important lessons during his trip across America! One key observation he made was how religion and freedom worked together in the United States. He noticed that religious leaders encouraged people to follow the laws, treat each other with kindness, and contribute to their communities. Unlike in some other countries where people believed religion and freedom couldn't coexist, Tocqueville saw that in America, faith actually helped protect freedom. Tocqueville also observed that Christianity teaches that everyone is equal and should have the same rights. He found this idea to be very important because, in the past, countries like Rome and Greece did not treat all people equally. He believed that Christianity helped people understand that everyone should be treated fairly, no matter who they were or where they came from. Tocqueville saw that because of religion, Americans valued freedom, fairness, and respect for one another, which made the country stronger. Now, take a moment to write down your thoughts in your notebook. Consider these questions:

ASK Students

How did Tocqueville see religion and freedom working together in the United States? Why do you think fairness and equality are important for a strong community? How do you think religious beliefs might help people make good decisions?

Lesson

TELL Students 📷🔑

During his journey across America, Alexis de Tocqueville observed an important aspect of democracy. While he saw that democracy worked well in many ways, he also recognized a challenge. Sometimes, the larger group of people, called the majority, may have the opportunity to make all the decisions. The **majority** refers to the larger group that agrees on something, while the **minority** is the smaller group with different ideas. Tocqueville worried that if the majority always made the rules, the smaller group, or minority, might not have their voices heard or their rights protected. Tocqueville learned that the Founding Fathers, such as George Washington, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton, also considered this problem when they created the United States government. **[Reference Washington, Madison, Hamilton Images]** They wanted to make sure everyone's voice was heard, not just the majority. Tocqueville read the **Federalist Papers**, writings from Madison and Hamilton, which explained how the government should work. One key idea was that if the majority held too much power, the minority might lose their freedoms. Tocqueville saw that America's democracy was strong, but it needed to make sure that everyone, regardless of how big or small their group is, had a say in shaping the country's future. Now, take a moment to write your thoughts in your journal. Consider these questions:

ASK Students

Why do you think it's important for both the majority and minority to have a voice in decisions? How do you think the Founding Fathers made sure everyone's rights were protected? What are some ways the government can ensure that the minority's ideas are heard?

TELL Students 🔑

During his trip across America, Alexis de Tocqueville noticed something very interesting. He saw that, except for the injustice of slavery, most people in America did not take away the rights of the smaller group, called the minority. This was very different from his home country, France, where the larger group often had too much power. Tocqueville wanted to understand why America was different. He realized that it wasn't just the government that kept things fair, but also the way people lived and the choices they made. He called this **"habits of the heart."** This means how people naturally act and make decisions based on their beliefs. Tocqueville observed that many Americans had strong values and followed the teachings of Christianity. These beliefs helped them act fairly, be kind, and show respect for others. Even though the laws allowed people to make choices, their faith taught them to do what was right and to avoid harming others.

Lesson

TELL Students (continued)

Tocqueville also learned that self-control was important for people to live peacefully and protect each other's rights. **Self-control** means thinking carefully before you act, and only acting in ways that are good and helpful. It helps you make better choices instead of acting too quickly. For example, if you want to talk while your teacher is speaking, self-control helps you wait your turn. If you feel angry, self-control helps you take a deep breath and stay calm instead of yelling.

ASK Students

How do you think Tocqueville's idea of "habits of the heart" helped Americans make fair decisions and protect the rights of everyone? Can you think of a time when self-control helped you make a good decision?

TELL Students

When Alexis de Tocqueville traveled across America, he noticed something important about how people lived and worked together. He saw that while the American government didn't have many rules to stop the majority (the larger group) from having too much power, the values held by the American people helped keep things fair. One key value he noticed was religion, which taught people to make good choices and treat others with fairness and respect. Tocqueville believed that religion gave people strong values that guided their actions. The Founding Fathers also thought religion was important for a strong country. They made sure that the Federal government would not force people to follow a certain religion, but they believed that religious values could help people make wise and fair decisions. Tocqueville saw that in America, religion and democracy worked together in a way that helped people stay free, make good choices, and treat each other with respect. Please write an observation in your journal. Here are some questions to guide your thinking:

ASK Students

Why did the Founding Fathers think religion was important for the country? How do you think religion and democracy work together in a country? Can you think of a time when kindness and respect helped solve a problem? Write about it.

