Kindergarten

DISCOVER AMERICA

Teacher Guide



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

LITTLEPATRIOTS

WWW.LITTLEPATRIOTSLEARNING.COM

Table of

Contents

3 Themes & Values

Learning Objectives

4 Key Terms

6 Introduction

10 Lesson

16 Activity: Tocqueville's Tracks

18 Activity: Habits of the Heart - Being a Good Citizen

20 Resources

22 Images

25 Notes

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

- Explain who the Founding Fathers were and why they helped create important documents like the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.
- Understand that a government is a group of leaders who help make rules and decisions for a community, state, or country.
- Explain that in a democracy, people help make decisions by voting for leaders and laws.
- Understand that self-government means people make their own rules and work together to take care of their communities.
- Identify how faith helped guide people in making good choices and treating others with kindness and fairness.
- Explain that Tocqueville traveled to America and learned what made the country strong.

Key Terms

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

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

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

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

05 **faith:** believing in something even when you cannot see it.

06 **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.

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

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

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

10 **majority:** a large group of people who agree on something or share the same beliefs.

11 **minority:** a group that is smaller than the majority and that has different ideas or beliefs from the majority.

12 **monarchy:** a type of government where a king or queen has the power to make all the decisions.

Key Terms

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

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

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

16 **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.

17 **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, Little Patriots! We have been learning about our Founding Fathers—the brave leaders who helped shape the United States by writing important documents like the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution. Remember, the **Declaration of Independence** is a very important document that the Founding Fathers wrote to tell Great Britain that the colonies were free and would govern themselves. The document says that all people have natural rights, like life, liberty, and the opportunity, or chance, to seek happiness, and that these rights come 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! **[Reference Fourth of July Image]** And, the **United States Constitution** is 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. The Constitution explains how laws are made, who is in charge, and how power is shared so that no one person or group has too much control. It also includes the Bill of Rights, which protects freedom of speech and freedom of religion, and makes sure that the government treats you fairly. The Constitution is the highest law in the United States, and it still guides our country today!

ASK Students

Why are our Founding Fathers important?

TELL Students 📷🔑

We have read what the Founding Fathers wrote and studied the important decisions they made to build our nation. But today, we are going to read about someone who was not a colonist or a Founding Father. Instead, he was a visitor from another country. Alexis de Tocqueville was a Frenchman who traveled across the United States in 1831. He learned a lot about our government. **[Reference Tocqueville Image]** A **government** is a group of leaders who help make rules and decisions for a community, state, or country. The government works to keep people safe, make sure everyone is treated fairly, and help things run smoothly. It builds things like roads, schools, and parks and makes laws that people must follow. One special kind of government is called a democracy. In a **democracy**, the people help make decisions by voting for their leaders and laws. The United States has a democracy, which means that citizens get to choose their leaders and have a say in how the country is run. This makes sure that everyone's voice is heard and that the government works to protect the rights and freedoms of the people.

Introduction

ASK Students

Why do you think it is important for people to have a say in choosing their leaders?

TELL Students

Alexis de Tocqueville wanted to learn why democracy worked so well in America, while his home country of France was struggling to create a stable government after its own revolution—a time when the people of France fought to change their government and gain more freedom. Tocqueville took careful notes on what he saw, especially how Americans valued freedom, faith, and local government. Later, he gathered all his observations into a book called *Democracy in America*. Today, we are going to explore what Tocqueville learned from our nation and why his discoveries about democracy, religious freedom, and self-government are still important today! **Self-government** means that the 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. In self-government, people work together to make decisions, create laws, and help their community. This is an important part of democracy, where citizens have a say in how their country is run by voting and sharing their ideas. The United States was founded on the idea of self-government so that the people, not a king, would have the power to make choices about their own future.

ASK Students

Can you think of a place in your town or school where people work together to make decisions and help the community, just like in self-government?

