

★ UNIT STUDY

Martha Washington

OUR FIRST LADY 1731 - 1802



JULIA FORSHEE
allthingswithpurpose.com
SARAH LEMP

DEAR PARENTS,

We are excited to partner with you as you seek to educate your children.

This Unit Study is designed to not only educate your child on Martha Washington's life, but also integrate other subjects including: vocabulary, art, Bible, reading, and handwriting. We strive to be as historically accurate as possible in every aspect of our lesson. Our vocabulary elements will be in bold with the definition either incorporated into the sentence or in brackets next to the word.

The flexibility is yours for dividing the material into the number of lessons appropriate for your child.

Years of Study: K-2

Educational Elements: History, Vocabulary, Bible, Reading, Handwriting, Art, and Cognitive Thinking

All Things Homeschooling,

Sarah and Julia

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★ READ THE STORY: *Martha Washington*

Martha Dandrige was born June 2, 1731 in Chestnut Grove, Virginia. When Martha was 18 she married Daniel Custis, a rich farmer, who was 20 years older. Upon his father's death, he became one of the wealthiest men in Virginia owning more than 15,000 acres of land. As a result of this great wealth, Martha lived a life of luxury and comfort.

Together Daniel and Martha had four children. A son, Daniel, a daughter Frances, another son John (Jacky), and another daughter Martha (Patsy).

Martha was faced with the sorrow of two of her children dying in their infancy [still babies], and all of her children dying before they were 27 years old.

In 1757, Martha became a widow [her husband died] at the age of 25. Women were not allowed to hold property or own things.



★ READ THE STORY: *Martha Washington*

The only exception was a Dower Inheritance. A Dower Inheritance is whatever her husband gives her upon his death in his will [a paper that tells everyone who he wants to have his things] she could own and control. She received one-third of this wealth while the other two-thirds were set aside in a trust [holding until the children became adults] for Daniel Custis' two living children.



Having such tragic [very bad] losses in such a short period of time would make anyone want to despair [give up hope]. God has a promise for us:

★ *Bible Verse*

“I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11

We need to trust in Him no matter what.

★ READ THE STORY: *Martha Washington*

Martha had two serious suitors [men who wanted to marry her]. Because she was financially secure, she was able to marry the man she loved, George Washington, on January 6, 1759. He was wealthy, but not to the same caliber (level) as her first husband. While they did not have any children together, George adopted her two living children, John whose nickname was Jacky and Martha whose nickname was (Patsy). After they were married, they moved to Mount Vernon. A home George inherited and then had renovated [updated] for Martha.



In a letter from her husband dated June 18, 1775, George Washington wrote from Philadelphia to Martha. With the country on the verge of war with Great Britain for their independence [ability to make their own laws], he explained that he had accepted the position as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army. The Continental Army and Continental Congress were the terms used before the United States of America was created.

★ READ THE STORY: *Martha Washington*

George Washington was a perfect fit for our country because of his experience in the French Indian War and his solid reputation [what others know about you]. Martha was faced with the uncertainty of how long her husband would be away, or if he would return. As a result of her husband's prominent position in the army George wanted his wife to move to a safer area during the war. She chose to remain at Mount Vernon. Undoubtedly, she had times where she was afraid.



★ *Bible Verse*

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”
Joshua 1:9

She supported him by visiting him at the army's headquarters in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Valley Forge,

★ READ THE STORY: *Martha Washington*

Pennsylvania for several months at a time. With the exception of those visits, George and Martha would be separated for over seven years.



Martha's son, Jacky, enlisted [voluntarily joined the army] as an aide to his stepfather, serving briefly before he died of camp fever. Jacky's wife, Eleanor, was in ill health. The youngest two of their four children were sent to Mount Vernon to be raised by Martha and George.

On Christmas Eve, 1783, George Washington arrived back at Mount Vernon from the Revolutionary War, and Martha resumed her role as hostess. Their normalcy [things returning to normal] was short-lived. George Washington's Presidency began on April 30, 1789, and he served until March 4, 1797. Martha did not support his candidacy [running for office] for President, and was so strongly disappointed that she did not attend his inauguration [officially being placed in office].