Lesson

TELL Students

Tocqueville learned that one of the strongest things about the United States was self-government. Remember, self-government means that people can make their own rules and decisions in their towns and cities. Tocqueville saw that people went to town meetings, voted on important issues, and worked together to help their community. By doing these things, they learned how to be responsible and became better leaders as they grew older. Tocqueville also noticed that the beliefs and values people had helped them make good choices and kept the country strong. He saw that in America, faith and democracy worked together. Many people used their faith to help them be kind, fair, and make wise decisions. Tocqueville believed this was one reason why democracy worked so well in the United States.

ASK Students

How did Tocqueville see self-government helping people become better leaders? Why do you think faith and democracy are important for making good choices? How can we use our values to help our community?

TELL Students

Alexis de Tocqueville learned many important lessons during his trip across America. He observed that people in towns and cities worked together to solve problems and make decisions for their communities. **[Reference Tocqueville Image]** This helped them learn how to be responsible, take care of their neighbors, and be active participants in their government. By helping with local government, people understood how democracy worked and why it was important to have fair leaders who listened to the people. Tocqueville also noticed that when people in small towns were involved in their local government, it made the entire country stronger. He saw that faith, especially Christianity, helped people make good choices and treat others with fairness and respect. This kept the government balanced and prevented any one group from having too much power. He believed that when people had strong values and worked together, their communities and the country as a whole would succeed.

Let's watch an exciting Learn More with Liberty to discover what Tocqueville admired about our country. As you watch, think about what you admire most about America too!

Lesson

WATCH

Learn More with Liberty: Tocqueville's America:
What Makes the U.S. Different from Other Countries?



TELL Students

Tocqueville's ideas are still very important today! Self-government, strong values, and working together are the keys to keeping our country strong. Today, people continue to vote, attend town meetings, and help make decisions for their schools, neighborhoods, and cities. Just like in Tocqueville's time, Americans take responsibility for their communities and work together to solve problems. His trip taught him that democracy only works when people stay involved, and this lesson is just as important today as it was during his journey across America. **[Reference American Flag Image]** Reflect on what makes our country great. How does being involved in local government and working together with others help our nation stay strong? Think about how these ideas connect with what we learned about American exceptionalism in our earlier lessons, where we saw how America's values and freedom make it unique in the world.



Democracy in Action: Discovering and Displaying America's Values

Objective

Fourth-grade students will apply their observations from Alexis de Tocqueville's journey across America to create a display that showcases what they believe makes America great, reflecting Tocqueville's key points about democracy, self-government, religion, and community values.

Introduction

Start by reminding students about Tocqueville's observations on democracy in America, focusing on his admiration for the following:

- Self-government: People actively participate in decisions for their communities.
- The role of religion: Faith that helps people make fair decisions and treat others with respect.
- Local government: The power of towns and small communities in shaping democracy.
- Equality and liberty: How American society worked to treat everyone equally and preserve freedom.

Ask the students:

- What do you think makes America great, based on what we've learned about Tocqueville's journey?
- How does democracy in America help keep us free and strong?

Create Your Own "Democracy in Action"

1. Divide students into small groups or have them work individually to create a visual representation of what Tocqueville admired about America. Have them start by putting their observations into a book form and reading them individually or with a friend. Provide materials such as:
    - Large sheets of paper, markers, construction paper, and any other supplies needed for their displays.
    - Students can include images, words, and symbols that represent:
        - Democracy in action (voting, local meetings)
        - The role of faith in shaping values (kindness, fairness)
        - Self-government and how it connects to strong communities
        - The balance between equality and liberty
2. Encourage students to reflect on their own observations from Tocqueville's journey. Have them answer questions like:
    - How does participating in local government help protect our freedoms?
    - What role does faith play in a strong community?
    - How can we show self-control and responsibility to make our communities better?



Democracy in Action: Discovering and Displaying America's Values

Guidelines for the Display:

- The display should include at least three major observations based on Tocqueville's teachings.
- Visual elements (drawings, symbols, etc.) should help explain the students' ideas.
- The display should also include a brief paragraph or sentence summarizing what makes America great, based on their observations

Gallery Walk

1. Set up the displays around the classroom for a gallery walk. Each student or group will display their work on a designated wall or table.
2. Students will walk around the room, reading and observing the displays made by their classmates.
3. Reflection: After the walk, have students gather and discuss what they observed. Guide the discussion with questions like:
    - What did you notice about how your classmates portrayed Tocqueville's observations?
    - Which ideas about America's democracy did you find the most interesting or important?
    - How did seeing your classmates' work help you think more deeply about what makes America great?