TELL Students

Tocqueville believed that communities naturally form whenever people live near each other. He saw that these small towns, called villages or townships, were very important because they gave people the chance to make decisions for themselves. He believed that a country could not be truly free unless its people were involved in their own local government. **Local government** is the group of leaders in a town or city who help make rules and decisions for the community. They work to keep people safe, take care of roads and schools, and make sure the town runs smoothly. Tocqueville saw that local government was important because it let people have a voice in how their community was run. He compared local government to a school—just as schools teach students about reading and math, local government teaches people how to be responsible citizens and protect their freedoms.

Introduction

ASK Students

Why do you think it's important for people in a community to help make decisions about their town or city? What can local leaders do to help their communities?

TELL Students

America has always relied on local communities to make decisions. When the colonists came to America, the king of England gave them special rules called Royal Charters, which allowed them to create their own local governments. Since England was very far away, it was hard for the king to control the colonies. This made local government an important part of life, and it helped the colonists learn how to govern themselves. Tocqueville focused on towns in New England as examples of strong local government. He noticed that when people took part in running their towns, they became more connected to their community and learned how to work together. They developed a love for freedom, fairness, and responsibility. **Responsibility** means taking care of things that need to be done and making good choices. When you are responsible, you do what is expected of you, like cleaning up your toys, finishing your homework, or helping a friend. Being responsible also means thinking about how your actions affect others and doing your best to be kind, honest, and helpful.

ASK Students

What are some ways you can be responsible in your school or community, just like the colonists and townspeople Tocqueville wrote about?

TELL Students

Tocqueville also believed that when people helped their community, they were also helping themselves. He believed that when people worked to improve their town, they became better **citizens**—members of a community who have rights and responsibilities. Citizens help take care of their town by following rules, being kind to others, and working together to make their community a better place. Tocqueville thought that local government was the foundation—or strong base—that helped a country succeed. When people took part in making decisions for their town, they learned how to be responsible and how to protect their freedoms. So far, Tocqueville has learned a lot of good things about democracy and the United States. Let's watch a Star Spangled Adventures cartoon to learn more about his adventure!

Lesson

TELL Students

Alexis de Tocqueville had quite an adventure, didn't he? Have you ever gone on a field trip and discovered something new? His journey across America was similar—he traveled to learn about the country. He learned a lot about how its government worked, especially at the local level. While big national and global issues often get the most attention, Tocqueville learned that local government has the biggest impact on people's daily lives. It helps run schools, repair roads, keep neighborhoods safe, provide clean water, and respond to emergencies. Local government makes decisions that directly affect communities, helping to keep everything running smoothly.

ASK Students

What are some ways the local government helps our community every day? Can you think of something in your town, like a school, a park, or a road, that local leaders help take care of? Please turn to your neighbor to discuss. [Give students three minutes to discuss with a neighbor and then discuss as a class.]

TELL Students

Tocqueville was very impressed by how well local governments in America worked. He noticed that towns and cities in the United States had many schools, well-kept roads, and churches that met the needs of their communities. He saw that people took an active role in making decisions for their towns, and this helped them learn how to be responsible citizens. Today, there are about 3,144 counties, more than 13,000 school districts, and over 16,500 towns across the United States. This proves that self-government—where people have a say in how their communities are run—is still an important part of keeping America free and strong.

ASK Students

Why do you think it's important for people to help take care of their town or city? How do you help make your community a better place?

TELL Students

Tocqueville was also fascinated by the role of religion in the United States. **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.

Lesson

TELL Students (continued)

One of the first things Tocqueville noticed during his travels was how important religion was to the American people. Unlike in Europe, where religion and government often clashed, Tocqueville saw that in America, Christianity and democracy worked together. As we learned in earlier lessons, many people in America at this time practiced Christianity. **Christianity** is a religion based on the teachings of Jesus Christ. Tocqueville found that many people in the United States believed that their faith helped guide them to make good decisions.

ASK Students

Why do you think faith is important to people?