★ READ THE STORY: *Martha Washington*



They lived there together for a little over a year before moving to Philadelphia because the United States government was initially set up in New York. While living there, Martha presided over weekly receptions, and fulfilled her duties as the wife of the President, but she did not relish [enjoy] the role. She undoubtedly was disappointed it was taking so long to build the new capital of the United States of America in her beloved Virginia.

They returned to Mount Vernon in 1797, and her husband, George, died on December 14, 1799. Martha was so grieved [saddened] when her husband died, she moved from her master bedroom to a third floor bedroom where she lived in seclusion [away from others] until her death on May 22, 1802. Before she died, Martha burned the all the letters she and George had exchanged in order to keep their relationship private [between the two of them].



Reading Comprehension

Q. How many times did Martha marry?

A. Martha married two times.

Q. What does suitor mean?

A suitor is when a man is trying to get a woman to marry him.

Q. Where did Martha live with her husband George?

A. They lived on a plantation in Mount Vernon.

Q. How did her husband serve the United States of America?

A. He served as the General of the Continental Army and/or the President of the United States.

Q. What did Martha's visits do for the troops during the Revolutionary War?

A. Martha's visits encouraged the troops while they were at army headquarters.

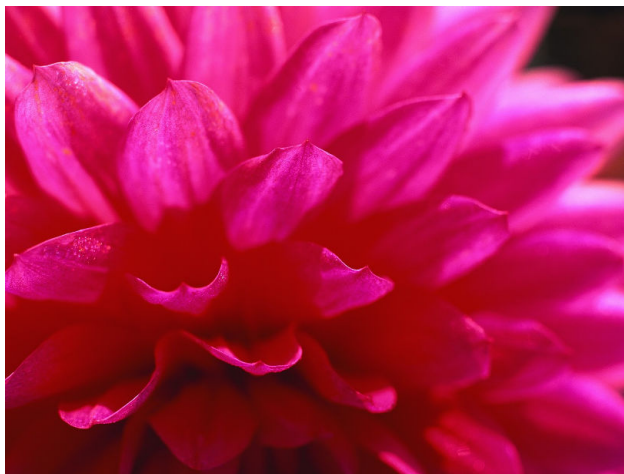
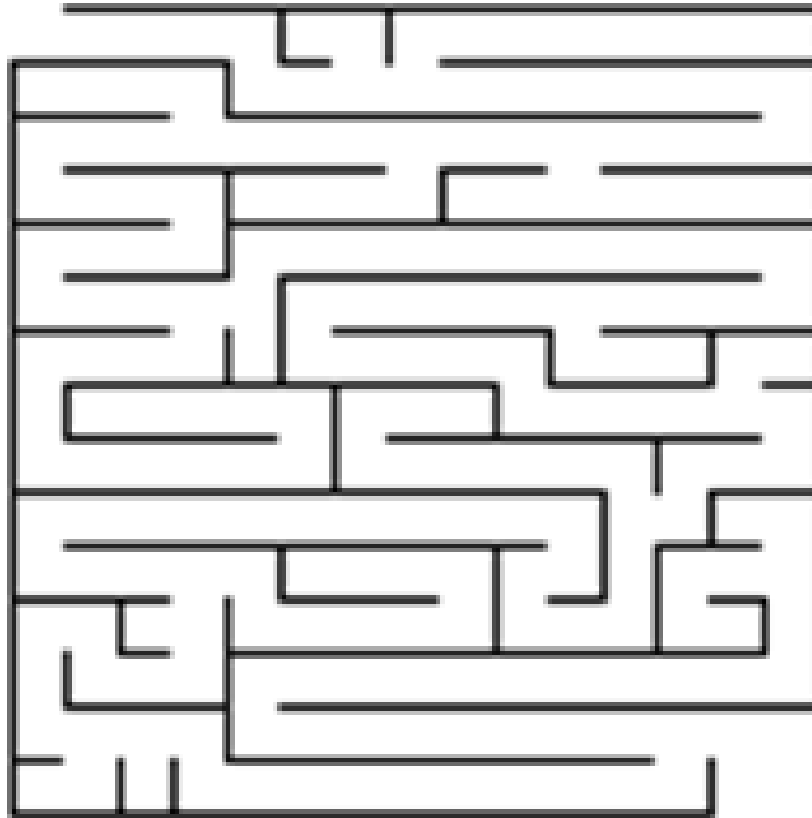
Q. After Martha's son died, how many children did she and George raise?

