Advice for a Republic

Read Washington's warnings about keeping a free government strong.

8.C.5.1.E "Read and discuss Washington's advice as expressed in his Farewell Address regarding political factions, foreign alliances, and the relationship between morality and self-government."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one piece of Washington's advice in each paragraph. Circle a harm he believed that advice could help prevent.

Three Warnings in a Farewell

1. In 1796, George Washington prepared to leave the presidency after two terms. His Farewell Address was published in a newspaper rather than delivered as a speech. The new nation had survived arguments over taxes, banking, and its relationship with Britain and France. Washington worried that political parties could turn disagreement into a contest for power. When citizens put party victory above the public good, leaders might seek revenge, ignore laws, or invite one group to dominate another. He did not demand that people stop disagreeing. He warned against letting party loyalty outrank the nation.

2. Across the Atlantic, Britain and France were at war, and Americans argued over which side to favor. Washington urged the United States to avoid permanent political ties to foreign powers. A fixed alliance, he feared, could pull the country into wars fought for another nation's interests. He did not call for cutting off trade or refusing all contact. He supported commerce and suggested that temporary alliances might be needed in extraordinary emergencies. His advice asked Americans to weigh each foreign dispute against their own country's interests rather than follow a powerful partner automatically.

3. Washington also tied self-government to the choices citizens make when no ruler stands over them. He argued that religion and morality were important supports for public duties, including honesty and respect for promises. If officials lied and voters accepted lies, written rules alone might not protect the republic. In his view, a free government depended on people who could be trusted to act with restraint. His address joined three warnings: party anger could divide citizens, lasting alliances could limit independent judgment, and weak public ethics could damage the trust needed for self-government.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why did Washington see party loyalty as a danger to the republic?

2. How could a permanent alliance affect the country's decisions about war?

3. Why did Washington think honesty mattered even when a republic had written rules?

4. A citizen claims Washington wanted Americans to stop disagreeing and end foreign trade. What evidence from the passage challenges both parts of that claim?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a new republic where rival groups refuse to work together, a neighboring country asks for a promise to join every future war, and candidates spread false claims. Write a four- or five-sentence advisory note that applies all three parts of Washington's advice and explains how one choice could protect self-government.

ANSWER KEY

Advice for a Republic

GRADE 8 · 8.C.5.1.E

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one piece of Washington's advice in each paragraph. Circle a harm he believed that advice could help prevent. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did Washington see party loyalty as a danger to the republic?	**People might put party victory above the public good, leading leaders to seek revenge, ignore laws, or let one group dominate another.**
2	How could a permanent alliance affect the country's decisions about war?	**It could pull the country into a war fought for another nation's interests instead of letting Americans judge the conflict for themselves.**
3	Why did Washington think honesty mattered even when a republic had written rules?	**Written rules alone might not protect the republic if officials lied and voters accepted lies. Self-government also depended on trust and restraint.**
4	A citizen claims Washington wanted Americans to stop disagreeing and end foreign trade. What evidence from the passage challenges both parts of that claim?	**Washington did not demand that people stop disagreeing, and he supported commerce rather than cutting off trade.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Do not let rival groups treat winning as more important than working for the whole country. Refuse the promise to join every future war, since the republic must judge each conflict on its own interests. Candidates should tell the truth even when a lie might win votes. Honest debate will help citizens trust one another and protect self-government.

Accept other accurate explanations supported by the passage. For the advisory note, look for distinct applications of the warnings about factions, permanent alliances, and public morality, plus an explanation of how one choice supports self-government.