TELL Students 📷🔑

Tocqueville visited the United States during the **Second Great Awakening**, a time of religious revival that took place from the late 1700s to the early 1800s. **[Reference Second Great Awakening Image]** During this time, church membership grew quickly, and Christianity had a strong influence on American daily life. Tocqueville believed that this connection between faith and democracy helped keep America strong. He believed that practicing faith helped people make good choices and be involved in their government in a fair and responsible way. **Faith** means believing in something even when you cannot see it. Many Americans had faith in God, and they believed that their religious values helped them be kind, honest, and responsible. Instead of being controlled by the government, religion in America thrived on its own. It encouraged people to work hard, help others, and take part in their communities.

ASK Students

How do you think faith and kindness help people make their communities a better place?

TELL Students 🔑

Tocqueville noticed that while religion did not control the government in America, it was very important in shaping the country's values and beliefs. He believed that religion helped people understand their freedoms and encouraged them to protect those freedoms. In France, where Tocqueville was from, many people thought that religion, especially the Catholic church, was a problem for democracy.

Lesson

TELL Students (continued)

This idea came from the French Revolution, which was a time in France when the people decided they no longer wanted a king to rule them. During the French Revolution, revolutionaries—people who wanted big changes in the government—fought to take power away from the king and give more rights to the people. Some of these revolutionaries thought that religion was too closely connected to the monarchy. A **monarchy** is a type of government where a single person, like a king or queen, has the power to make all the decisions. The French king claimed he ruled by divine right, which means he thought he was chosen by God, not the people. So, the revolutionaries tried to remove religion from public life. Many churches were closed, and Christian symbols and holidays were taken away.

ASK Students

Why do you think Tocqueville was surprised that religion and democracy worked together in America?

TELL Students

Tocqueville saw that things were very different in the United States. He noticed that the Second Great Awakening, a time when many people turned to Christianity, helped bring Americans together under the belief that all people were equal. He believed that in America, religion and democracy worked together. Religious leaders supported the country's system of government, and their teachings encouraged people to respect laws and protect freedom. He compared it to ancient Rome and Greece, where only certain people had rights. Tocqueville believed Christianity helped spread the idea that all people are created equal. He thought that the teachings of Jesus Christ helped people understand that everyone should be treated fairly and have the same rights. In his view, religion was not something that held democracy back, but something that helped keep America strong and free.

ASK Students

What did Tocqueville learn about religion and democracy in America?

TELL Students 📷🔑

Tocqueville's biggest concern about democracy in the United States was that the majority could take away the freedoms of the minority.

Lesson

TELL Students (continued)

A **majority** is the larger group of people who agree on something or share the same beliefs. A **minority** is the smaller group that has different ideas or beliefs from the majority. Tocqueville worried that if the majority always made the rules, the minority might not have their voices heard or their rights protected. This was also a fear of the Founding Fathers—leaders like George Washington, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton, who helped create the United States government. **[Reference Washington, Madison, and Hamilton Images]** James Madison and Alexander Hamilton wrote about this in a collection of essays called the **Federalist Papers**. These essays explained how the new government would work and how it would protect people's rights. One of the things they explained was that if a majority group had too much power, the minority might lose their rights and freedoms.

ASK Students

What do you think would happen if only the majority got to make all the rules and the minority never got a chance to share their ideas?

TELL Students

Tocqueville agreed that unlimited power could be dangerous. In the United States, the majority had a big influence over public opinion, laws, and government decisions. He worried that if the majority always controlled everything, there would be little protection for smaller groups with different beliefs. However, when he studied America, he found that, except for the injustice of slavery, the majority in the United States did not take away the rights of the minority as often as in some European countries, including France. Tocqueville believed this was because of the values and beliefs of the American people. He called these values "**habits of the heart**," meaning the way people naturally behaved and treated one another. Tocqueville learned that religion, particularly Christianity, had an impact on "habits of the heart." Many Americans had faith in God and followed religious teachings that encouraged them to be fair, honest, and respectful toward others.

