

North America Vocabulary

- 1. George Washington:** The first president of the United States, commander of the Continental army, and Virginia representative to the Second Continental Congress
- 2. Thomas Jefferson:** Wrote the Declaration of Independence, was responsible for the Louisiana Purchase
- 3. Self-government:** The government of a country, nation, etc. by its own people
- 4. Declaration of Independence:** A document created in 1776, primarily by Thomas Jefferson, to declare independence from Great Britain because the British failed to give the colonies rights to which they felt entitled
- 5. American Revolution:** Was fought against Great Britain from 1777-1783 because of the failure of the British to recognize the independence of the 13 colonies
- 6. United States Constitution:** Document written, mostly by James Madison, in 1787 to replace the flawed Articles of Confederation. This set up the system of government that we know today. It includes the 3 branches of government, the Bill of Rights, and other amendments. It ensures that we have a democracy in the US.
- 7. Louisiana Purchase:** Land purchased by Thomas Jefferson from France for \$15 million dollars, doubling the size of the United States
- 8. Manifest Destiny:** The belief of the colonists that they had the God-given right to expand the United States westward
- 9. Westward Expansion:** Refers to America's desire to expand to the western territories that were either not claimed or were claimed by other countries
- 10. Civil War:** War fought between the states from 1861-1865; was primarily due to slavery while Abraham Lincoln was president
- 11. Abraham Lincoln:** 16th President of the United States; saved the Union during the American Civil War and emancipated the slaves. He was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C.
- 12. Appalachian Mountains:** A system of mountains in eastern North America; these mountains were the first physical barrier that westward-bound settlers encountered

- 13. 3 Branches of Government:** Include the Legislative Branch, the Judicial Branch, and the Executive Branch
- 14. Popular sovereignty:** Belief that the ultimate power lies with the people who vote in the election process
- 15. Checks and balances:** A system that balances the distribution of power in a government; Ensure that no one branch of government is more powerful than another
- 16. French separatists movement:** People in Quebec, Canada that threatened to secede from Canada if English (and not French) was named the only language
- 17. NAFTA:** North American Free Trade Agreement; An Agreement among Canada, Mexico, and the US that lowers trade barriers among the three countries
- 18. Jacques Cartier:** An explorer who sailed up the St. Lawrence River in the 1530s. He claimed the St. Lawrence and the land around it for France
- 19. Parliamentary democracy:** A form of government where voters elect the parliament which then forms the government. The party with the most votes picks the leader of the government
- 20. St. Lawrence River:** The St. Lawrence River is located northeast of the Great Lakes and carries water eastward to the Atlantic Ocean
- 21. Diego Rivera:** An artist that painted many public murals that explored Mexican history and culture including one that appears the National Palace
- 22. Cinco de Mayo:** A national holiday in Mexico celebrated on May 5th that commemorates a victory of Mexican forces over invading French troops in 1862.
- 23. Constitutional Federal Republic:** Mexico's government where there are three branches of government and power is divided between the federal and state governments
- 24. Tierra Templada:** A vertical climate zone that is considered a middle climate zone where there are cooler temperatures
- 25. Indigenous-** a people who are believed to be the first people to settle an area