

A Collection of Brief Biographies of U.S. Presidents

Compiled by Henry Anker

Note: *This is by no means a comprehensive accounting of accomplishments, shortcomings, failures, or a full listing of events that have been related to the U.S. Presidents.*

Students are encouraged to continue their research using multiple sources of reliable information, including physical (non-digital) biographies, textbooks, encyclopedias, as well as online sources. Below are some of the sources I used to gather the information that follows, including some of my own perspectives on Presidents that served during my lifetime, beginning in 1961.

Sources:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/>

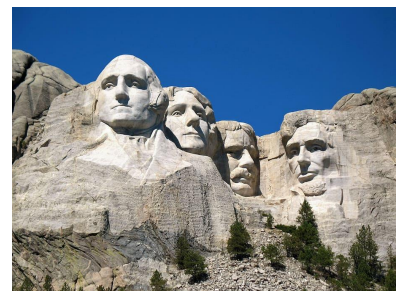
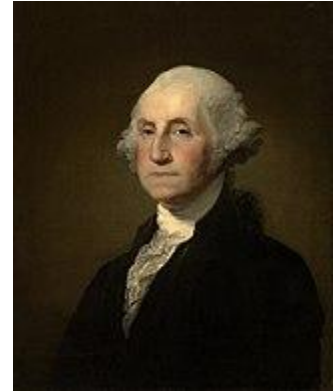
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

<https://www.whitehousehistory.org/slavery-in-the-presidents-neighborhood-faq>

<https://www.biography.com/us-president>

1. **George Washington (1789-1797) -no party affiliation-**

- Prior to the American Revolution, he managed his expansive lands with more than 100 slaves in and around Mount Vernon, Virginia. In his will, he granted some of them their freedom, in a future year, upon the death of his wife.
- He served in the Virginia House of Burgesses (similar to a council or congress). He was the commander of his Virginia regiment, but retired from service in December 1758. His experience during the French and Indian War was generally frustrating, with decisions slowly made, with poor support from the colonial legislature, and having to lead under-trained recruits.
- He married a wealthy widow, Martha Dandridge Custis, who owned a great deal of land.
- He was one of the Virginia delegates to the Second Continental Congress.
- Following the battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775, the dispute between Great Britain and the colonies grew into an armed conflict. In May, Washington traveled to the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia dressed in a military uniform, letting the Delegates know that he was prepared for war.
- He was the first Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, when he served as a General in the Revolutionary War, which lasted six years. Now, each President is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces in the U.S., including the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard.
- He was the First President of the United States, when there were just 13 states in the Union.
- He was unanimously elected President by the Electoral College.
- He served two terms.
- He favored U.S. neutrality (not taking sides) in the war between France and England.
- He encouraged the country, during his farewell address, to avoid party partisanship, and long-term alliances with foreign countries.
- He appears on the U.S. one dollar bill.
- His likeness appears on Mount Rushmore, in South Dakota.



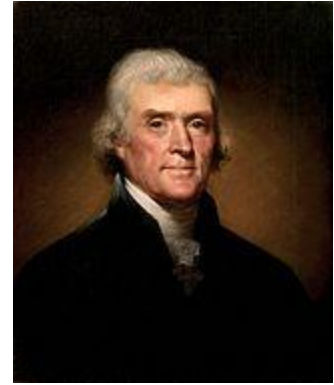
2. **John Adams (1797-1801) -Federalist-**

- He was born and raised in what would become the state of Massachusetts.
- He was a Harvard-educated lawyer.
- As a lawyer, prior to the Revolutionary War, which allowed for the creation of the United States, he successfully defended a group of British soldiers in their trial, when they were charged with the murder of unarmed colonists in the Boston Massacre.
- He was elected to both the First and Second Continental Congresses as a Delegate.
- He advocated for American Independence from Great Britain.
- He served as a diplomat in France and Holland during the Revolutionary War, seeking financial support from countries who were enemies of Great Britain, hoping their support would help the Colonial Armies successfully fight against the British.
- He, along with Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, was a principal writer of the Declaration of Independence.
- He was the second President of the United States.
- He served as George Washington's Vice President, because at the time, the Constitution called for the runner-up in the Presidential Election to be Vice President.
- During his two terms as Vice President under Washington, he complained to his wife, Abigail Adams, that as Vice President, he didn't have much to do, because the role of Vice President, under the Constitution, gave him so little to do. This is a feeling that many other subsequent Vice Presidents have felt. Many who have served in this office thought that the position was only a ceremonial one, and didn't really have any political power. This is, for the most part, true, except in the case when there is an even number of Democrat and Republican votes in the Senate. In this case, when a vote is tied, the Vice President gets to cast the deciding vote, and would, as one would expect nowadays, vote in the way the President prefers the vote to go. Additionally, the Vice President becomes President if the President should die. or becomes incapacitated (unable to do the job). This has happened many times in U.S. History. In other words, many U.S. Vice Presidents have gone on to become President.
- A quote attributed to him was, "People and nations are forged in the fires of adversity."



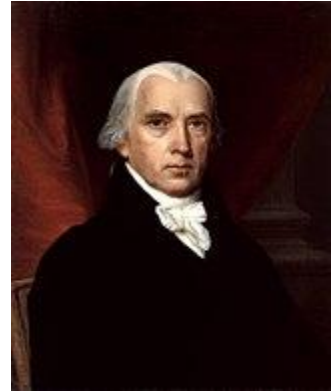
3. **Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809) -Democratic-Republican-**

- He was not considered to be a great public speaker, but rather a great writer and philosopher.
- He was born in 1743 in what would become the state of Virginia.
- He inherited around 5,000 acres of land from his father, and high social standing from his mother.
- He married a widow, Martha Wayles Skelton.
- His home and farm in Virginia was, and is now, known as Monticello.
- He is considered to have been the principal writer of the Declaration of Independence, and was assisted by John Adams and Benjamin Franklin.
- As the principal writer of the Declaration of Independence, he wrote "...all men are created equal," yet enslaved more than 600 people over the course of his life.
- He served as Vice President under John Adams, again, because he was runner up.
- In 1786, he wrote a bill establishing religious freedom.
- He served as the third President of the United States, and the second, after Washington, to serve two terms.
- He authorized the Louisiana Purchase from France, which included land west of the Mississippi River, from the border with Canada down to the Gulf of Mexico, nearly doubling the size of the U.S., paving the way for the establishment of many more states, at the expense of Native American Tribes who had lived on this land for hundreds of years. Native Americans were forced off this land, and were given next to nothing in compensation.
- This President appears on the U.S. two dollar bill.
- His likeness appears on Mount Rushmore, in South Dakota.