Conclusion

End the activity with a short reflection and connection to earlier lessons. Ask students:

- How do these ideas about democracy, faith, and self-government connect to the American exceptionalism we discussed in earlier lessons?
- How can you apply these ideas to your own life as a good citizen?

This activity will give students the opportunity to synthesize the lessons about Tocqueville's journey and express their understanding creatively while reinforcing the importance of democracy and shared values in American society.



Tocqueville's Tune

Objective

Fourth-grade students will work in groups to create a song about one key observation Alexis de Tocqueville made during his trip to America, explaining why it is still important today. The activity will help students understand Tocqueville's lessons about democracy, local government, religion, and equality while using creativity to communicate the value of these ideas.

Introduction

- Begin by reviewing Alexis de Tocqueville's observations about America. Highlight one or two major themes from his writings, such as:
  - **Self-government:** How Americans actively participate in local government and make decisions that affect their lives.
  - **Religion and democracy:** How faith and democracy worked together to guide people toward fairness and responsibility.
  - **Equality and liberty:** How America worked to protect freedom and treat people equally, even in Tocqueville's time.
- Ask the students:
  - What do you think makes America great, based on what Tocqueville observed?
  - Why do you think it is important for us to understand these ideas today?

Songwriting Challenge

1. Divide students into small groups (3-4 students per group).
2. Assign each group one of the key themes from Tocqueville's observations:
   - Self-government
   - Religion and Democracy
   - Equality and Liberty
3. Provide guidelines for creating the song:
   - The song should be about one specific lesson Tocqueville learned (choose from the themes above).
   - Students can write lyrics and create a melody, or if they prefer, they can adapt an existing well-known tune.



- The song must answer these questions:
  - What did Tocqueville learn about America?
  - Why is this lesson important today?
- Encourage students to use rhyming words, repetition, and a catchy rhythm to make the song memorable.

4. Provide materials:
   - Paper and pencils for writing lyrics.
   - Optional: Instruments (like small tambourines, maracas, or a piano if available) or clapping for rhythm.

Rehearsal and Preparation

- Allow each group time to rehearse their song and make any adjustments to the lyrics or melody.
- Encourage students to practice performing with energy and enthusiasm, as they will be sharing their songs with the class.

Song Sharing

- Hold a "Tocqueville Song Concert" where each group performs their song for the class.
- After each performance, ask the class:
  - What did you like about this song?
  - How does the song reflect what Tocqueville learned about America?
  - Why is the lesson from Tocqueville still important today?

Reflection

- Class Discussion: Ask students to reflect on the activity.
  - What was the most interesting thing you learned from Tocqueville's observations?
  - How can we apply what Tocqueville observed in our own lives today?
  - How did creating a song help you understand the importance of Tocqueville's ideas?

Extension

If time permits, create a class "Tocqueville's Tune" album where each group's song is recorded (even if just on video or audio). This will give students a fun way to review the lessons later!

Short Answer Assessment

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. **Who was Alexis de Tocqueville?** (Write a few sentences explaining who he was and why he visited America.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. **What did Tocqueville learn about American self-government?** (Explain how Americans participate in their government and why it is important.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. **Tocqueville said that religion helped people make good choices. Why did he think this?** (Describe how religion was connected to democracy in America.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Short Answer Assessment

4. **How did Tocqueville see the role of local government in America?** (Explain why he thought local governments were important for freedom.)

5. **What did Tocqueville think about equality and liberty in America?** (Write about what Tocqueville observed regarding equality and freedom in America.)

6. **Why do you think Tocqueville's observations are still important today?** (Explain why his lessons about democracy, freedom, and self-government matter in today's world.)

Short Answer Assessment

7. **Reflecting on Tocqueville's journey, what is one thing you think makes America great today?** (Write your own thought about why America is great based on what Tocqueville observed.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Bonus Question

What is one thing you learned from this lesson that you can use to help your community? (Think about what Tocqueville said and how you can apply it in your life.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Answer Key: Short Answer Assessment

1. Who was Alexis de Tocqueville?

   Answer: Alexis de Tocqueville was a French writer and political thinker who visited America in 1831 to study the American prison system. However, he also observed many aspects of American society, including its government, values, and democracy. He wrote a book called *Democracy in America* in which he shared his thoughts on what made America unique.

