



The Home of the President: Washington, D.C.

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☑ **Lesson Objectives**

Core Content Objectives

Students will:

- ✓ Name the current president of the United States
- ✓ Identify the White House as the president's home
- ✓ Describe Washington, D.C., as the city in which the current president lives and where monuments of past presidents can be found
- ✓ Identify the American flag
- ✓ Describe the differences between a president and a king

Language Arts Objectives

The following language arts objectives are addressed in this lesson. Objectives aligning with the Common Core State Standards are noted with the corresponding standard in parentheses. Refer to the Alignment Chart for additional standards addressed in all lessons in this domain.

Students will:

- ✓ With prompting and support, explain the connection among the president, Congress, and the Supreme Court (RI.K.3)
- ✓ With prompting and support, compare and contrast kings and presidents (RI.K.9)
- ✓ With assistance, categorize and organize facts and information from “The Home of the President: Washington, D.C.” to answer questions about kings and presidents (W.K.8)
- ✓ Explain the meaning of “a dog is man’s best friend” and use in appropriate contexts (L.K.6)

Core Vocabulary

capital, *n.* The city where most of the decisions that affect a state or country are made and where the branches of government are located
Example: The capital of the United States, Washington, D.C., is where many of our country's laws are made.

Variation(s): capitals

liberties, *n.* Freedoms

Example: One of the liberties all people should have is the freedom to talk about their beliefs.

Variation(s): liberty

monuments, *n.* Statues or buildings made to honor important people or events

Example: Our town created two monuments to help us remember our town's heroes.

Variation(s): monument

nation, *n.* A country

Example: Our nation is made up of fifty states.

Variation(s): nations

president, *n.* The elected leader of a country or group


Example: The president often gives speeches to encourage the people.

Variation(s): presidents

symbol, *n.* A sign or object that stands for something else

Example: A four-leaf clover is a symbol for good luck.

Variation(s): symbols

At a Glance	Exercise	Materials	Minutes
Introducing the Read-Aloud	Domain Introduction		10
	What Do We Know?	Image Cards 1–5	
	Purpose for Listening		
Presenting the Read-Aloud	The Home of the President: Washington, D.C.	U.S. map; chart paper, chalkboard, or whiteboard	10
Discussing the Read-Aloud	Comprehension Questions		10
	Word Work: Liberties		5
 Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day			
Extensions	Sayings and Phrases: A Dog Is Man's Best Friend		15
	Venn Diagram	chart paper, chalkboard, or whiteboard	
Take-Home Material	Family Letter	Instructional Masters 1B-1, 1B-2	*



The Home of the President: Washington, D.C.

1A

Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

Domain Introduction

Begin by reviewing what students learned in the *Kings and Queens* domain, and what they already know about kings and queens, as well as kingdoms. Ask students what they recall about their study of kings and queens by using the following questions to guide the discussion:

- What is a king? (a male ruler of a kingdom)
- What is a queen? (a female ruler of a kingdom or the wife of a king)
- What is a kingdom? (the place and people ruled by a king or queen)
- Where does a king or queen live? (in a palace or castle)
- Once a person is king or queen, how long does s/he remain in that position? (for the rest of his or her life)
- Is the king or queen chosen or elected by the people? (He or she is born into the position.)
- Does the king or queen always try to represent the interests of the people? (not always)

Remind students what they learned in the *Columbus and the Pilgrims* domain. Remind them that the Pilgrims came from England and landed at Plymouth Rock, along the coast of North America. Now ask students if they remember why the Pilgrims chose to leave England and go to America. (The Pilgrims wanted to go to their own church, but the king said they had to go to the Church of England. The Pilgrims decided to leave so they could be happier and worship as they wanted.)

Explain that kingdoms still exist today, but that there were many more kingdoms long ago. Explain that our country, the United States of America, is not a kingdom. Ask students, “Do we have a king? (no) Do you know what we call the leader of our country?”

