

George Washington's Teeth

K-3

Written by Deborah Chandra & Madeleine Comora
Illustrated by Brock Cole

Published by Farrar Straus Giroux
Spoken Arts Video 9695
Running Time: 7 minutes

Story Summary

From battling toothaches while fighting the British to having rotten teeth removed by his dentists, the Father of His Country suffered all his life with tooth problems. Yet contrary to popular belief, George Washington never had a set of wooden teeth. Starting at the age of twenty-four, he lost on average a tooth a year. And, by the time he was elected President, he had only two left!

In this reverentially funny tale based on Washington's letters, diaries, and other historical records, readers will find out what really happened as they follow the trail of lost teeth to complete *tooflessness*.

Objectives

Children will learn some facts about our first President.

Children will put into sequence certain events.

Children will predict the main idea of a story from a picture.

Before viewing the video

Ask the children to look at the title of the story and the cover of the book or video. Have them predict the main idea of the story. What do they think will happen? What do they think they know about George Washington and his teeth? Make a list.

Questions to ask after viewing the video

1. Why did George Washington want to hide the fact that his teeth were falling out?
2. What did Martha feed him when he returned from the war? Why?
3. How many teeth did he have in his mouth on the day he became President?
4. Who taught the dentist how to make his false teeth?

Activities

1. Take some books from the library about George Washington. Try to find references to his teeth to see what was known at the time. Create a time line to represent the sequence of events in George Washington's life.
2. Before viewing this video, the class made some predictions about George and his teeth. How close to the real facts were they? Make a list of what they now know about George. Use a Venn diagram to compare what they thought they knew to be true, and the actual facts.
3. Ask the children to imagine that another famous person had a problem like George, but not necessarily teeth. How would this affect what they do? Write funny stories about this person. How did they cope with their situation?

Other Related Spoken Arts Titles

Thank you, Sarah - SAV9694

Fireboat- SAV9699

Boxes For Katje - SAV9703

Christmas Tapestry - SAV9692