ASK Students

What are "habits of the heart"?

Lesson

TELL Students

Tocqueville saw that religion helped people understand the difference between right and wrong. Even if laws allowed people to make certain choices, religious teachings encouraged them to be fair and do what is right. Because of this, he believed that religion helped protect freedom and stop leaders from treating others unfairly. The Founding Fathers also thought religion was important for a strong and fair government. They made sure that no one would be forced to follow a certain religion, but they also believed that religious values could help people make good choices and treat others with fairness and respect.

ASK Students

Why do you think it is important for people to make fair and kind choices, even if there are no rules telling them what to do?

TELL Students 📷

In his Farewell Address, President George Washington told Americans that religion and good values were very important for the country to be strong and successful. **[Reference Washington Image]** He believed that people needed to make good choices and treat others with fairness and respect to keep the nation free. He warned that if people stopped caring about what is right and wrong, it would be harder to protect freedom. Because the Founding Fathers wanted everyone to have religious freedom, they did not make one official religion for the country. Tocqueville noticed that even though religion was not part of the government, it still inspired American values. It helped people understand their freedoms and encouraged them to do what was right.

ASK Students

Why do you think it's important for people to make good choices and treat others with kindness and respect? How does that help keep our country strong?

TELL Students

Tocqueville also believed that one of America's greatest strengths was self-government—the idea that people could make their own rules and decisions, starting in their own towns and cities. He saw that people attended town meetings, voted on important issues, and worked together to make choices that would help their communities. This experience helped them learn responsibility and

Lesson

TELL Students (continued)

prepared them to be good leaders in their state and national government. Tocqueville also noticed that people's beliefs and values helped guide their choices and kept the country strong. He saw that in America, faith and democracy worked together. He believed this was one of the reasons why democracy was so successful in the United States.

ASK Students

What did Tocqueville learn about self-government in America?

TELL Students

Alexis de Tocqueville traveled across the United States and learned what made American democracy successful. He saw that self-government was a key part of American life, as people in local communities took responsibility for making decisions, solving problems, and improving their towns. He also noticed that religion, especially Christianity, helped shape American values by encouraging people to treat others fairly, respect laws, and protect freedom. Unlike in some European countries, where the government controlled many aspects of life, Tocqueville observed that Americans worked together to govern themselves. He believed that the combination of self-government, strong values, and active participation in the community helped make democracy in the United States strong. Today, Tocqueville's ideas still apply, as Americans continue to vote, serve their communities, and take part in government at the local, state, and national levels. His observations remind us that freedom and democracy require responsibility, respect, and involvement from all citizens.



Tocqueville's Tracks

Objective

Kindergarten students will learn about Alexis de Tocqueville, a Frenchman who came to America and studied how people lived, worked together, and governed themselves. They will explore their own role in their community through a fun and engaging interactive activity.

Materials Needed

- A large map or printed map of the United States and France
- Picture cards showing community helpers (mayor, police officer, teacher, firefighter, doctor, etc.)
- Large paper or whiteboard
- Stickers or stamps

Instructions

1. Review Tocqueville's Journey to America

- Explain that Tocqueville was a Frenchman who came to the United States in 1831 and studied how Americans lived and governed themselves. He was curious about why democracy worked so well in America.
- Show a map and point to France, explaining that Tocqueville traveled across the ocean to visit the United States.

2. Tocqueville Observes American Communities

- Explain that Tocqueville saw that people in America helped make decisions for their towns and worked together to solve problems. He noticed that people in local communities, like towns and cities, helped keep everything running smoothly.

3. Interactive Drawing

- Show picture cards of community helpers (mayor, police officer, teacher, firefighter, doctor, etc.) one at a time. Ask students to guess who they are and how they help the community.
- Discuss how each person plays a role in making sure the community works well.