(the president) Tell students that our country's form of government is a democracy. *Democracy* means rule by the people. "If our country is ruled by the people, what does our president do?"

Tell students that today they are going to hear a read-aloud about what the president of the United States does and about the home of the president in Washington, D.C. Over the next few weeks, students will also learn about several important United States presidents and how these men helped to shape our country.

What Do We Know?

Show students Image Card 1 (American Flag). Ask, "What is this?" Tell students that they are going to hear more about this important American symbol. Show students Image Card 2 (President George Washington). Explain to students that this is George Washington, who was the first president of the United States, and that he lived long ago. Tell them that the capital of the United States, Washington, D.C., is named after him. The capital is the city in the United States where most of the decisions that affect the country are made and where the government is located.

Tell students the name of the current president and that the president of the United States lives in Washington, D.C. Show Image Card 3 (White House), and explain that this is the building in which the president lives while he or she is president. Then show Image Card 4 (U.S. Capitol Building) and 5 (Washington Monument), and tell students that these structures are also located in Washington, D.C.

Ask students what else they know about Washington, D.C. Ask, "Where is Washington, D.C.? Is it in one of the states?" If a student's response includes inaccurate factual information, acknowledge the response by saying something like, "So you think Washington, D.C., is in Maryland? We'll have to listen very carefully to our read-aloud and find out if that's true!"

Purpose for Listening

Tell students to listen for details about Washington, D.C., and the different buildings and monuments found in the city. Ask them to also listen carefully to find out how the president of our democracy is different from a king.



The Home of the President: Washington, D.C.

Show image 1A-1: American flag

1 A symbol is something that stands for something else. A nation is a country.

2 [Ask students to name the state in which they live and other states they have heard of.]

The American flag is a **symbol** of our **nation**, the United States of America.¹ You can see that the flag is red, white, and blue. You can see that it has red and white stripes. It also has fifty stars, and each star is a symbol for one of the states in the United States of America.²



Show image 1A-2: Washington, D.C.

3 [Show D.C. on a U.S. map.]

4 The president is an important leader in our government. [Name the current president for students.]

There is one very important city in the United States that is not in any of the fifty states. In fact, it is the nation's **capital**. It's the city where most of the decisions that affect the country are made and where the government is located.³ Our nation's capital city is the part of the United States where the **president** of the United States lives: Washington, D.C.⁴



Show image 1A-3: Founding Fathers writing the Constitution

Men from each of the original colonies helped write the Constitution, a plan for how the new country should be run. We call these men the "Founding Fathers." The Founding Fathers decided they wanted the country to be run by a president instead of a king. Once a person is king or queen, he or she remains in that position for the rest of his or her life. He or she is not elected by the people and might not represent the interests of the people. The Founding Fathers didn't want one person to tell everyone what to do, as a king does. Instead, they wanted a leader who would listen to what the people wanted and work hard to get them what they needed. To make sure the president didn't become like a king, they decided to write the Constitution, a set of rules for the president to follow. They also decided that the president would have to be elected by the people.⁵ The president would

5 *Elected* means voted for or chosen by the people.

not be born into the position like a king is, and he could only be a president for four years before the people would vote for a president again.



← **Show image 1A-4: Early White House**

When the Founding Fathers started to think about where the president would live, they started to worry. If the president lived in the state he was from, it would make that state feel more important than all the others. The Founding Fathers were afraid that one of the states would try to take over and be in charge of the others. They decided to write into the Constitution that a special city should be built, no bigger than ten miles wide, which would serve as the nation's capital.

This capital city would not be in any state, so no one state could say that it was in charge of the country. This city was to be called Washington, in honor of George Washington, our first president. Eventually, Washington grew into the area we now call the District of Columbia, or Washington, D.C.⁶

6 Who was Washington, D.C., named for?



← **Show image 1A-5: White House**

If you visited Washington, D.C., today, you would be able to see the White House, the house where the president lives.⁷ The president moves into this house when he or she becomes president and then moves out when the next president is elected. But not just presidents live there. Their families, and even their pets, come with them to live in the White House.