A. Martha and George raised two children.



AMAZING MARTHA WASHINGTON

Find your way to Martha's Dahlias



Activity

When they were not drilling [practicing being a soldier], which made up a considerable portion of their time in camp, soldiers passed the time writing letters, and playing games like checkers, dominoes and cards. Soldiers also liked whittling [using a pocket knife to carve shapes out of wood], making music and praying. Having a woman's company was a welcome distraction from the normal routine at camp. *Martha was known for boosting morale [mood] of the troops.*



Draw a picture of how you think the camp would look like when the soldiers were relaxing.

★ Writing



The following is an excerpt [a part] of a letter Martha wrote to her caretaker Fanny on July 1st, 1792. Fanny was the caretaker at Mt. Vernon. Copy the underlined portion of this letter onto the lines.

Fanny, I have not a doubt but we shall have company all the time we are at home - I wish you to have all the china looked over, the closet cleaned and the glasses all washed and every thing in the closet as clean as can be. - Martha

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed middle line. There are ten sets of these lines provided for copying the text.





Activity

Create a timeline!

**Cut out the boxes below and arrange them
in the correct order on the timeline located on the next page.**

Martha's husband became
the first president.
April 30, 1789

Martha visited George at army
headquarters.
(anytime during the War)

The Revolutionary
War Started
April 18, 1775

The Revolutionary War ended
September 1783

Martha married George Washington
January 1759

The United States of America
was formed
July 4, 1776

Martha was born
June 2, 1731

Martha Washington's Time Line

1781



1789



For Additional Study

www.marthawashington.us/exhibits/show/teaching/

www.womenshistory.about.com/od/1stladywashing/p/biography.htm

www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/History/Facts/ArlingtonHouse.aspx

michaeldeas.com

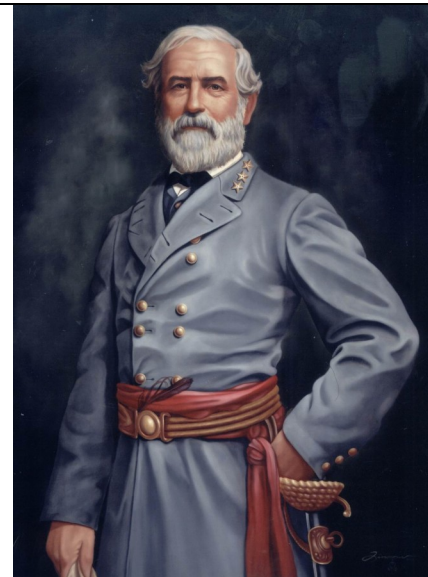
www.civilwar.org/education/history/faq/

★ *Extra Reading:
Interesting Family History!*



George and Martha Washington raised the youngest two of her son's four children. The boy, George Custis, had a daughter, Mary. She married Robert E. Lee, who was the commanding General for the South during the Civil War. Mary Custis Lee (Martha Custis Washington's Great Grand-daughter) inherited her parent's plantation after their deaths in 1857.

They lived there until the start of the Civil War in 1861. At that time the Lee family had to flee due to fighting. Four months before the Civil War's end, the government officially took control of the land. Brigadere General Montgomery Meigs, wanted Lee to be held responsible for and constantly reminded of the deaths he felt Lee had caused. As



a result he began burying the bodies of Union soldiers in the flower beds surrounding the house and on either side of the

★ *Extra Reading:
Interesting Family History!*

drive. In addition, he built a stone, masonry vault [small building] in the rose garden, 20 feet wide and 10 feet deep, containing the remains of 1,800 Bull Run casualties. Meigs wanted to ensure that the house would be uninhabitable [no one would be able to live there] should the Lee family ever try to return.

The name of the house was Arlington House, and so it was named Arlington National Cemetery.

The Supreme Court did rule twelve years after Lee's death that the property had been confiscated [taken] illegally [wrongly] and the government paid \$150,000 to Robert E. Lee's oldest son.