4. Building Our Own Community

- On a large piece of paper or a whiteboard, draw a simple town layout (houses, school, park, roads, etc.).
- Ask students to help decide where the community helpers should go in the town. For example, where does the mayor make decisions? Where do firefighters work?
- Let students place stickers or stamps to represent important places in the community.

5. Community Problem-Solving

- Tell students that Tocqueville saw that Americans worked together to fix problems in their towns.
- Give them simple scenarios, such as:
  - "The park needs to be cleaned up. Who can help?"
  - "A new school needs to be built. Who makes that decision?"
  - "A road has a hole in it. Who fixes it?"
- Let students discuss and decide who in the community would help solve these problems.

6. Reflection and Wrap-Up

- Ask students what they learned about Tocqueville and how he saw American communities working together.
- Have them share one way they can help in their own community, like picking up trash, helping a friend, or listening to their teacher.
- Give each student a "Community Helper" sticker or stamp for participating.

Extension Idea

If possible, take a short "field trip" around the school to observe how different people help keep the community running, such as the principal making decisions, the janitor keeping the school clean, or the teachers helping students learn.



Habits of the Heart - Being a Good Citizen

Objective

Kindergarten students will learn about Tocqueville's idea of "habits of the heart"—the values and behaviors that help people live together in a fair and kind community. Through interactive role-playing and discussion, students will explore how they can practice good habits in their daily lives.

Materials Needed

- A large paper heart cutout or a felt board heart
- Picture cards or illustrations of different actions (sharing, helping, listening, being kind, following rules, etc.)
- Small heart stickers or cutouts
- A story or short video clip about kindness and respect (optional)

Instructions

1. Introduction to "Habits of the Heart"

- Begin by telling students:

  A long time ago, a man named Alexis de Tocqueville came to America to learn about how people worked together. He saw that Americans had something special called "habits of the heart." These were the good choices people made every day that helped their country stay strong, fair, and free. Some of these habits were kindness, honesty, helping others, and working together.
- Show the large heart cutout and explain that it represents all the good choices we make to help our community.

2. Role-Playing "Habits of the Heart"

- Hold up different picture cards showing actions like:
  - Sharing toys
  - Helping a friend who falls
  - Saying "thank you"
  - Cleaning up after playing
  - Listening to the teacher
  - Being respectful to others



Habits of the Heart - Being a Good Citizen

    - Waiting for a turn
    - Being honest
- For each card, ask students:
- *Is this a habit of the heart? How does it help our class or community?*
- If the answer is yes, let a student place a heart sticker or cut-out onto the large heart.

3. "Habit of the Heart" Movement Game

- Call out a habit (e.g., "helping others"), and students must act it out (pretend to help a friend up).
- Call out a different habit (e.g., "sharing"), and students pretend to pass a toy to a friend.
- Continue with different habits, encouraging students to think about how these actions help their school, family, and community.

4. Reflection and Wrap-Up

- Gather students and ask:
  How do good habits help us all get along?
  How do they help our classroom, school, and town?
  What habit of the heart will you try to use today?
- Summarize: *Tocqueville saw that Americans had strong habits of the heart. He believed these habits helped keep the country strong and fair. We can all practice these habits every day to make our school and community a better place!*

Extension Activity

- Create a "Habits of the Heart" Chart where students can add stickers whenever they show kindness, honesty, or responsibility during the week.

This activity helps young learners connect Tocqueville's idea to their own lives by making kindness and responsibility fun and interactive!