4. **James Madison (1809-1817) -Democratic-Republican-**

- As a boy, and young man, his father had him stay home and receive private tutoring because he was concerned about his health.
- He would experience bouts of ill health throughout his life.
- He joined the Virginia Militia as a colonel.
- He was one of Virginia's delegates to the Continental Congress.
- He was one of three authors of the Federalist Papers, and was later called the Father of the U.S. Constitution. When in later years, he was given such credit, he commented that it was the work of many people and not him alone.
- He became a champion for the separation of church and state, ensuring that language regarding religious freedom was included in the Constitution.
- While serving in Congress, he helped author the Bill of Rights.
- He favored the formation of a three-part federal government, consisting of Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches. He thought it was important to have a structure that included a system of checks and balances, in order to prevent the abuse of power by any one branch.
- He established the Democrat-Republican Party with President Thomas Jefferson, who he considered a lifelong friend.
- While not viewed as especially charming himself, his wife Dolley made up for it with her warmth and gaiety (outward happiness). She was the toast of Washington.
- He was one of 12 Presidents, like Washington and Jefferson, to have been a slave owner at some point in his life.



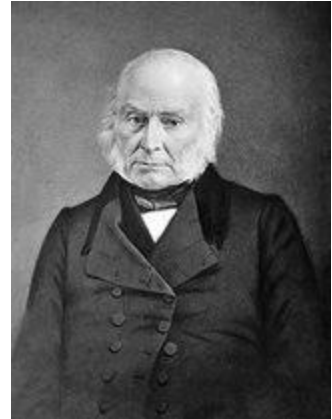
5. **James Monroe (1817-1825) -Democratic-Republican-**

- He was severely wounded when fighting in the Revolutionary War under the command of George Washington.
- He had an outstanding reputation for being honest. Jefferson was to have said of him, that he "...was so honest that if you turned his soul inside out, there would not be a spot on it."
- He served as a senator from Virginia, and as Minister to France.
- He served three terms as Governor of Virginia.
- He initially joined the anti-Federalists in opposing ratification of the new constitution because it lacked a Bill of Rights.
- He assisted in the negotiation of the Louisiana Purchase.
- He is said to be the last president among the Founding Fathers.
- He considered the council (advice) of former presidents Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, and the son of President Adams, John Quincy Adams, who would next become president.
- He established the doctrine that European powers like Russia and France must not attempt to further colonize regions in the North or South American continents. This policy was later to be known as the "_____ Doctrine".
- He was one of 12 Presidents to have been a slave owner at some point in his life.



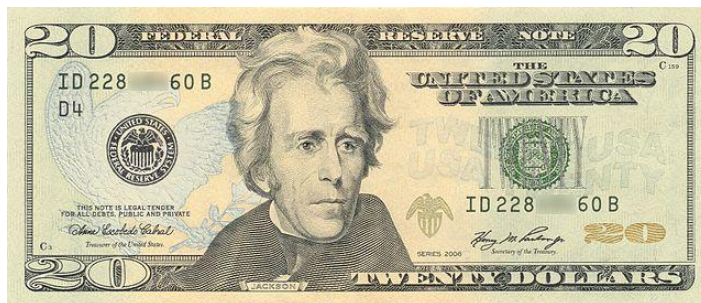
6. **John Quincy Adams (1825-1829) -Democratic-Republican-**

- The sixth President of the United States and the first President to be also the son of a previous President.
- He served as a member of the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate from Massachusetts, before becoming President.
- He was one of the authors of the Monroe Doctrine.
- At age 10, he traveled to France with his father, who was trying to convince other countries to support the American Revolution against the British.
- In 1783, he traveled to Paris to serve as secretary to his father, who was negotiating the Treaty of Paris. During this time, Adams attended schools in Europe and became fluent in French, Dutch and German.
- Back in the U.S. in 1785, he graduated from Harvard University.
- He served in the Massachusetts Legislature and the U.S. Senate.
- He served as Secretary of State to President James Monroe. In this role, he helped negotiate the acquisition of Florida and the Oregon Territories for the U.S.
- As President, he called for a uniform system of weights and measures and making improvements in the patent system, which protects inventor's rights.
- Like his father, he was considered stubborn and independent in his beliefs, and was not able to convince others to support his ideas. As president, he failed to develop the political relationships needed to enact new laws.
- In his Presidential Election, there was a three-way tie, which had to be decided by the House of Representatives, where he prevailed (won). Andrew Jackson, who therefore lost, vowed to defeat him four years later, which he did.
- He served in the House of Representatives after being President, which former Presidents have rarely done.



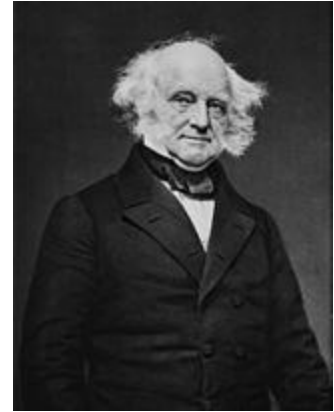
7. **Andrew Jackson (1829-1837) -Democratic-**

- A two-term President who sought to win the popular vote, and pledged to be a President who would represent the common man.
- He was born in the backwoods of the Carolinas, but studied law, and rose to become wealthy enough to buy slaves in Tennessee.
- As a Major General in the War of 1812, he led 5,000 soldiers to an unexpected victory over the British in the Battle of New Orleans.
- He briefly served in the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate from the state of Tennessee.
- He lobbied for the elimination of the Electoral College as a method for voting for President, and replace it with the popular vote. This did not happen, and the controversial Electoral College is still used as the method employed in the Presidential Election today.
- He did not think people should have lifetime terms in government offices. Instead, he believed they should serve for a limited number of years and go back to their own businesses afterward. He did not like consulting or seeking approval of Congress; rather he preferred to use Executive Actions, which is something many recent Presidents like G.W. Bush, Obama, Trump, and Biden have all done as well, to sidestep the process of having Congress approve their plans.
- He instituted policies that forced Native Americans off their land.
- This President appears on the U.S. \$20 bill.
- He was one of 12 Presidents to have been a slave owner at some point in his life.



