

The Sword, Tongue, and Pen

A 25- to 60-minute companion lesson

For use with *Washington, Adams, and Jefferson: The Sword, Tongue, and Pen of the American Revolution* by C.A. Worman.

GRADE LEVEL	TIME	SUBJECT	SETTING
Grades 4–6 Extension: 7–8	25–60 minutes One class period	U.S. History / Civics America250	Classroom or home Requires the picture book

Students will...

- Compare Washington, Adams, and Jefferson using facts from the book.
- Think more deeply about each man's actions and why they mattered.
- See which president they are most like based on their personality.

Materials

You will need the picture book, copies of student pages 2–3, and pencils. Print pages 1 and 4 for the adult only.

To purchase a single copy: [amazon.com/dp/B0DJ35BSBC/](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0DJ35BSBC/)

For bulk orders (5+), contact the author at: caworman.com/contact

Presidential Personality Quiz: <https://caworman.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/founding-fathers-quiz.html>

Grade bands

Grades 4–6: Complete lesson components 1, 2, and 3, then optionally 7.

Grades 7–8: Complete the same work, plus lesson components 4, 5, and 6.

Lesson sequence

1–3 is about 25 minutes (if this is all you use, students only need page 2). 4–6 is about 15 to 20 minutes. 7 is 10 to 15 minutes.

1	Story read-aloud 8–10 min Read the story through the page where the three men become the first three presidents.	4	Presidency read-aloud 5 min Read the higher-level presidency pages in the back of the book.
2	Graphic organizer + questions 10 min Students write one fact from the book in each box, then answer the three story questions.	5	Extension questions 5–7 min Students answer the two extension questions, A and B.
3	Discuss 5–7 min Have students explain their answers to the three story questions.	6	Discuss 5–8 min Have students explain their answers to the extension questions.
7	Personality quiz 10–15 min Have students take the 5-question Presidential Personality Quiz individually or as a class. Then answer the questions.		

Words to preview

Preview these words from the book's glossary before you read: colonialism, liberty, noble, persevere, provocation, surveyor, and zeal.

Note. This pack is a companion to the America250 edition. It is not a reprint of the book and is not a standalone textbook. The book appears on the PBS Books America250 Reading List.

Name

Date

The Sword, Tongue, and Pen

Write one fact from the book in each box. Short phrases are enough.

	Washington <i>the Sword</i>	Adams <i>the Tongue</i>	Jefferson <i>the Pen</i>
Before they led			
During the Revolution			

Story Questions

1. Why do you think Adams nominated Washington to lead the army instead of taking the job himself?

2. How were Adams and Jefferson alike before the war?

Did you know? Both men died on July 4, 1826, the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence.

3. What was the main contribution each of the three men made in the pursuit of independence, and why did it matter?

Name _____

Date _____

Extension Questions

Use the story and the presidency pages after the story to answer each question.

A. Leaving office on purpose.

Washington was elected unanimously, then left office after serving two terms. Why might leaving office on purpose matter as much as winning it?

B. Words and reality.

Jefferson wrote of our “rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” What does the book show about how hard those words were to make real both during and after the Revolution?

Presidential Personality Quiz

Answer after taking the personality quiz.

1. Who are you most like according to the quiz, and why do you think you received that result?

2. Do you think your result was accurate? Why or why not?

Answer key

Graphic organizer

One solid fact from the story per box is enough (examples below).

1. Why Adams nominated Washington

Adams calls him a noble man, daring and courageous, and fit to lead the army. The story also shows Washington already had military experience in a militia and the French and Indian War. Adams was a lawyer, not a soldier.

2. How Adams and Jefferson were alike

Both were lawyers who wrote about rights and liberty before the war. They both valued virtue.

3. Each man's main contribution

Washington led the army. Adams sought support overseas. Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence. Students should think of related reasons for why these contributions were important.

Extension A

Washington was elected unanimously and served only two terms. Leaving on purpose shows the office is larger than the man. It is a position of service. His farewell warns against party fights and lasting foreign alliances.

Extension B

Jefferson wrote about our rights in 1776, but the war lasted until Yorktown in 1781. The British were strong, states were invaded, and many thought the Americans would lose. After the war, other conflicts arose to threaten these rights.

Personality quiz

Any thoughtful answers are acceptable.

Organizer at a glance

	Washington · Sword	Adams · Tongue	Jefferson · Pen
Before they led	Planter and surveyor; local militia; served with the British in the French and Indian War; 15 years serving his state and attending to Mount Vernon.	Boston lawyer. Famous for writing and an ambitious legal career. When redcoats fired into a crowd, he defended the soldiers.	Of Virginia; youngest of the three; legal career and belief in liberty; seen as a scholar.
During the Revolution	Nominated to lead the Continental Army; often outnumbered; persevered; Yorktown, 1781. The French crippled the British fleet.	Nominates Washington; seeks help from French Navy; argues with zeal; later called le Washington de la négociation; Paris treaty, 1783.	Writes the Declaration, 1776. As Virginia governor, his state is invaded when the British turn south.