Resources

- Tocqueville, Alexis de. "Vol. II, Book IV, Chapter VI: What Sort Of Despotism Democratic Nations Have To Fear" in ***Democracy in America***. https://www.gutenberg.org/files/816/816-h/816-h.htm#link2HCH0073.
- Tocqueville, Alexis de. "Vol I. Book I, Chapter V: Necessity of Examining the Condition of the States" in ***Democracy in America***.
- http://seas3.elte.hu/coursematerial/LojkoMiklos/Alexis-de-Tocqueville-Democracy-in-America.pdf.
- Zunz, Olivier and Kramer, Larry. "Alexis De Tocqueville On Associations And Philanthropy" in ***HistPhil***.
- https://histphil.org/2015/07/13/alexis-de-tocqueville-on-associations-and-philanthropy/.
- Tocqueville, Alexis de. "Vol. I, Book I, Chapter XVII: Principal Causes Maintaining The Democratic Republic – Part I" in ***Democracy in America***.
- https://contextus.org/Tocqueville%2C_Democracy_in_America_(1835)%2C_Book_I%2C_Chapter_XVI_Causes_Mitigating_Tyranny_In_The_United_States_(Part_I).20?lang=en.
- Holloway, Carson. ***Tocqueville on Christianity and American Democracy***. Heritage Foundation. https://www.heritage.org/civil-society/report/tocqueville-christianity-and-american-democracy#_ftn26.
- J.K. ***When Notre Dame Became the Revolution's Temple of Reason.*** https://artifactstravel.com/notre-dame-cathedral-french-revolution-temple-of-reason/.
- Stand Together Trust. ***Alexis de Tocqueville and America: The enduring legacy of an outsider's perspective.*** https://standtogether.org/newsroom/constitutionally-limited-government/alexis-de-tocqueville-and-america-the-enduring-legacy-of-an-outsiders-perspective#:~:text=Tocqueville%20was%20born%20into%20an,politics%20at%20an%20early%20age.
- Tocqueville, Alexis de. "Volume I, Book I, Chapter II: The Origin Of The Anglo-Americans Part II" in ***Democracy in America***.
- Tocqueville, Alexis de. "Vol. I, Book I, Introductory Chapter" in ***Democracy in America.*** https://contextus.org/Tocqueville%2C_Democracy_in_America_(1835)%2C_Book_I%2C_Introductory_Chapter.10?lang=en&with=Navigation&lang2=en
- Tocqueville, Alexis de. "Vol. II, Book I, Chapter III: Why The Americans Display More Readiness And More Taste For General Ideas Than Their Forefathers" in ***Democracy in America***.
- https://www.gutenberg.org/files/816/816-h/816-h.htm#link2HCH0003.

Resources

- Madison, James or Hamilton, Alexander. ***The Federalist Papers: No. 51***. Yale Law School. https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed51.asp.
- Tocqueville, Alexis de. "Vol. I, Book I, Chapter XV: Unlimited Power Of Majority, And Its Consequence" in ***Democracy in America***. https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/815/pg815-images.html#link2HCH0003.
- Tocqueville, Alexis de. "Vol. I, Book I, Chapter XVII: Principal Causes Maintaining The Democratic Republic — Part II" in ***Democracy in America.***
- https://contextus.org/Tocqueville%2C_Democracy_in_America_(1835)%2C_Book_I%2C_Chapter_XVII_Principal_Causes_Maintaining_The_Democratic_Republic_(Part_II).31?lang=en&with=Navigation&lang2=en.
- Washington, George. ***Farewell Address of 1796***.
- https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/resources/pdf/Washingtons_Farewell_Address.pdf.

