First President's Choices

Read how Washington shaped the presidency and advised the nation.

5.C.7.1 "Describe the presidential leadership of George Washington, including the creation of cabinet positions precedent of not seeking a third term read and discuss his Farewell Address."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence showing how Washington led with his cabinet, circle the two sentences showing his choice about a third term, and number the two warnings in his Farewell Address 1 and 2.

Leading a New Nation

1 In 1789, George Washington became the first president under the new Constitution. Congress set up the State, Treasury, and War departments and the office of attorney general. Washington chose their leaders and brought them together as his cabinet. These advisers offered information and different opinions before he made decisions. By listening to experts while taking responsibility himself, Washington shaped how future presidents could lead.

2 After winning a second term, Washington could have tried to win another election. Instead, he left office in 1797 after two terms. At the time, no rule stopped a president from seeking a third term. His choice set a precedent, an example for later presidents to follow. For many years, presidents respected that example. Washington also showed that the nation could change leaders peacefully.

3 Before leaving office, Washington published his Farewell Address in a newspaper in 1796. It was a written message, not a speech he gave to a crowd. He urged Americans to protect the unity of their country. He warned that bitter political parties could divide people. He also warned that strong, lasting attachments to foreign nations could draw the United States into their struggles. His words invited citizens to consider the nation's future.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Washington's use of a cabinet shape the president's job?

2. Why did Washington's decision to leave office after two terms set a precedent?

3. What danger did Washington see in bitter political parties, and what did he urge Americans to protect?

4. Why did Washington warn against strong, lasting attachments to foreign nations?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a short message to a newly elected class president. Give advice based on Washington's use of advisers, his choice to leave office after two terms, and one warning from his Farewell Address. Explain how each idea could help your class.

ANSWER KEY

First President's Choices

GRADE 5 · 5.C.7.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence showing how Washington led with his cabinet, circle the two sentences showing his choice about a third term, and number the two warnings in his Farewell Address 1 and 2. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Washington's use of a cabinet shape the president's job?	**He listened to advisers with different knowledge and opinions but remained responsible for his decisions.**
2	Why did Washington's decision to leave office after two terms set a precedent?	**No rule stopped him from seeking a third term, so his choice gave later presidents an example to follow.**
3	What danger did Washington see in bitter political parties, and what did he urge Americans to protect?	**Bitter parties could divide people, so he urged Americans to protect the country's unity.**
4	Why did Washington warn against strong, lasting attachments to foreign nations?	**Such attachments could draw the United States into other nations' struggles.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Ask classmates with different skills to advise you, as Washington asked his cabinet for help. Listen to them, but make your own decisions so the class has a leader it can count on. When your term ends, let someone else lead, as Washington did after two terms, so the class can hear new ideas. Do not let rival groups split the class, because Washington warned that bitter parties could divide a country.

Accept responses that accurately connect Washington's cabinet, his two-term precedent, and either Farewell Address warning to specific advice for a class president.