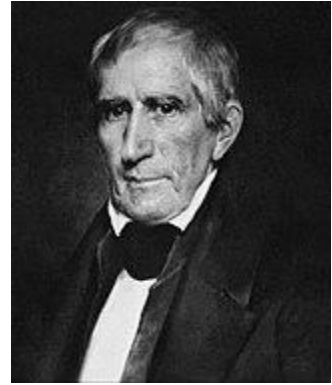
8. **Martin Van Buren (1837-1841) -Democratic-**

- He served as a U.S. Senator.
- He served as Secretary of State and Vice President under Andrew Jackson.
- He was elected president after Andrew Jackson's second term ended.
- He was born into a family with a humble background, meaning that his family was not rich.
- His parents were tavern owners and farmers.
- His family was not able to afford college for him, so his father got him an apprenticeship (a person who learns while on the job assisting) with a lawyer. He later became a lawyer himself.
- When he became active politically, he used the tactic of offering political offices in exchange for votes. This type of bribery was not uncommon in these times, and was practiced by Abraham Lincoln, as well, in order to get the 15th Amendment passed.
- This really established the foundations of the modern political machine, where this largely illegal behavior ('pay to play') has gone on for hundreds of years, to the present.
- He was President when the 1837 Economic Panic and resulting five-year economic depression occurred.
- He opposed the expansion of slavery, and blocked the annexation (addition) of Texas because, by his thinking, it certainly would have become slave territory - and might bring war with Mexico, which turned out to happen later.
- He was one of 12 Presidents to have been a slave owner at some point in his life.



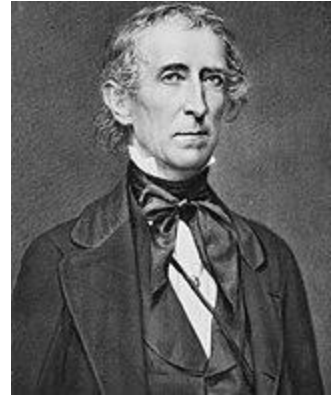
9. **William Henry Harrison** (1841-1841) -*Whig*-

- He was a military officer before his election as President.
- As a military officer, he led many campaigns against Native American tribes and fought to take their land away and offer it to American settlers as farmland.
- His father was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and his grandson, Benjamin Harrison, later became President himself.
- He served in the Ohio Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the U.S. Senate.
- He was elected President at the age of 67, as the oldest man, at the time, to take the office, and became the first to die in office.
- He served only 32 days in office, the fewest of any President.
- Historians believe that the cause of his death was a severe cold.
- He was one of 12 Presidents to have been a slave owner at some point in his life.



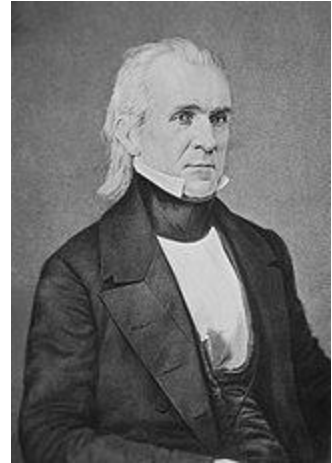
10. **John Tyler (1841-1845) -Whig-**

- He came from a large and wealthy family.
- He studied law at the College of William & Mary.
- In the War of 1812, he served as a military captain.
- He served as governor of Virginia, and in the U.S. House of Representatives.
- He became the tenth President of the United States when President William Henry Harrison died in April 1841.
- He was the first Vice President to assume the Presidency after the death of his predecessor.
- He was a strict constitutionalist, meaning that he always followed the Constitution to the letter.
- His administration suffered from his opponents' doubting his legitimacy as President, since he was not actually elected himself.
- He insisted on having a formal inauguration, which was not common for later Vice Presidents assuming office.
- His presidency was beset by problems with the banking system and the fight that the southern states made for the continuation of slavery, that later led up to the Civil War.
- After leaving the presidency, Tyler led efforts for Southern Secession. He became a member of the Confederate House of Representatives.
- He was one of 12 Presidents to have been a slave owner at some point in his life.



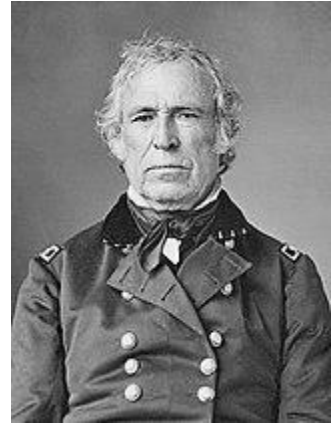
11. **James K. Polk (1845-1849) -Democratic-**

- He was the last of the Jacksonian Democrats supporting Jackson's policies, before becoming president himself.
- He served in the House of Representatives as Speaker of the House, the House of Representatives' highest position.
- He served as Governor of Tennessee. When running for President, he advocated for the Texas and Oregon territories to become part of the United States.
- He nearly led the United States into a war with Great Britain over the expansion of the Oregon Territory (and possibly further into Canada), but ultimately the dispute was settled without war, with the Canadian Border established to where it is today.
- He led the United States into war with Mexico over the U.S. claim for Texas and California, for which the United States ultimately paid Mexico \$15 million.
- The elimination, or expansion of slavery in various parts of the United States weighed heavily on him during his presidency. He left office in poor health, and he died in 1849, not long after leaving office.
- He was one of 12 Presidents to have been a slave owner at some point in his life.