2. What did Tocqueville learn about American self-government?

   Answer: Tocqueville learned that Americans participated in their government through voting and attending local meetings. He saw that people were involved in decisions that affected their communities, which helped them understand how to be responsible citizens. He believed this active participation made America strong and helped protect freedom.

3. Tocqueville said that religion helped people make good choices. Why did he think this?

   Answer: Tocqueville believed that religion, especially Christianity, helped guide people to make moral and fair decisions. It taught them to treat others with kindness and respect, which supported democratic values. He saw that religious values helped Americans act with fairness and keep their communities strong and balanced.

4. How did Tocqueville see the role of local government in America?

   Answer: Tocqueville believed that local governments, like town meetings, were essential to maintaining freedom. He saw these meetings as places where people learned about their rights and responsibilities. He thought that strong local governments helped protect individual freedoms and made citizens more responsible.

5. What did Tocqueville think about equality and liberty in America?

   Answer: Tocqueville observed that in America, people were treated equally and had freedoms that protected their rights. He saw that equality and liberty worked together to help everyone have a voice in the government. He believed that these principles made America unique compared to other countries, like France, where freedom and equality were not as strongly protected.

Answer Key: Short Answer Assessment

6. Why do you think Tocqueville's observations are still important today?

   Answer: Tocqueville's observations are still important because they teach us the value of being active citizens, respecting others' rights, and participating in democracy. His ideas about self-government, equality, and liberty continue to shape how we live in a free country today. Understanding these lessons helps us protect our freedoms and make good choices for our communities.

7. Reflecting on Tocqueville's journey, what is one thing you think makes America great today?

   Answer: (Answer will vary depending on the student's personal reflections but should connect to a key theme from Tocqueville's observations, such as the importance of self-government, the role of religion in guiding values, or equality and liberty.)

   Example:
   One thing that makes America great today is the ability for everyone to have a voice in government. Whether it's voting, attending local meetings, or sharing ideas, people can be part of decisions that shape their future.

Bonus Question:

What is one thing you learned from this lesson that you can use to help your community?

Answer: (Answer will vary depending on the student's personal reflections, but should be based on the lessons learned from Tocqueville's observations, such as participating in local government, treating others with kindness, or standing up for fairness.)

Example:
I can help my community by getting involved in local meetings to make decisions that benefit everyone. I will also make sure to treat others with kindness and respect, just like Tocqueville said was important.

Student Text

Please read the following paragraph to learn more.

During his trip across America, Tocqueville was amazed by how well local governments worked. He saw that towns and cities had schools, well-maintained roads, and churches where people could gather to worship. He also noticed that the people in each town worked together to make important decisions. This teamwork helped them learn how to be responsible and good citizens. Being a good citizen means helping others, following rules, and making thoughtful, fair choices. Today, we still have thousands of towns and schools all across the United States, each managed by local governments. This shows how important it is for people to work together to make decisions and take care of their communities. Local governments help make America strong and free!