7 Who is our current president?



← **Show image 1A-6: Bo Obama portrait**

Have you ever seen a picture of this dog? His name is Bo, and he lives with President Barack Obama and his family.⁸ When President Obama was first chosen to be our president in 2008, he promised his daughters they could get a dog to live with them in the White House. Bo moved into the White House about three months after President Obama and his family moved there, and one of his favorite activities is playing outside with President Obama's daughters.

8 You will hear more about President Obama in a later read-aloud.



← **Show image 1A-7: Oval Office**

- 9 [Draw an oval on a piece of chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard. Tell students that the shape of the president's office is an oval like the one you just drew.]

The president doesn't just live in the White House; he or she works there, too. The part of the White House where the president works is called the West Wing. The president's office has a special name, too: the Oval Office. Sometimes the president signs laws or gives speeches from the Oval Office.⁹



← **Show image 1A-8: White House, Capitol Building, and Supreme Court**

- 10 To *enforce the rules* means to make sure the rules are followed.
- 11 Liberties are freedoms. Remember, the Pilgrims left England because they didn't have an important liberty. Which liberty, or freedom, did the Pilgrims not have? (the liberty to choose which church to attend)

One of the president's most important jobs is to enforce the rules of the Constitution.¹⁰ The president doesn't run the government alone, however, as a king would. The government is made up of a team of three groups: the president, Congress, and the Supreme Court. The Founding Fathers made sure that all three—the president, the Congress, and the Supreme Court—had equally important jobs so that the president didn't hold all the power like a king, and so that people's **liberties** would be protected.¹¹



← **Show image 1A-9: Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial**

- 12 These statues and other buildings are called *monuments*.
- 13 [Point to the monument on the left side of the image.]

Because so many of our past presidents have lived in Washington, D.C., it is also a place where people often build statues and other buildings to honor them.¹² If you visited Washington, D.C., you would find many **monuments** to past presidents. One famous monument is called the Lincoln Memorial.¹³ Another famous monument is the Jefferson Memorial. These monuments are symbols to remind us how important these past presidents were in our nation's history.



← **Show image 1A-10: Washington Monument**

The Washington Monument is one of many people's favorite monuments to visit in Washington, D.C. It is the world's tallest stone building. When you go to the top of the tower, you can see all of Washington, D.C. But you don't have to go to Washington, D.C., to appreciate our country and its leaders. Every time you say the Pledge of Allegiance or sing the National Anthem, you can let everyone around you know that you are proud to be a part of our country.



← **Show image 1A-11: Pledging to the flag**

14 [Ask students to stand and face a flag in your classroom. If no flag is available, show image 1A-1.]

Let's say the Pledge of Allegiance together:¹⁴

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

15 or freedom and fairness

The next time you see the American flag, remember that our fifty states all share a belief in liberty and justice¹⁵ for everyone. And remember that these United States of America all share the same government, which is led by the president, the Congress, and the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C.

Discussing the Read-Aloud

15 minutes

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

If students have difficulty responding to questions, reread pertinent passages of the read-aloud and/or refer to specific images. If students give one-word answers and/or fail to use read-aloud or domain vocabulary in their responses, acknowledge correct responses by expanding the students' responses, using richer and more complex language. Ask students to answer in complete sentences by having them restate the question in their responses.