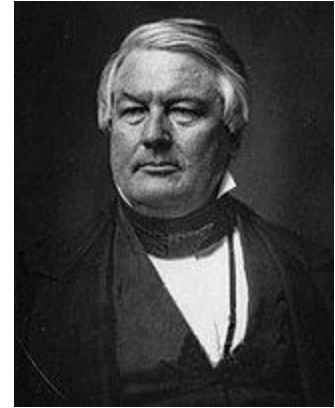
12. **Zachary Taylor (1849-1850) -Whig-**

- Taylor served just over one full year in office before his death in July 1850, which occurred after presiding over a ceremony at the Washington Monument on a very hot summer day.
- He was president when New Mexico and California were pursuing their statehood. The fight over whether states would be slave states or free states was a huge issue at the time, and one that he did not want to deal with.
- Before being elected President, he had served as a general and was considered a military hero from his service in the War of 1812 and the War with Mexico.
- He spent much of his military career fighting and killing Native Americans, forcing them off their own lands in favor of white settlers taking their property.
- He was a strong nationalist, meaning he wanted to keep the country together, and threatened severe consequences to southern state leaders and insurrectionists if they went to war against the Union (the Northern States). His position included the use of military force, in defense of the North, against the South.
- Though he died 11 years before the Civil War began, his only son later participated in the war as a general for the Confederate (Southern States') Army.
- It should not be overlooked that he was the owner of more than 100 slaves at one time or another, and had slaves working for him while President at the White House.



13. **Millard Fillmore (1850-1853) -Whig-**

- He began his life in extreme poverty in a log cabin in the year 1800, and rose to wealth through hard work and dedication.
- He was apprenticed to a cloth maker by his father to keep the family solvent (able to pay their bills).
- As a young man, he worked on his father's farm and attended school in a one-room schoolhouse. Many years later, at the age of 26, he married one of his teachers.
- He often stole books to educate himself. He later became a lawyer.
- He served in the New York State Assembly and the U.S. House of Representatives.
- He was chosen to run as Vice President along with Zachary Taylor, but did not even meet Taylor until after the election was won. Once they met, they did not get along well.
- As the Vice President for Zachary Taylor, he became President upon Taylor's death in 1850. When this happened, all of Taylor's cabinet members (assistants to the President in various areas of government) resigned (quit).
- He was responsible for forcing open U.S. trade with the country of Japan, with the Treaty of Kanagawa.
- He worked to keep Imperialist (conquering) European interests from taking control of the Hawaiian Islands.
- He refused to back (assist) an invasion of Cuba by Southerners who wanted to expand slavery into the Caribbean region.
- He served only one term as President, because many members of his own party refused to support him for re-election.



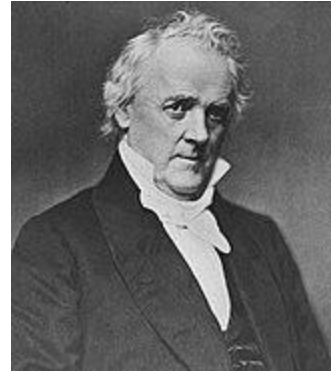
14. **Franklin Pierce (1853-1857) -Democratic-**

- He was a one-term president who served at a very challenging time in U.S. History.
- The nation was divided over the issues of Slavery and States' Rights. He believed that The Compromise of 1850 had succeeded in calming the tensions between the Southern Slave States (Confederacy), and the Northern Free States (Union). But the differences between the two sides escalated over new states' being added, and whether or not these states would be 'slave' or 'free' states.
- Prior to becoming president, he served in the Army during the War with Mexico, was elected to the House of Representatives, and later, was elected to the U.S. Senate.
- Two months before his inauguration, he and his wife saw their eleven-year-old son killed when their train was wrecked. Grief-stricken, he entered the Presidency with tremendous sadness and apprehension.



15. **James Buchanan (1857-1861) -Democratic-**

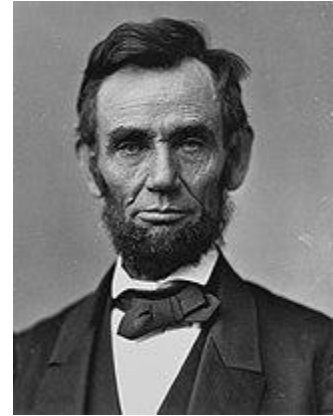
- He was the 15th President of the United States (1857-1861), serving right before the American Civil War.
- He remains the only President to be elected from Pennsylvania*, and to remain a lifelong bachelor, which means he is the only President not to have been married.
- He was elected five times to the House of Representatives, and for a decade in the Senate.
- He had lots of diplomatic experience. Under President Jackson, he served as a Minister to Russia. Under President Polk, he was chosen to be Secretary of State. Years later, after losing the Presidential Election to Franklin Pierce, he was chosen to be Pierce's Minister to Great Britain.
- His service abroad (in other countries) helped him win the Democratic Nomination in 1856, probably because he had been away from the United States and had stayed out of the political fighting between the North and the South over the issue of slavery.
- In his campaign, he stated his belief that Slavery was a question to be decided by states and territories, but not by the Federal Government.
- He was unable to settle differences between the Northern and Southern States on the issue of slavery. Division between the two sides in the United States only got worse during his Presidency, until the time he left office. Because of this, most historians consider his Presidency to have been a failure.