Resources

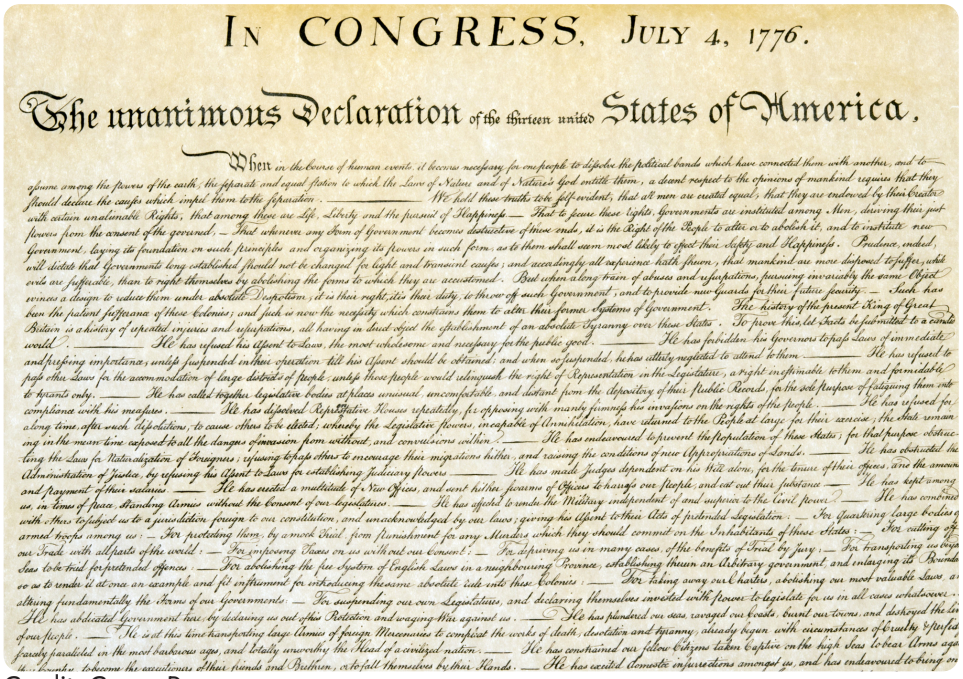
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Images

Declaration of Independence


IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

When in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. — We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. — Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world. — He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good. — He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them. — He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only. — He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures. — He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people. — He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within. — He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands. — He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers. — He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries. — He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our People, and eat out their substance. — He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our Legislatures. — He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power. — He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation: — For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us: — For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States: — For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world: — For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent: — For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by jury: — For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences: — For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies: — For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments: — For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with Power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever. — He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us. — He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people. — He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation. — He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands. — He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

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Fourth of July



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U.S. Constitution



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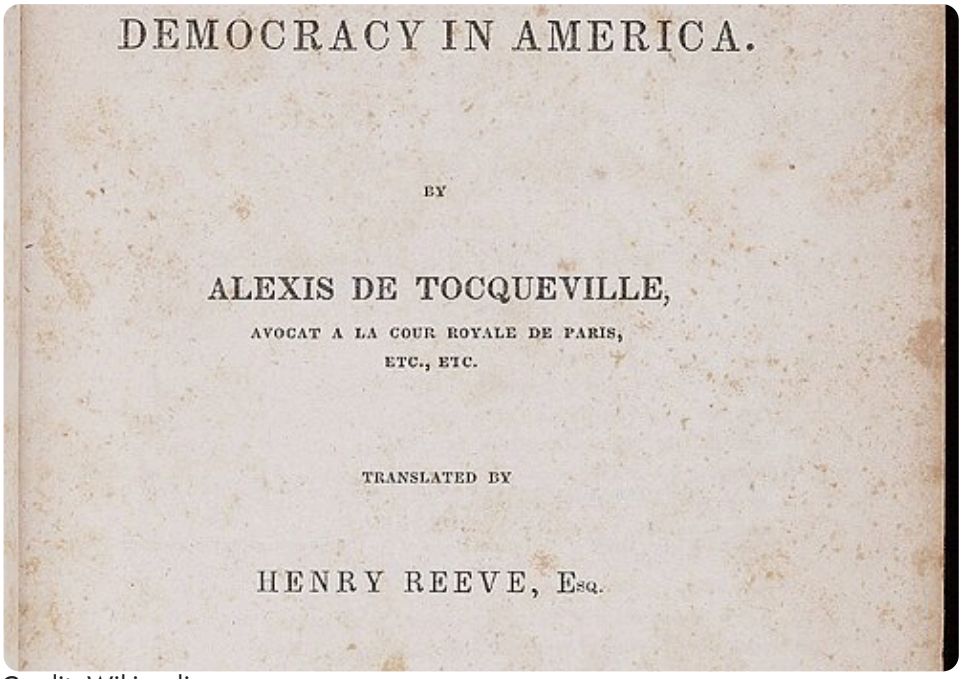
Alexis de Tocqueville



