Setting the Example

Read Washington's choices and weigh their impact.

SS24.6.19 "Analyze the election and presidency of George Washington for its impact on establishing the role of president in the United States, including the creation of the first Cabinet, establishment of the District of Columbia..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three choices Washington made that shaped the presidency. Near each choice, circle a phrase that shows its impact or a concern about it.

The First President's Choices

1. In 1789, electors unanimously chose George Washington as the first president under the new Constitution. No one had held this office before, so his choices could become examples for others. He asked department heads to advise him, creating the first Cabinet and giving presidents a way to hear expert views. Washington also signed a 1790 law calling for a permanent federal capital along the Potomac River. The resulting District of Columbia gave the national government a home outside any state.

2. In 1790, Washington wrote to the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island. He said the United States gave "to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance," showing his commitment to religious freedom. In 1794, farmers in western Pennsylvania protested a federal tax on whiskey, and some attacked tax collectors. Washington called up a large militia force to stop the violence and enforce the law. Supporters said the new government had to show it could uphold laws. Critics worried that using troops against citizens could silence protests.

3. After two terms, Washington chose not to seek a third in 1796. His choice set an example of leaving power peacefully, though the two-term limit did not become law until much later. In his Farewell Address, he warned that political factions could put party loyalty above the country's needs. He urged Americans to avoid permanent alliances with foreign nations, while allowing trade and other useful ties. He also said that religion and morality supported civic virtue. Together, his words asked citizens to put the public good ahead of personal or party gain.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Washington's election and his creation of the Cabinet help define the new presidency?

2. How did the District of Columbia and Washington's Newport letter each show what he thought the national government should be like?

3. Was Washington right to call up the militia during the Whiskey Rebellion? Defend your view with one passage detail, then name a detail someone could use to disagree.

4. What guidance did Washington give in his Farewell Address about political factions, other nations, and citizens' behavior?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are advising the next president after Washington. Write a five-sentence letter about choosing advisers, handling disagreements among citizens, and dealing with other nations. Use evidence from at least two paragraphs of the passage, and explain one trade-off your advice might involve.

ANSWER KEY

Setting the Example

GRADE 6 · SS24.6.19

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three choices Washington made that shaped the presidency. Near each choice, circle a phrase that shows its impact or a concern about it. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Washington's election and his creation of the Cabinet help define the new presidency?	**As the first president, Washington's choices could set examples. His Cabinet gave presidents a way to get advice from department heads.**
2	How did the District of Columbia and Washington's Newport letter each show what he thought the national government should be like?	**The District of Columbia gave the national government a home outside any state. The Newport letter showed Washington's commitment to religious freedom and opposition to persecution.**
3	Was Washington right to call up the militia during the Whiskey Rebellion? Defend your view with one passage detail, then name a detail someone could use to disagree.	**Yes. Some protesters attacked tax collectors, so the government needed to enforce the law. Someone could disagree because using troops against citizens might silence protests.**
4	What guidance did Washington give in his Farewell Address about political factions, other nations, and citizens' behavior?	**He warned against putting party loyalty first, urged Americans to avoid permanent foreign alliances while keeping useful ties, and called on citizens to put the public good first.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Dear President, choose advisers with different skills, as Washington did when he formed the first Cabinet. When citizens oppose a law, protect peaceful protest but act to stop violence, as Washington did during the Whiskey Rebellion. Explain your decisions openly so people can judge whether you are using federal power fairly. Follow Washington's Farewell Address by avoiding permanent foreign alliances while keeping useful trade ties. This approach may make decisions slower, but it can protect rights and help the government earn trust.

For the Whiskey Rebellion question, accept either position if the student supports it with passage evidence and identifies a passage-based counterargument. In the letter, look for all three topics, evidence from two paragraphs, and a clear trade-off.