**President Biden (2021-) was born in Pennsylvania, though was elected when living in the state of Delaware.*

16. **Abraham Lincoln (1861-1865) -Republican-**

- He was the 16th President. (The U.S. has now had nearly 50 presidents.)
- He is probably best known for having signed the Emancipation Proclamation that declared forever free those slaves within the Confederacy (southern slave states) in 1863.
- He swore, in his Inaugural Address, to uphold his oath to preserve, protect, and defend the United States Government.
- He was not born into a wealthy family. He grew up in Kentucky and had limited access to higher education.
- He taught himself the law by reading William Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England*.
- He worked on a farm, in a store, and served as a lawyer in a law firm partnership with another lawyer.
- Sometimes, as the circuit court traveled through various counties, to make a living as a lawyer, he would travel with the court as well.
- At the age of 33, he married Mary Todd, who was a high-spirited woman from a well-known family in Kentucky. They had 4 sons, only one of which lived into adulthood.
- He served in the Illinois state government.
- While serving in the U.S. House of Representatives, he spoke out against the Mexican-American War.
- He ran for Senator in Illinois, and lost to Steven Douglas, but gained a reputation as a speaker and thinker that later helped him win the Presidency.
- As President, he wanted the American people to know how important the Civil War was to history and the future of the United States.
- To fight the Civil War, he distributed \$2,000,000 from the U.S. Treasury for war weapons, supplies, and food for soldiers, without an appropriation (permission) from Congress.
- He called for 75,000 volunteers into military service without a declaration of war.
- He suspended the writ of *habeas corpus* (*due process for a suspect*), arresting and imprisoning suspected Confederate States sympathizers without a warrant.
- He faced antagonism (anger and disagreement) from the opposition, his own staff and army generals, and the majority of the American People.
- He was a very active Commander in Chief of his armed forces in the Civil War, often sleeping in the telegraph room of the White House to send and receive messages, to and from, the battlefields. He also made appearances with his generals and soldiers in the places where they fought. He studied military strategies, and was aware of which generals fought aggressively, and which ones were more tentative in seeking combat.
- His *Gettysburg Address* is considered to be one of the most important speeches ever made. The speech was given at a ceremony to establish a cemetery to honor soldiers who died in the Civil War. He said that, "*We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain - that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom - and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.*"
- He won re-election in 1864, planning for the return of the Southern States to the Union.

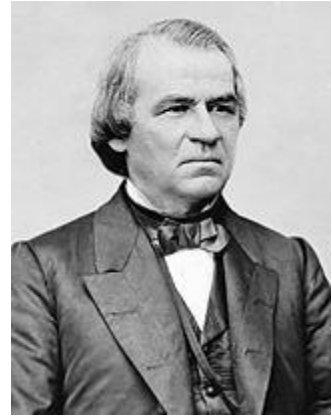


- In his Second Inaugural Address, he stated his spirit of reconciliation (getting along) towards the southern states that had seceded (left, or separated themselves). The famous words are now inscribed on one wall of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.: *“With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation’s wounds....”*
- Tragically, he was assassinated (shot and killed) while attending a theatre performance in April 1865. His absence further tragically hampered (hurt) the nation’s recovery from the Civil War and Reconstruction (the physical and social rebuilding of the southern states).
- He is considered to be one of America’s greatest heroes.
- He appears on the U.S. five dollar bill.
- His likeness appears on Mount Rushmore, in South Dakota.



17. **Andrew Johnson (1865-1869) -National Union-**

- He became president after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln in 1865.
- He was not Lincoln's first Vice President, but was selected by Lincoln to partner with him for his second term, in order to better Lincoln's chances for re-election.
- He was considered an honest and honorable man, but he was challenged vigorously by the Radical Republicans in Congress during his presidency.
- He was born into poverty and became a tailor by trade before serving in the U.S. House of Representatives.
- In government, he advocated for the distribution of free farm land to poor farmers.
- During the secession crisis (when the Southern States left the Union and formed the Confederate States of the United States to fight against the North in the Civil War), Johnson remained in the U.S. Senate even when his state of Tennessee seceded, which made him a hero in the North, and a traitor in the eyes of most Southerners.
- In 1862, President Lincoln appointed him Military Governor of Tennessee, and he used the state as a laboratory for reconstruction.
- The Radical Republicans in Congress did not feel that Johnson was doing enough to protect the rights of freed men and women (former slaves).
- The Radical Republicans in Congress, (though by today's standards, most people would not refer to them as 'radical'), defended their actions as being supportive of freed African Americans, and pushed for more rights for Blacks in the South. Additionally, these 'Radical Republicans' were in favor of passing more punitive (punishing) laws against Southern Democratic senators, trying to keep the former Confederate members from returning.
- His leadership style was more conciliatory (getting along with others), and wanted to welcome Southerners back into the U.S. Government (as Lincoln also had planned to do), so he vetoed the Radicals' legislation. When the Radical Republicans did not get the support of Johnson for their progressive ideologies, they overrode his veto, which was a historic move by Congress against the President, and led to his being the first President of the United States to be Impeached.
- Though Impeached, he was acquitted in Congress by one vote, and was able to remain in office until the end of his term.
- After his presidency, he returned to Tennessee and served briefly as a senator before he died.
- He was one of 12 Presidents to have been a slave owner at some point in his life.



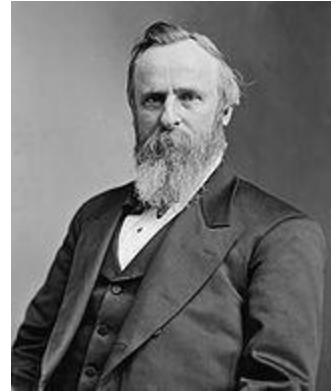
18. **Ulysses S. Grant (1869-1877) -Republican-**

- As a young man, he hated the idea of having to work in his father's tannery (where animal hides are cleaned and dried).
- He served in the U.S. military during the Mexican American War, under Zachary Taylor.
- As a leader of a volunteer regiment at the beginning of the Civil War, he impressed President Lincoln with his leadership skills and was promoted to General, where he continued to excel and help lead the Northern Union Forces to victory over the Southern Confederacy in the Civil War.
- His effective military leadership included victories in the Battles of Shiloh and Vicksburg.
- He was considered by Northerners to be an American hero.
- He was elected to two terms as the 18th President of the United States.
- As President, he worked to implement Congressional Reconstruction and to remove the stains of slavery.
- He aligned himself with the Radical Republicans who wanted more and quicker reforms in the South than Southerners were willing to make.
- Once he became President, he included many members of his Army staff in his White House staff.
- He pushed through ratification (approval) of the 15th Amendment, which stated, *"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."* It took the Voting Rights Act of 1865, however, to enforce the right of black men (not yet women), to vote.
- He led the way to establishing the National Parks Service (which protected natural areas for public use, and created campgrounds).
- Grant was highly scrupulous (detail-oriented), but his administration was infected with scandal. After leaving the Presidency, he requested Mark Twain (a famous author and humorist) publish his memoirs (life story).
- He was one of 12 Presidents to have been a slave owner at some point in his life.
- He appears on the U.S. \$50 bill.



