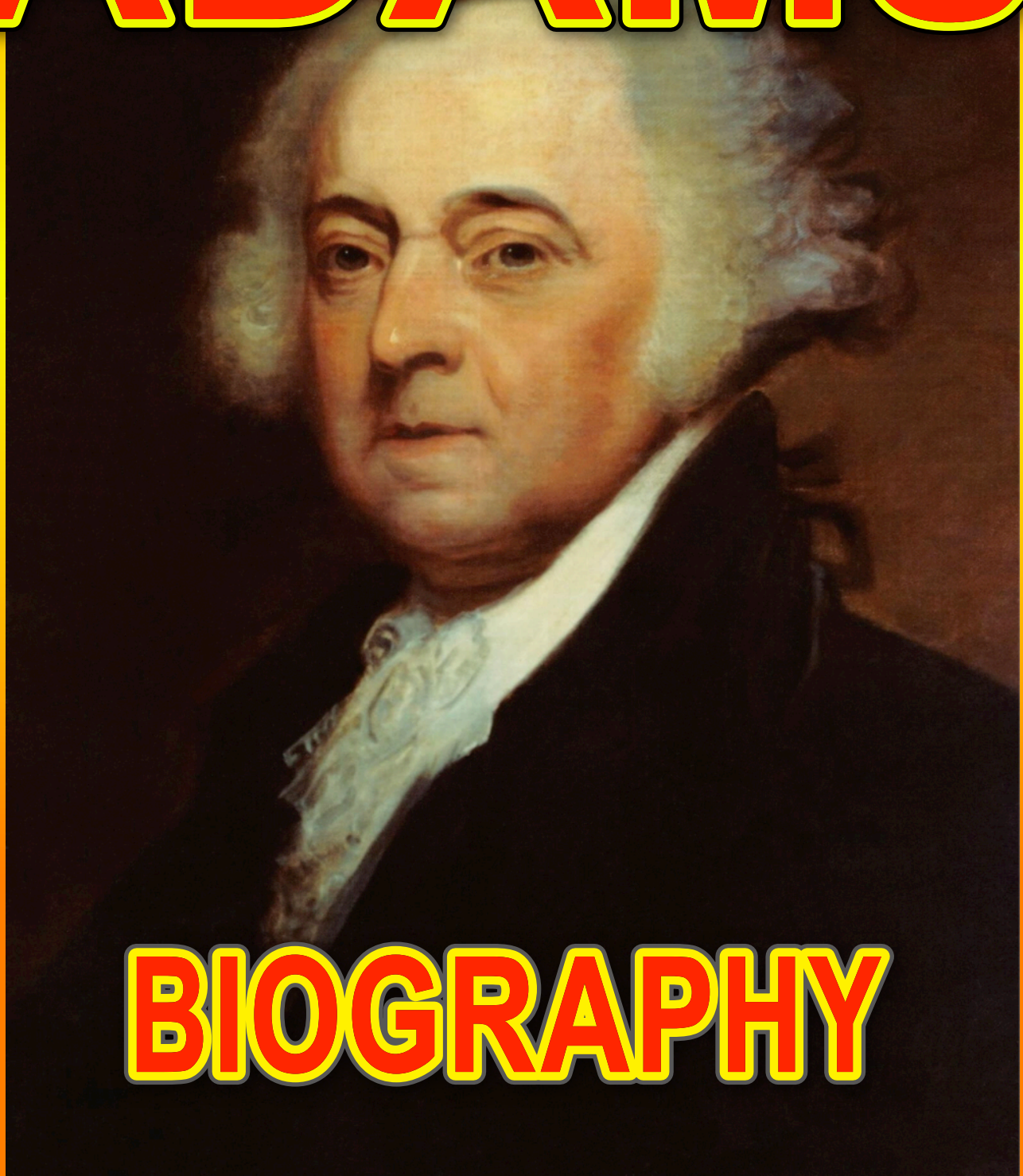


JOHN ADAMS



BIOGRAPHY

JOHN ADAMS

John Adams (born October 30, 1735, in Massachusetts) was one of the American Founding Fathers, and one of those who were active in gaining independence from Great Britain.

He was a lawyer in Boston and deeply involved in the ideas of politics. He believed in a republic, rather than a monarchy. Unusually for the time, he was against slavery and did not own slaves. He believed in fairness and successfully defended British soldiers accused in the Boston Massacre, something that made him unpopular at the time.

In 1775, he suggested George Washington should be commander-in-chief of the Continental (Revolutionary) Army. Adams was a representative from Massachusetts to the Continental Congress (the meeting that discussed independence), and he was one of those who helped Thomas Jefferson draft the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

As a lawyer, he was used to speaking about complex matters and it was Adams who explained the document to the Congress. Later, he helped negotiate the eventual peace treaty with Great Britain. He wrote the Massachusetts Constitution in 1780. He served two terms as George Washington's vice president before becoming president.

Adams was the father of John Quincy Adams, the sixth President of the United States. Adams was the first U.S. president to live in the mansion that we now call the White House.

Adams died in Quincy, Massachusetts, on July 4, 1826, which was the 50th anniversary of American independence.

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 'fairness'.

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

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

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

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'fairness' 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: complex	complicated

Sequencing

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

After two terms as vice president, Adams became president himself.

John Adams was born in Massachusetts in 1735.

In 1776, Adams helped Jefferson to draft the Declaration of Independence.

Adams died on July 4, 1826, fifty years after independence had been won.

in 1775, Adams suggested Washington should be commander-in-chief of the Continental Army.

He was the first U.S. president to live in the White House.

Adams explained the Declaration to Congress.

Get to the facts

1 Where was Adams a lawyer?

2 Who did Adams help to draft the Declaration of Independence?

3 Which country did Adams negotiate a peace treaty with?

4 What did Adams write in 1780?

5 How many terms was Adams vice president for?

Make a story...

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

Independence Day, 1826

It was July 4, 1826. Fifty years had passed since the Declaration of Independence from Great Britain. I was celebrating when I heard that John Adams, who had signed the declaration, had died... (now complete the story)

Below is a plain text version for printing:

Understanding words:

- a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'fairness'.
- b From that sentence, suggest what 'fairness' means.
- c Write a new sentence using the word 'fairness'.
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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 – complex

Synonym – complicated

Sequencing:

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

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In 1776, Adams helped Jefferson to draft the Declaration of Independence.

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John Adams

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