

# #12130

## JOHN ADAMS & THOMAS JEFFERSON

NEW DIMENSION MEDIA/QUESTAR, 2003

Grade Level: 3–8

12 Minutes



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### **John Adams & Thomas Jefferson** **Our Presidents in America's History Series**

**Subject Area:** Social Studies, U.S. History

**Synopsis:** Chronicles the presidencies of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, focusing on the peaceful transfers of power from Washington to Adams and from Adams to Jefferson, and the rise of the Federalist and Republican parties. Discusses the significant events, issues and policies of each man's presidency, including the XYZ Affair, the Alien and Sedition Acts, the Louisiana Purchase, the Lewis and Clark Expedition and the Embargo Act.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

- Objective 1)** Students will be able to explain the significance of the peaceful transfers of power from Washington to Adams, and from Adams to Jefferson.
- Objective 2)** Students will be able to contrast the views of Federalist President John Adams and Republican President Thomas Jefferson.
- Objective 3)** Students will be able to discuss the significant events and policies of Adams' presidency, including the XYZ Affair and the Alien and Sedition Acts.
- Objective 4)** Students will be able to discuss the significant events and policies of Jefferson's presidency, including the Louisiana Purchase, the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and the Embargo Act of 1807.
- Objective 5)** Students will be able to describe Thomas Jefferson's views on slavery and his concerns that the issue would eventually destroy the nation.

#### **Pre-Viewing Discussion and Activities:**

- 1) Who was the first President of the United States? What challenges do you think the second President of the United States faced when taking the place of George Washington?
- 2) Vocabulary: strong-willed, Patriot, Boston Massacre, delegate, Continental Congress, diplomatic, campaign, hysteria, peace commission, bribe, dispute, plantation, tobacco, forefront, House of Burgesses, electoral process, Louisiana Territory, navigation, judicial review, unconstitutional, politics of deference, anti-climax, biracial.

#### **Post-Viewing Discussion and Activities:**

- 1) Why did John Adams defend the British officials accused in the Boston Massacre? What does this show about his belief in the system of law?
- 2) Why did John Adams refer to his inauguration day as "another sun rising". Why was the peaceful transfer of power from Washington to Adams a significant event? How did Thomas Jefferson refer to his election in 1800? Why did he consider his election a "revolution"?

- 3) Explain the events that became known as the XYZ Affair. How did John Adams respond to the crisis? How did the American public feel about his actions?
- 4) What were the purposes and effects of the Alien and Sedition Acts? Did the Acts violate Americans' civil rights? Could similar laws be passed today?
- 5) Thomas Jefferson was constantly at odds with Hamilton and Adams over what issue?
- 6) On a map, point out the original 13 colonies and the Louisiana Territory. From what nation did Thomas Jefferson purchase the Louisiana Territory? How did this purchase change the United States? Why was this land of value to the United States? What opportunities did the new territory open up for Americans?
- 7) What was the purpose of the Lewis & Clark Expedition?
- 8) How did Thomas Jefferson feel about slavery? What conditions made it difficult for him to release his slaves? Why did he believe the issue of slavery would divide the nation?

**Additional Activities:**

- 1) Ask students to rewrite Jefferson's second term as President of the United States. What actions could he have taken to make his second term in office as remarkable as the rest of his life?
- 2) Have students draw a political cartoon of one of the events mentioned in the program. Display students' cartoons and have a class discussion about the points of view they have depicted.
- 3) Thomas Jefferson's epitaph states that he was "Author of the Declaration of American Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, Father of the University of Virginia". Have students write their own epitaphs of Thomas Jefferson.

FOR INFORMATION, OR TO ORDER CONTACT:

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**680 N. Lake Shore Drive, Suite 900, Chicago, IL 60611**

**800.288.4456**