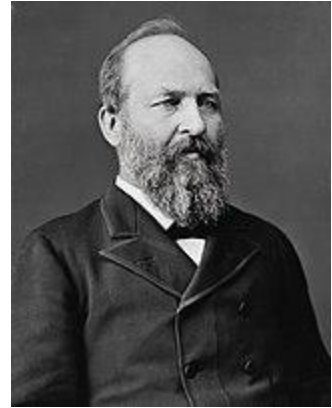
19. **Rutherford B. Hayes** (1877-1881) -*Republican*-

- He was born in Ohio and attended Harvard Law School. After graduation, he opened his own law practice.
- When serving in the Civil War, he was wounded in action.
- He was elected to the House of Representatives. He also served as Governor of Ohio.
- In his election to become President, he went to bed thinking he had lost. He did, in fact, lose the popular vote, but won the Electoral College and the Presidency.
- He oversaw the end of Reconstruction (changing laws in the Southern states, in an attempt to advocate for the civil rights of former slaves).
- He began Civil Service reforms, and other efforts to reduce the friction between the North and South.
- At his direction, his First Lady made the Women's Temperance Union (an organization working to outlaw the sale and drinking of alcohol) very happy when she had all alcoholic beverages removed from the White House.
- He favored financial conservatism (being careful with spending money from the federal budget).
- He announced in advance that he would not seek a second term as President, and retired to his home in Fremont, Ohio.



20. **James Garfield (1881-1881) -Republican-**

- He was born in Ohio. Sadly, his father died when he was only two years of age.
- He drove canal boat teams to earn money for college, and later became a college professor, and then the President of the college.
- He served as a General during the Civil War.
- He served as a senator from Ohio.
- He spoke publicly in support of the Republican Party and abolition.
- He became a member of the Radical Republicans.
- After the Civil War, he supported the confiscation (taking by law or force) of southern plantations (large homes with farmland) and the punishment of southern rebellion leaders.
- While he tried to improve relations between the Radical Republicans and President Johnson, he was unsuccessful, and ultimately supported the impeachment of Johnson.
- He was elected President after serving 9 two-year terms in the U.S. House of Representatives.
- He was known for his efforts to reduce political corruption.
- He was assassinated after only 200 days in office, meaning he served less than one year as President.



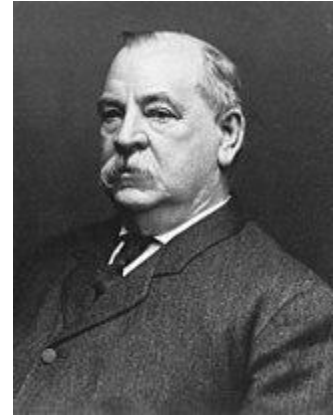
21. **Chester A. Arthur** (1881-1885) -*Republican*-

- He was the son of an immigrant father who came from northern Ireland.
- His father was a passionate Baptist abolitionist (person in opposition to slavery) preacher.
- From Vermont, he graduated from Union College, was briefly a teacher himself, then graduated from law school and practiced law in New York City. He served in the New York state government in the Customs House.
- He was a loyal political party operative and promoter (member with power) of the patronage (corruption) system during his political career prior to becoming President.
- He was Garfield's Vice President and became president after Garfield's assassination.
- His wife, Ellen, died in 1880, and he entered the White House as a widower (a husband whose wife has died).
- He was a well-dressed man as President and he associated (spent time with) with the elite (rich and famous people) in Washington, D.C.
- While he was President, many reforms were made to reduce corruption in many government systems.
- He, himself, changed his ways, and as President supported the Pendleton Civil Service Act (1883), which provided for the open appointment and promotion of federal employees based on merit (hard work) rather than patronage (who a person knew, was related to, or bribery).
- Newspaper Editor Alexander McClure said of President Arthur, "No man ever entered the Presidency so profoundly and widely distrusted, and no one ever retired...more generally respected."



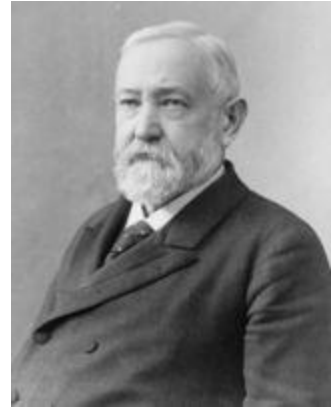
22. **Grover Cleveland (1885-1889) -Democratic-**

- He was raised in New York, and was one of nine children in the family.
- His father, a Presbyterian minister, died when he was only 16, and he had to forgo (give up) his education to go to work to support the family.
- He worked with his older brother at the New York Institute for Special Education.
- He passed the New York State Bar Exam (the test given in each state to obtain a law license) in 1858, without any structured formal study.
- He avoided serving in the Civil War by paying a substitute \$300 to take his place as a soldier, which was not an uncommon practice at the time.
- He served as Mayor of Buffalo, New York, and Governor of New York state.
- He was the first Democrat elected after the Civil War, and the only President to leave the White House, and four years later, be elected President again.
- He served as President from 1885-1889 and from 1893-1897.
- He won the Presidency with the support of both Democrats and reform Republicans.
- He was the only President to get married in the White House. The woman he married was 21 years old, while he was 48. They had five children.
- He vetoed (blocked) many funding bills proposed by Congress that he felt were fraudulent or unnecessary, earning the nickname "guardian president" for his record-breaking use of veto power and strengthening the power of the executive branch (Presidency).
- He wrote, *"Federal aid in such cases encourages the expectation of paternal care on the part of the Government and weakens the sturdiness of our national character..."*
- Another famous quote attributed to this President was this one that he offered during his 1888 re-election campaign, *"What is the use of being elected or re-elected unless you stand for something?"*
- He presided over the dedication of the Statue of Liberty
- In his re-election bid, though he won more popular votes than his opponent, he lost the Electoral College vote, and the Presidency.
- Benjamin Harrison served as President between Cleveland's two terms.
- He was elected again in 1892.
- He was opposed to women's suffrage (women's right to vote), believing that sensible women didn't want the vote
- He faced many national economic challenges as President during his second term, and was not nominated by his party for a third term.