Images

Fourth of July



Credit: Canva Pro

Alexis de Tocqueville



Credit: Wikipedia

Images

Second Great Awakening



Credit: Wikipedia

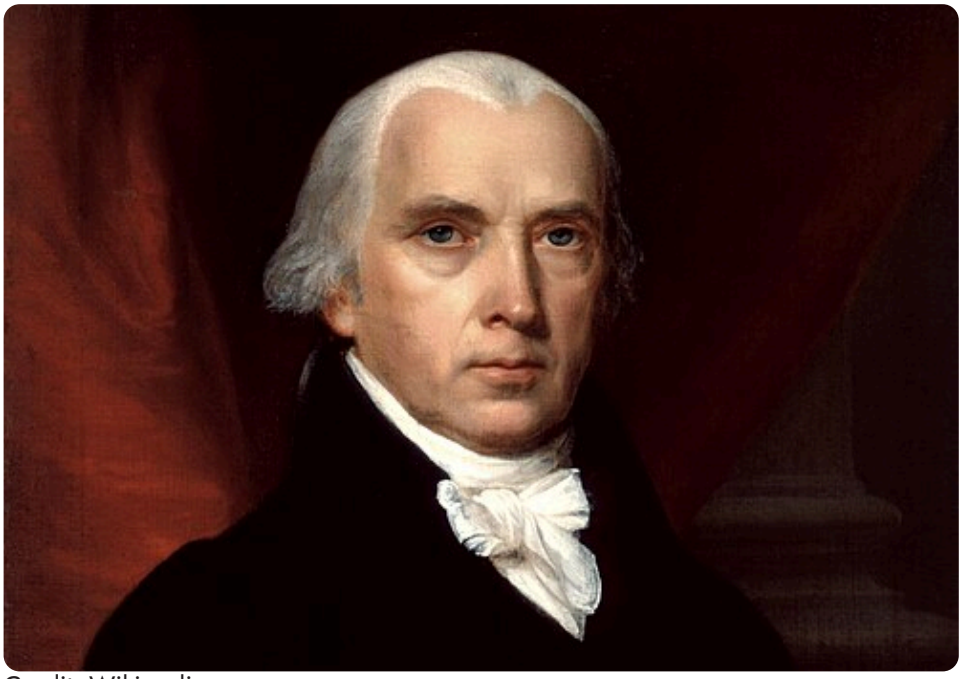
George Washington



Credit: Canva Pro

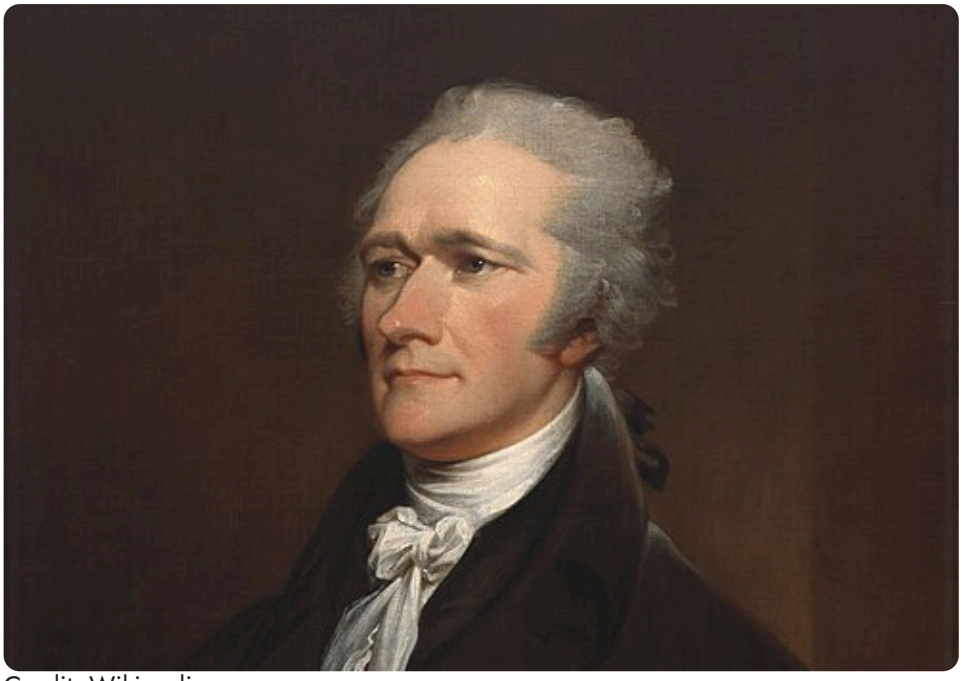
Images

James Madison



Credit: Wikipedia

Alexander Hamilton



Credit: Wikipedia

Notes