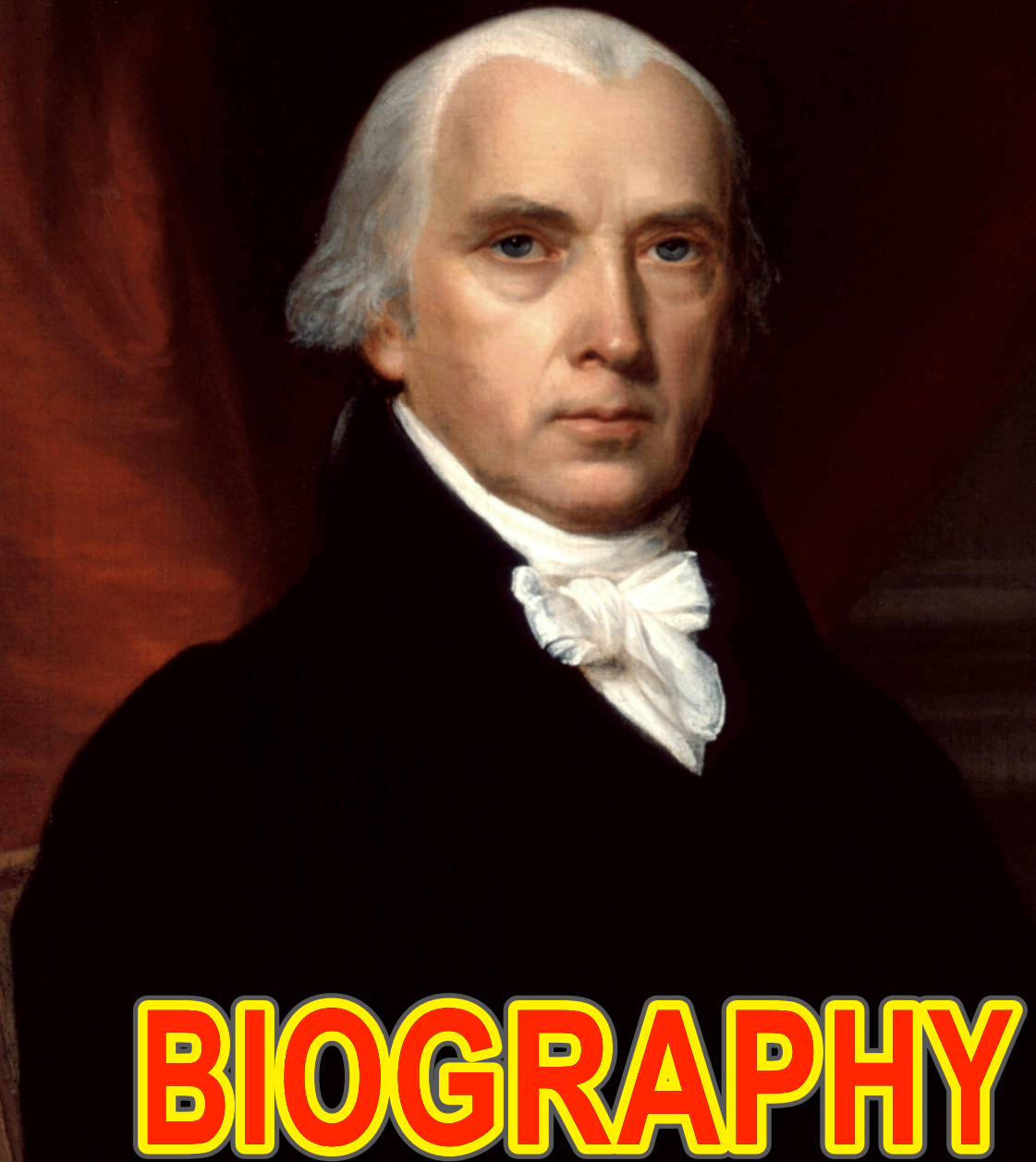


JAMES MADISON



BIOGRAPHY

JAMES MADISON

Virginian James Madison, Jr. (March 16, 1751 – June 28, 1836) is remembered as the “Father of the Constitution” for his role in drafting of the United States Constitution. He was the person behind the United States Bill of Rights.

Madison was the first president not to be an American Founding Father. But he was a keen politician and spent all of his energies getting the Constitution agreed by all the states.

In 1789, Madison became a leader in the new House of Representatives. This was the time when fundamental laws had to be written, and Madison was one of those who began this enormous task. It became clear that there needed to be some changes to the Constitution. He drafted the first ten amendments to the Constitution. That is why he is known as the “Father of the Bill of Rights”.

Madison helped President George Washington to organize the new federal government. But there was disagreement between those seeking to forge a new direction for the United States. Madison and Thomas Jefferson thus began the Republican Party.

Madison was Jefferson’s Secretary of State between 1801 and 1809, and he supervised the Louisiana Purchase. It was Madison who led America into war in 1812. He wanted to end the influence of the British among their Indian allies. The Indians, by holding on to their traditional lands, were stopping American settlement in the Midwest around the Great Lakes. He wanted to be rid of them. But he found the war was very difficult to manage while it was such a loose collection of states, and this is why he pushed for a stronger federal government.

Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'keen'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'keen' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'keen'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'keen'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'keen' means.

Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: fundamental	basic

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

For his role, Madison became known as the 'Father of the Bill of Rights'.

In 1812, Madison led America into war.

Madison helped write fundamental laws for the new House.

James Madison was born in Virginia on March 16, 1751.

Madison helped President George Washington organize the new federal government.

In 1789, Madison became leader of the House of Representatives.

Between 1801 and 1809, Madison was Secretary of State.

Get to the facts

1 When did Madison become a leader in the House of Representatives?

2 Who did Madison help to organize the new federal government?

3 Who did Madison start the Republican Party with?

4 When was Madison Secretary of State?

5 What did Madison do in 1812?

Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

The British attack

During the War of 1812, British forces marched on Washington and destroyed government buildings. Imagine you were in Washington when the British first approach... (now complete the story)

Below is a plain text version for printing:

Understanding words:

- a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'keen'.
- b From that sentence, suggest what 'keen' means.
- c Write a new sentence using the word 'keen'.
- d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'keen'.
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Finding key words:

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym).

For example:

Key word – fundamental

Synonym – basic

Sequencing:

Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense:

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In 1812, Madison led America into war.

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