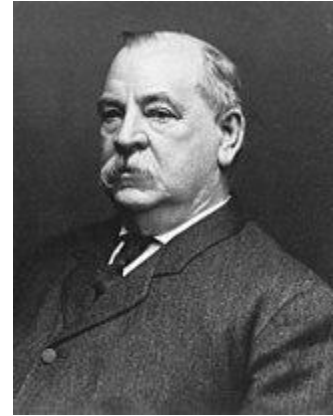
23. **Benjamin Harrison (1889-1893) -Republican-**

- He was born in Ohio, but later moved to Indianapolis, Indiana, where he practiced law, and was considered to be an excellent lawyer.
- He served as a Colonel of the 70th Volunteer Infantry in the Civil War.
- He served in the U.S. Senate, where he was said to have advocated for (supported) Native Americans, Homesteaders, and Civil War Veterans.
- In his Presidential Election, he lost the popular vote by about 100,000 votes to Grover Cleveland, but won the Electoral College vote, 233 to 168, and therefore, the Presidency.
- He signed the Sherman Antitrust Act in order to protect trade and commerce (businesses) against unlawful restraints and monopolies (attempts by companies to control all of one business sector, like oil, electricity, transportation, etc.).
- In his re-election campaign of 1892, he was defeated by Grover Cleveland, who has been the only President to serve non-consecutive terms.



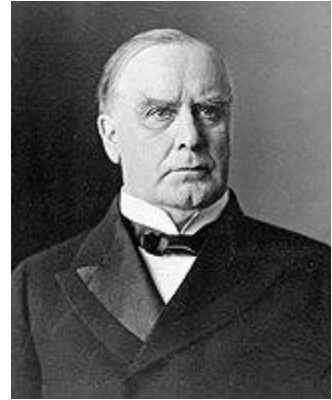
24. **Grover Cleveland (1893-1897) -Democratic-**

- He was raised in New York, and was one of nine children in the family.
- His father, a Presbyterian minister, died when he was only 16, and he had to forgo (give up) his education to go to work to support the family.
- He worked with his older brother at the New York Institute for Special Education.
- He passed the New York State Bar Exam (the test given in each state to obtain a law license) in 1858 without any structured formal study.
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- He faced many national economic challenges as President during his second term, and was not nominated by his party for a third term.



25. **William McKinley (1897-1901) -Republican-**

- He was born in Ohio in 1843.
- He attended college and taught briefly before the Civil War started.
- In the Civil War, he enlisted at the lowly rank of Private in the Union Army (North). At the end of the war, he left as a brevet major of volunteers.
- He studied and practiced law in Canton, Ohio.
- In Congress, he was perceived as siding with public interests over private ones.
- At the end of the Spanish American War, he favored annexing (taking control of) the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico.
- He served two terms as Governor of Ohio.
- He was elected in 1896, during an economic depression.
- He supported the Dingley Tariff Act, the highest protective tariff in American history. His support for the Dingley Tariff strengthened his position with labor unions, while his business-friendly administration allowed industries to grow rapidly.
- He was re-elected in 1900, but was shot (assassinated) in September of 1901, and died eight days later.



26. **Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) -Republican-**

- His first wife and mother died on the same day, and caused him great sadness. He spent a lot of time riding horses and hunting near his ranch in South Dakota for the next few years. Later, in 1886, he remarried.
- He served as a Lieutenant Colonel of the 'Rough Rider' regiment in the Spanish American War. Much has been written about his exploits in this war.
- He was elected Governor of New York in 1898.
- He was chosen to be William McKinley's Vice President.
- He became President in 1901, after the assassination of President William McKinley.
- He was only 43 years old when he took office. At the time, he was the youngest U.S. President.
- He was considered to be a progressive reformer.
- He was known as the 'trust buster' for his leadership in breaking up harmful company monopolies.
- His favorite proverb to quote was, *"Speak softly and carry a big stick."*
- He was a strong leader in the area of foreign policy.
- He helped ensure the construction of the Panama Canal, and worked to prevent foreign intervention by other countries in the Caribbean Sea region.
- He was a great conservationist. Under his guidance, millions of acres of forests and other natural lands were preserved for public use as National Parks.
- He lived his life actively and vigorously. He played outdoors with his five younger children and loved to hike in natural areas.
- While delivering a campaign speech for a third term (which he did not win) in Wisconsin, he was shot in the chest in an assassination attempt. Unbelievably, he continued his speech for more than an hour, before seeing a doctor.
- In his post-presidential life, he was proud that all four of his sons enlisted for service during WWI, one of whom was shot and killed.
- A last quote attributed to him was, "No man has had a happier life than I have led; a happier life in every way."
- His likeness appears on Mount Rushmore, in South Dakota, along with Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln.



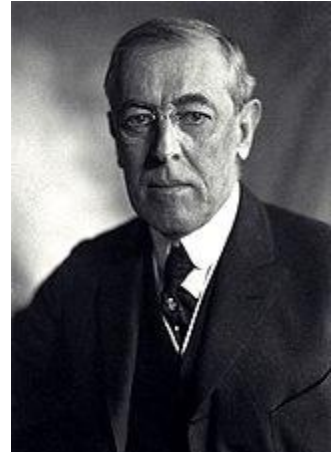
27. **William Howard Taft (1909-1913) -Republican-**

- He is the only President to have also served as the Chief Justice on the Supreme Court.
- He considered the appointment to the Supreme Court to be his greatest accomplishment, even better than being President.
- He graduated from Yale and practiced law in Ohio.
- He served as governor general of the Philippines.
- He was the first president to have a presidential automobile, converting the White House stables into garages.
- He was the first to occupy the Oval Office.
- He was the first to throw the ceremonial first pitch at a baseball game, and the first President to play golf as a hobby.
- He was bothered by Progressives' anger toward his policies.
- His administration initiated 80 antitrust suits continuing the work of Theodore Roosevelt.
- While President, Congress submitted plans for a Federal Income Tax and an amendment for the direct election of Senators.