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Democracy in America



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Royal Charters



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Balance of Power



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American Revolution



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U.S. Map



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Second Great Awakening



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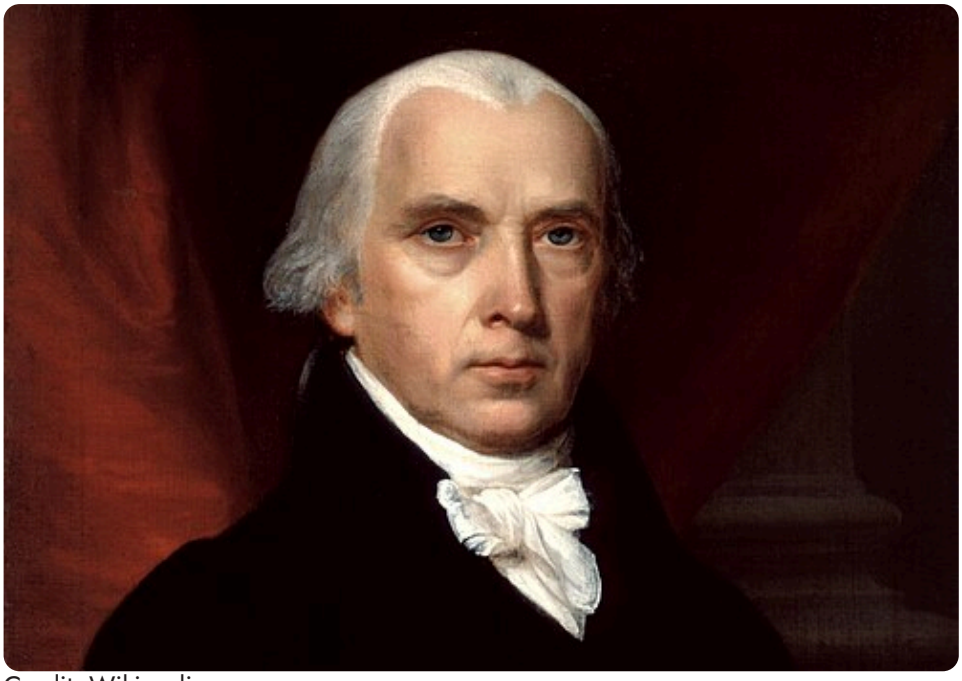
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George Washington



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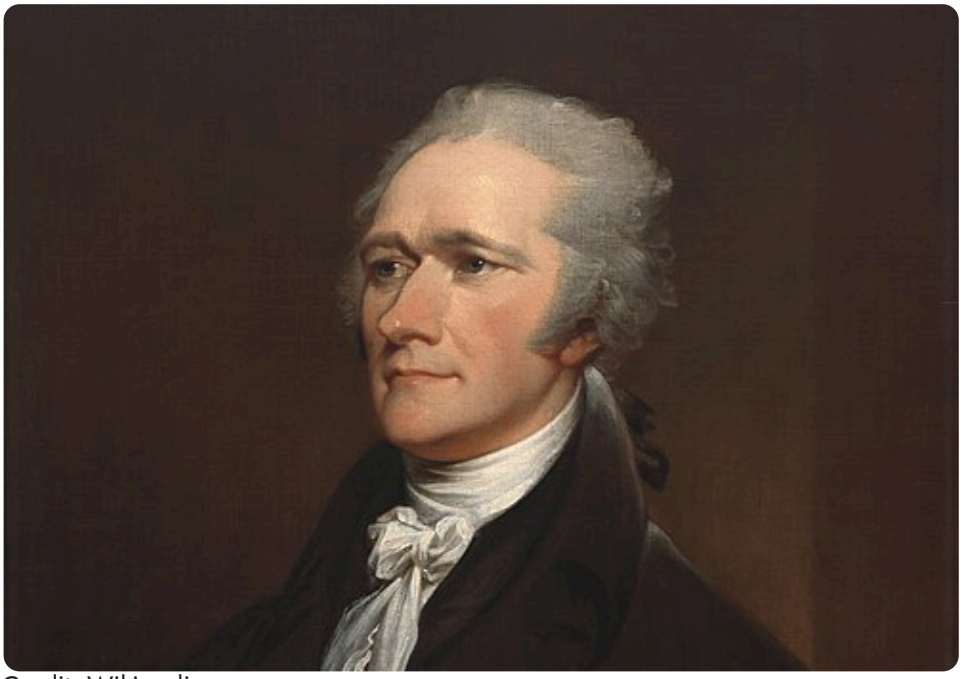
James Madison



Credit: Wikipedia

Images

Alexander Hamilton



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American Flag



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Notes