

Museum of World Treasures

Presidents Vocabulary List

- All entries pertain directly to artifacts or signs in our exhibits.

George Washington – Known as the first President of the United States in 1789. He also was known for leading the Continental Army during the American Revolution during the years 1775-1783. Apart of the Federalist party but was favored by both Federalists and Anti-federalists.

John Adams – After falling second to George Washington and becoming his vice president, John Adams became the second President of the United States from 1797 to 1801. Adams was America's first ever vice president.

Thomas Jefferson – Was the third President of the United States and served from 1801 to 1809. Asked by John Adams to write the Declaration of Independence and soon after had a total of 56 members of the Continental Congress sign the document.

James Madison – In 1809, James Madison became the fourth President of the United States. Madison was known to be one of America's Founding Fathers and assisted in creating the U.S. Constitution in the late 1700s.

James Monroe – In 1817, Monroe was elected as the fifth President of the United States. Well known for writing the Monroe Doctrine in 1823 which states a warning to all European countries to halt any further colonization into the Western Hemisphere.

John Quincy Adams – As the eldest son of John Adams, John Quincy Adams became the sixth President of the United States, served from 1825 to 1829. Adams assisted James Madison in negotiating the Treaty of Ghent which helped end the War of 1812.

Andrew Jackson – Became the seventh President of the United States, served for two terms. Was an army general who led his army to win the Battle of Horseshoe Bend.

Martin Van Buren – Elected the eighth President of the U.S.; served one term from 1837 to 1841. Known for being one of the founders of the Democratic Party.

William Henry Harrison – Became the ninth President in 1841 but died during his term due to pneumonia.

John Tyler – Became the first Vice President to take office after the death of William Henry Harrison, making Tyler the tenth President of the United States.

James K. Polk – The last “strong” President until the Civil War. Known for adding Texas and Oregon to the US. Considered the best one-term president.

Zachary Taylor – Died in office. Strong proponent of using force to keep the Union together.

Millard Fillmore – Known for admitting California as a free state and abolishing the slave trade in Washington, D.C. also called the Compromise of 1850.

Franklin Pierce – Purchased parts of Arizona and New Mexico. President during “Bleeding Kansas,” did little to solve the conflicts.

James Buchanan – The only President who was never married. Attempted to add Kansas to the Union as a slave state and failed. Cusp of Civil War.

Abraham Lincoln – President during the Civil War. Called the “Great Emancipator,” assassinated by John Wilkes Booth.

Andrew Johnson – Impeached. Harsh to old Confederate loyalists and one of the worst presidents.

Ulysses S. Grant – Reconstruction President who brought his military men into the cabinet. Bolstered southern reconstruction with military force.

Rutherford B. Hayes - Winner of the most fiercely disputed election in our history. Reversed many Reconstruction projects.

James A. Garfield – Attacked political corruption and restored prestige to the presidency. Assassinated by Charles Guiteau.

Chester Arthur – Involved in a Civil Service Act and the Chinese Exclusion act that limited Chinese immigrants coming to the USA.

Grover Cleveland – First Democrat elected after the Civil War. Vetoed private pensions and did not favor government handouts.

Benjamin Harrison – The first president to have a billion dollar budget.

Grover Cleveland – The only President to serve non-sequential terms. During this presidency, Cleveland focused on pulling the US out of a financial crisis.

William McKinley – President under which the USA annexed Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines.

Theodore Roosevelt – Ensured the construction of the Panama Canal, busted railroad trusts in the Northwest, added a corollary to the Monroe doctrine that prevented outside nations from taking Caribbean and Central American countries, and added enormously to national parks.

William Howard Taft – Finalized the direct election of senators by state and a federal income tax.

Woodrow Wilson – Established the Federal Trade Commission, graduated income tax, President during World War I, one of the founders of the League of Nations.

Warren G. Harding – Had a scandalous presidency that his friends took advantage of.

Calvin Coolidge – The “inactive” president, some of his decisions led to the Great Depression.

Herbert Hoover – President during the stock market crash that started the Great Depression, which caused him to become a scapegoat for the entire debacle.

Franklin D. Roosevelt – The president with the longest stint – 4 terms. President during World War II, the Great Depression, and famous for his New Deal to help the nation out of financial woes.

Harry S. Truman – Perhaps most famous for making the decision to drop atomic bombs on Japan. Also signed the charter for the United Nations.

Dwight D. Eisenhower – Tried to reduce strains of the Cold War and met at the Geneva Convention. Urged military strength yet peaceful relationships with other countries.

John F. Kennedy – Youngest man elected president. Active in Civil Rights and the Cuban Missile Crisis. Assassinated by Lee Harvey Oswald.

Lyndon B. Johnson – Signed the Civil Rights Act into law. His “Great Society” saw reforms in health care, education, crime, poverty, and right to vote. President during the Vietnam conflict.

Richard Nixon – Ended the Vietnam conflict. Most of his achievements involved foreign policy – including repairing relationships with China and the USSR. Nixon resigned after the Watergate scandal.

Gerald Ford – Helped curb inflation, tried to help international relations in the Middle East, helped to revive a drooping economy, and attempted to solve energy problems.

James Carter – President during the Iranian hostage situation, Carter’s attempt at world peace was challenging. Some of his domestic challenges included civil service reform and energy.

Ronald Reagan – Reduced peoples’ reliance on the government. Overhauled income tax, enjoyed an extended period of time without war or economic problems.

George H.W. Bush – President at the end of the Cold War, the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein, and a faltering economy.

William J. Clinton – Enjoyed more peace and economic well-being than any president in history. He expanded NATO and was extremely successful in domestic affairs.

George W. Bush – President during the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York City, developed the office of Homeland Security, enabled the Patriot Act, started the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Barack Obama - Passed health care reforms, revoked “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” and fought to pull the country out of an economic depression.

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