← **Show image 1A-1: American flag**

1. *Literal* What is this? (the American flag) The fifty stars are symbols of something. What do they represent? (the fifty states of the United States)
2. *Literal* What city is the capital of our country? (Washington, D.C.)
3. *Literal* In which state is Washington, D.C., located? (It's not located in any of the states.)
4. *Inferential* Name three things you have learned about Washington, D.C. (It's where the president lives; it's where the Congress is located; it's one place where monuments of past presidents can be found; etc.)
5. *Literal* Who is currently the president of the United States? (name the current president)

6. *Literal* Where does the current president live? (the White House)
7. *Literal* What are the names of the three parts of the government that work together to protect peoples' liberties, or freedoms? (the president, Congress, and the Supreme Court)
8. *Literal* Who were the Founding Fathers? (the people who helped to create our nation)
9. *Evaluative* Why do you think the Founding Fathers split the government into three parts? (They did not want one person or part of government to tell everyone what to do or have too much power.)

[Please continue to model the *Think Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

I am going to ask a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally, I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

10. *Evaluative Think Pair Share:* Why do you think the Founding Fathers wanted the country to have an elected president rather than a king? (They thought that a king had too much power; they wanted a leader chosen by the people, someone who would listen to what the people wanted and would work hard to get them what they needed.)
11. After hearing today's read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these questions.]

Word Work: Liberties

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, “The Founding Fathers made sure . . . that people’s *liberties* would be protected.”
2. Say the word *liberties* with me.
3. Liberties are freedoms.
4. One of your liberties as an American is the freedom to practice the religion you believe in.
5. Tell about one of the personal liberties you have at your house. Try to use the word *liberties* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students’ responses: “One of my liberties at home is . . .”]
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about?

Use a *Sharing* activity for follow-up. Directions: Turn to your partner and talk about the liberties you may have, such as picking out the clothes you want to wear or choosing what you want for breakfast. Talk about the liberties you do not have.

[Explain to students why certain liberties are not theirs until they are older, such as the liberty to vote, the liberty to drive, the liberty to ride certain amusement rides, etc. As students share, be sure they use the word *liberties*.]



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



The Home of the President: Washington, D.C.

1B

Extensions

15 minutes

Sayings and Phrases: A Dog Is Man's Best Friend

5 minutes

Proverbs are short, traditional sayings that have been passed along orally from generation to generation. These sayings usually express general truths based on experiences and observations of everyday life. Although some proverbs do have literal meanings—that is, they mean exactly what they say—many proverbs have a richer meaning beyond the literal level. It is important to help students understand the difference between the literal meanings of the words and their implied, or figurative, meanings.



◀ Show image 1A-6: Bo Obama portrait

Remind students that when the president is elected and moves into the White House, he or she brings his or her family. This often includes the family pet, which is often a dog. Ask students if they remember whose dog is pictured in this image. Remind them that when President Obama became president, his family adopted this dog, named Bo.

Ask students if they have ever heard anyone say “a dog is man’s best friend.” Explain to students that dogs are often very loyal, or faithful—sometimes more loyal than people. This saying explains one reason why dogs, such as Bo Obama, are such popular pets, even for presidents. Ask students if any of them have dogs as pets that they consider best friends.

Tell students that when they hear a story about a pet dog that is loved by its owner, they can use the saying “a dog is man’s best friend.”

Venn Diagram

Draw a Venn diagram on chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard. Explain that you are going to talk about the read-aloud and that you are going to write down what students say. Remind

students that they are not expected to be able to read what you write, because they are still learning all the rules for decoding. Emphasize that you are writing what they say so that you don't forget, and tell them that you will read the words to them.

Have students compare and contrast kings and presidents. Write *Kings* on the left side of the Venn diagram and *Presidents* on the right side. Ask, "How are kings and presidents alike?" Write students' responses in the center where the two circles overlap. (They lead people in a country; they have a lot of power.) Then ask, "How are they different?" (A president is elected/a king is born into his position; a president shares power with Congress and the Supreme Court/a king decides on the rules or laws on his own; the president of the United States lives in the White House/a king lives in a palace or castle; a president represents the people/a king doesn't always represent the interests of the people.) Record the information in the appropriate area on the Venn diagram.

Take-Home Material

Family Letter

Send home Instructional Masters 1B-1 and 1B-2.