

John Quincy Adams

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”

—John Quincy Adams



Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. What do John Quincy Adams and George W. Bush have in common?
2. What do you know about John Adams?
3. What was the Monroe Doctrine?
4. Who was Andrew Jackson?

B. Vocabulary Preview

Match as many meanings and words as you can before you read.
Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| ___ 1. excel | a) a person who tries to make deals happen |
| ___ 2. fluent | b) an organized effort to win a leadership role, such as the presidency |
| ___ 3. negotiator | c) to do very well at something |
| ___ 4. candidate | d) very dishonest (especially in relation to government) |
| ___ 5. campaign | e) unwilling to change one’s mind or actions, determined to be right |
| ___ 6. ballot | f) able to speak a language effortlessly |
| ___ 7. corrupt | g) a ticket or form where voters mark their selection(s) |
| ___ 8. influence | h) a possible person for a job or leadership position |
| ___ 9. stubborn | i) to try to convince someone to act in a certain way |
| ___ 10. stroke | j) a blockage of blood to the brain, causing lack of oxygen |

Reading

1. John Quincy Adams was the sixth president of the United States. He was born in Massachusetts in 1767. He was the oldest son of John Adams, the second president of the United States. Because his father had been a diplomat and then president, John Quincy's childhood was unusual. When he was ten years old, John accompanied his father to Europe, where John Adams served as a diplomat. In the next eight years, John Quincy went with his father to Paris, London, and Amsterdam. While his father was working, John Quincy studied. He **excelled** in his studies. He was especially **fluent** in French, and at age 14, he had a job as the personal secretary to the minister to Russia.
2. In 1785, John Quincy Adams returned home. He graduated from Harvard in two years, and then studied law. Like his father, he established a law practice in Boston. When John Quincy was 26 years old, President Washington appointed him minister to Holland. In the years that followed, he served as minister to several European countries under different presidents. As minister to Great Britain, Adams was the chief **negotiator** of the treaty that ended the War of 1812. He also served as secretary of state under President James Monroe. During this time, he drafted the Monroe Doctrine, which declared that no European country could colonize any territory in North and South America.
3. In 1824, John Quincy Adams decided to run for president of the United States. Besides Adams, there were three other major **candidates**—Andrew Jackson, the extremely popular war hero; Henry Clay, Speaker of the House; and William H. Crawford, secretary of the treasury. However, the contest was mainly between Adams and Jackson. Historians describe the Adams–Jackson **campaign** of 1824 as the most vicious in American history.
4. Although Jackson and Adams were the top vote-getters, none of the candidates won 50% of the vote, which was required by the Constitution. In this situation, the House of Representatives would make the final decision. The House voted for Adams on the first **ballot**. Adams immediately gave Henry Clay, his supporter, the job of secretary of state. Andrew Jackson was very angry at the outcome. He accused Adams of making a "**corrupt** bargain," a "dirty deal." Jackson's supporters agreed. They thought that Clay had **influenced** the House vote in Adams's favor.
5. Adams's time as president was not easy. Jackson's supporters constantly worked against him. Also, John Quincy's **stubborn** and cold personality often made it hard for others to work with him. In 1828, Adams decided to run for a second term as president. Andrew Jackson and his supporters, still angry over the 1824 election, worked hard to beat Adams. Jackson won the election. Two years later, John Quincy Adams was elected to the US House of Representatives. He served as a hardworking and respected congressman for 17 years. In 1848, Adams had a **stroke** on the floor of the House and died two days later.
6. Most historians do not consider John Quincy Adams a great president. He is remembered, however, as a great diplomat, secretary of state, and congressman. He is also remembered for his part in creating the Monroe Doctrine.

Comprehension

A. True or False?

Read the statements below.

If the statement is true, write T beside the sentence.

If it is false, write F and correct the information in your notebook.

- _____ 1. John Quincy Adams was the second oldest son of President John Adams.
- _____ 2. John Quincy Adams had an extraordinary childhood.
- _____ 3. John Quincy Adams was ten when he first went to Europe with his father.
- _____ 4. John Quincy Adams was a very popular war hero.
- _____ 5. John Quincy Adams wrote the Monroe Doctrine.
- _____ 6. Andrew Jackson and John Quincy Adams were friendly rivals.
- _____ 7. John Quincy Adams had a pleasant, outgoing personality.

B. Ask & Answer

Practice asking and answering the following questions with your partner.

Then write your answers in complete sentences in your notebook.

1. Why was John Quincy Adams's childhood unusual?
2. Under which president did John Quincy Adams serve as secretary of state?
3. Who were the candidates in the presidential election of 1824?
4. Why did Jackson's supporters call the 1824 election a "corrupt bargain"?
5. Why was Adams's presidency difficult for him?
6. How did Adams continue his political career after he lost the 1828 election?
7. What is John Quincy Adams most remembered for?

