

<p><b>Purpose:</b> Read to learn useful information about your delegate in order to understand how his background might influence his positions on issues discussed at the Constitutional Convention. Specifically consider the topics listed on the reading tool.</p> <p><b>Before reading:</b> Think about what you already know about Washington before you begin reading.</p>	<p><b>CLOSE READING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Chunk the text</li><li>- Make sense</li><li>- Ask <u>your</u> questions</li><li>- Make connections</li></ul> <p>What does this section say? What does it mean?</p>
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## George Washington

**State:** Virginia

**Age at Convention:** 55

**Date of Birth:** February 22, 1732

**Date of Death:** December 14, 1799

**Schooling:** Private Tutors, Honorary L.L.D. from Harvard 1776

**Occupation:** Planter and Slave Holder, General of the Continental Army, Lending and Investments, Real Estate Land Speculations, Public Security Interests

**Prior Political Experience:** Virginia House of Burgesses 1759-1774, Continental Congress 1774-1775, Commander in Chief of Continental Army 1775-1783

**Committee Assignments:** President of the Convention

**Convention Contributions:** Arrived May 25 and was present through the signing of the Constitution. He spoke only once near the end of the deliberations, but the record suggests that he had a profound influence on the scope and direction of the discussions. William Pierce stated that "having conducted these States to independence and peace, he now appears to assist in framing a Government to make the People happy. Like Gustavus Vasa, he made be said to be the deliverer of his Country."

**New Government Participation:** He supported ratification of the Constitution by the State of Virginia. He was unanimously elected by the Electoral College as President of the United States (1788-1796). He used his Presidential powers to put down the Whisky Rebellion (1794).\*\*



Sheila Valencia 8/16/2013 1:00 AM

**Comment [1]:** Good place to review the approach to reading and talk about each aspect of close reading. Give the rationale about efficiency for all types of classes and for college. Experts to this! Think WHILE reading instead of AFTER!  
Then have students review purpose and before reading box and then SKIM to decide where to chunk. Tell students that this chunking will help them be more efficient and do better close reading. It will also help them remember because they will be thinking along the way. Have students place \*\*\*. Discuss where to chunk (after the overview - at the line, then for this first experience, chunk every 2 paragraph - it will go quickly because there isn't much related to purpose in the first several—that's what is being modeled).

Sheila Valencia 8/16/2013 10:56 AM

**Comment [2]:** Work through this summary section with students to model how to select important information related to PURPOSE and how to state in their own words. You should also ask them to identify MY questions, confusions, curiosities (set the expectation to share questions). Make connections goes back to the PURPOSE. Then You might want to begin filling in graphic organizer on overhead.

Sheila Valencia 8/16/2013 10:57 AM

**Comment [3]:** Read aloud first section and go through "What does this section say? What does it mean?(interpretation and analysis). What are MY questions, confusions, curiosities?" Then make connections - discuss what information is important for the purpose you have - include that on your organizer.

### Biography from the National Archives:

The eldest of six children from his father's second marriage, George Washington was born into the landed gentry in 1732 at Wakefield Plantation, VA. Until reaching 16 years of age, he lived there and at other plantations along the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers, including the one that later became known as Mount Vernon.

His education was rudimentary, probably being obtained from tutors but possibly also

from private schools, and he learned surveying. After he lost his father when he was 11 years old, his half-brother Lawrence, who had served in the Royal Navy, acted as his mentor. As a result, the youth acquired an interest in pursuing a naval career, but his mother discouraged him from doing so. \*\*

In 1755, Washington entered military service with the title of colonel and barely escaped death when the French defeated the general's forces in the Battle of the Monongahela, PA. As a reward for his bravery, Washington won command of the Virginia militia forces, charged with defending the colony's frontier. Because of the shortage of men and equipment, he found the assignment challenging. Late in 1758 or early in 1759, disillusioned over governmental neglect of the militia and irritated at not rising in rank, he resigned and headed back to his home in Mount Vernon.

Washington then wed Martha Dandridge Curtis, a wealthy widow and mother of two children. The marriage produced no offspring, but Washington reared those of his wife as his own. During the period 1759-74, he supported the initial protests against British policies; took an active part in the nonimportation movement in Virginia; and, in time, particularly because of his military experience, became a Whig leader. \*\*

By the 1770s, relations of the colony with the mother country had become strained. Measured in his behavior and resentful of British restrictions and commercial exploitation, Washington represented Virginia at the First and Second Continental Congresses. In 1775, after the bloodshed at Lexington and Concord, Congress appointed him as commander in chief of the Continental Army.



During the next 2 years, while still commanding the agitated Continental Army, which was underpaid and poorly supplied, Washington denounced proposals that the military take over the government, including one that planned to appoint him as king. Once the Treaty of Paris (1783) was signed, he resigned his commission and returned to his home. His wartime financial sacrifices and long absence, as well as generous loans to friends, had severely impaired his extensive fortune, which consisted mainly of his plantations, slaves, and landholdings in the West. He had little time to repair his finances, for his retirement was brief. \*\*

Dissatisfied with national progress under the Articles of Confederation, Washington advocated a stronger central government. He hosted the Mount Vernon Conference (1785) at his estate, though he did not directly participate in the discussions. In 1787, encouraged by many of his friends, he presided over the Constitutional Convention, whose success was immeasurably influenced by his presence and dignity. Following ratification of the new instrument of government, in 1788, the Electoral College unanimously chose him as the first president.

The next year, Washington took the oath of office. During his two terms, he governed with dignity and restraint. He took various steps to strengthen governmental authority, including suppression of the Whisky Rebellion (1794). To unify the country, he toured the Northeast in 1789 and the South in 1791. During his tenure, the government moved from New York to Philadelphia, and he began planning for the move to Washington, D.C. \*\*

Shelley Valencia 8/16/2016 10:59 AM

Comment [4]: If you model through the entire document, stopped every 2 paragraphs along the way, students will be able to recall what they learned about Washington that is pertinent to their task. They will also see that the last paragraph is irrelevant since it is after he becomes President.