Vocabulary Practice

A. Complete the Sentences

Complete the sentences using vocabulary from the list on the right.

1. John Quincy Adams decided to _____ for president.
2. Henry Clay was a _____ for president in the election of 1824.
3. Andrew Jackson's _____ were furious when Adams became president.
4. Adams served only one _____ as president because he lost the election of 1828.
5. The _____ of 1824 was called the most vicious in US history.
6. The result of the election was known as a " _____ bargain" because Jackson thought that Adams and Clay had made a "dirty deal."
7. Henry Clay had an important position in the Adams _____ .
8. Jackson won the popular vote because more people cast their _____ for him than for Adams.
9. In the House of Representatives, John Quincy Adams was a respected _____ .
10. As a diplomat, Adams was a very skillful _____ .

Word List

- administration
- negotiator
- ballot
- corrupt
- term
- supporters
- candidate
- campaign
- run
- congressman

B. Odd One Out

Draw a circle around the word that doesn't belong in each group.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a) unusual
b) ordinary
c) strange
d) different | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. a) keep
b) remove
c) eliminate
d) throw out | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. a) bargain
b) negotiate
c) discuss
d) prize |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. a) fail
b) excel
c) flunk
d) disappoint | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. a) stubborn
b) flexible
c) willing
d) cooperative | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. a) state
b) announce
c) deny
d) declare |

Discussion

1. Why do you think Adams was more successful as a diplomat and congressman than as a president? Do you think his personality had anything to do with it? Why or why not?
2. The election of 1824 is described as the most vicious in American history. Do you think some of the same tactics are used in present-day elections? If yes, explain and give examples. If no, explain why not.
3. The Monroe Doctrine covered both North and South America. Why do you think Adams included South America in the Monroe Doctrine?
4. Andrew Jackson was a great war hero who had been a general in the War of 1812. John Quincy Adams was a great diplomat and public servant. Personalities aside, who do you think would make a better president, a military leader or a diplomat? Explain your opinion.

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson, students read a short biography about the sixth president of the United States. They review related vocabulary and discuss how a candidate's background can make them more or less suitable for the role of president.

LEVEL: Int – Adv

TIME: 1–2 hours

TAGS: John Quincy Adams, president, US president, American, War of 1812, Monroe Doctrine, government

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

1. They were both sons of a US president.
2. John Adams was an American statesman, a Founding Father, vice president under Thomas Jefferson, and the second president of the United States.
3. The Monroe Doctrine, passed in 1823, was a statement of American foreign policy. It proclaimed that European countries could not try to colonize any territory in North or South America.
4. Andrew Jackson was a decorated soldier and the seventh president of the US.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. c | 3. a | 5. b | 7. d | 9. e |
| 2. f | 4. h | 6. g | 8. i | 10. j |

Comprehension

A. TRUE OR FALSE?

1. F – He was the oldest son.
2. T
3. T
4. F – His competitor, Andrew Jackson, was a war hero.
5. T
6. F – Their campaign rivalry is often described as the most vicious in US presidential history.
7. F – He is described as stubborn and cold.

B. ASK & ANSWER

1. John Quincy Adams spent much of his childhood in Europe because his father, John Adams, was a diplomat there at that time.
2. He served as secretary of state under James Monroe.
3. The major candidates were John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, Henry Clay, and William H. Crawford.
4. The election was called a “corrupt bargain” because people thought that Clay had influenced the vote in the House in exchange for the job of secretary of state.
5. Andrew Jackson’s supporters constantly worked against Adams. They tried to block almost everything that Adams wanted to do.
6. Adams was elected to the US House of Representatives. He served as a congressman from Massachusetts for the next 17 years.
7. Adams is most remembered for being a great diplomat, secretary of state, and congressman. He is also remembered for his part in creating the Monroe Doctrine.

(continued on the next page...)

Answer Key cont.

Vocabulary Practice

A. COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. run | 6. corrupt |
| 2. candidate | 7. administration |
| 3. supporters | 8. ballot |
| 4. term | 9. congressman |
| 5. campaign | 10. negotiator |

B. ODD ONE OUT

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------|----------|
| 1. ordinary | 3. keep | 5. prize |
| 2. excel | 4. stubborn | 6. deny |

Discussion

Use these questions for writing or speaking practice. For writing practice, you can assign one to each student or allow students to choose one. For speaking practice, discuss in groups or as a class.

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the words *Favor* and *Practice*. Most other English-speaking countries spell these words this way: *Favour* and *Practise* (when used as a verb; *Practice* when used as a noun). Make it a challenge for your students to find these words in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spellings.