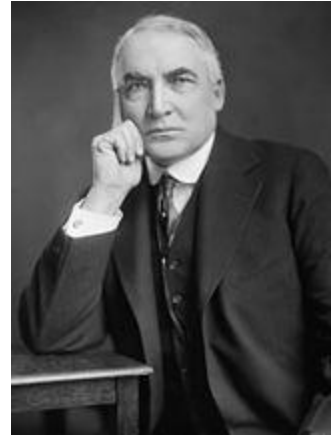
28. **Woodrow Wilson (1913-1921) -Democratic-**

- He graduated from Princeton and the University of Virginia Law School.
- He was a professor of Political Science, and later became President of Princeton.
- He served as Governor of New Jersey for two years before being elected President.
- He won only 42% of the vote for President, but benefitted from an election that included three candidates, and thus won an overwhelming Electoral Vote victory.
- A leader of the Progressive Movement.
- After a policy of neutrality at the beginning of WWI, he led America into the war in order to, “make the world safe for democracy.”
- He helped push through legislation for a Federal income tax, an eight hour day for railroad workers, and protection for business against unfair practices.
- While shepherding reforms for the middle class, union workers, and women’s Rights, he was also known for a dismal record on race relations
- After WWI, he traveled to Europe to campaign for a peace for the League of Nations (a treaty organization designed to prevent future wars. He suffered exhaustion and a stroke, and nearly died.
- He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1920.



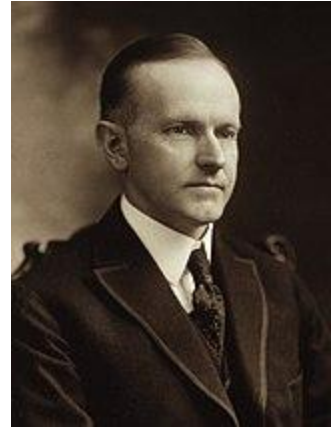
29. **Warren G. Harding (1921-1923) -Republican-**

- He served in the Ohio state government.
- He was very active in business, his church, charitable organizations and a publisher of a newspaper before being elected President.
- He won his Presidential Election with a landslide 60% of the popular vote.
- One of his campaign promises in the 1920 Election was, "Less government in business and more business in government."
- Though his predecessor, Woodrow Wilson had championed U.S. participation in the League of Nations, he kept the U.S. out.
- A lot of scandals occurred in his administration, but rather than allow the public to find out about them, he preferred to try to hide them.
- He died of a heart attack near the end of his four year term, in 1923, while in San Francisco.



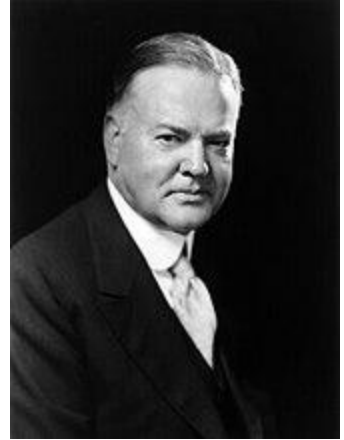
30. **Calvin Coolidge (1923-1929) -Republican-**

- Born in Vermont and graduated from Amherst College, then entered law and politics in Massachusetts, where he ultimately was elected governor.
- As Warren G. Harding's Vice President, he became President after Harding's fatal heart attack in 1923.
- He was sworn into office by kerosene lamp light at 2:30 am by his father, who happened to be a Notary Public (a person, who by law, can certify legal documents).
- Politically, as President, he favored isolation in foreign policy, tax cuts for the economy, and limited federal aid to farmers.
- He easily won election in 1924, as a large portion of the U.S. population was experiencing financial prosperity.
- Here is a quote from a political observer of Coolidge: "[His] active inactivity suits the mood and certain of the needs of the country admirably. It suits all the business interests which want to be let alone.... And it suits all those who have become convinced that government in this country has become dangerously complicated and top-heavy...."
- He was known as 'Silent Cal' for the few words he often had to say in interviews.
- He chose not to run for re-election in 1928. He avoided the disaster of the Great Depression which would come soon after.



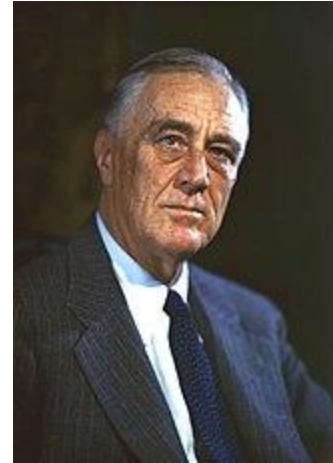
31. **Herbert Hoover (1929-1933) -Republican-**

- He was born in Iowa, but grew up in Oregon, and later attended and graduated from Stanford University in California.
- He earned acclaim for his public service as an engineer, administrator, and humanitarian.
- He spent time as a private company engineer in China.
- During WWI, President Wilson enlisted him as head of the Food Administration, to help keep soldiers and civilians fed, both at home and in Europe.
- He helped Americans living abroad safely return to the U.S. when WWI began and Germany declared war on France.
- By his political opponents, he was made into a scapegoat (the person everyone blamed) for the Great Depression.
- In the years after his Presidency, he served in government at the request of Presidents Truman and Eisenhower.



32. **Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933-1945) -Democratic-**

- He took office at the height of the Great Depression.
- He said in his inaugural speech, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."
- He was the fifth cousin to Theodore Roosevelt.
- Before becoming President, he served in the New York state government, and as Assistant Secretary of the Navy.
- At the age of 39, he was stricken with polio, which kept him in a wheelchair for much of his life.
- He was the only President to be elected four times.
- When he took office, most banks had gone out of business and unemployment was staggeringly high.
- He proposed and led the country steadily out of the depression with many public works programs designed to improve the country with roads, bridges, dams, electricity production, support for farmers, the arts, and other areas of need.
- He fought for the establishment of Social Security, higher taxes on the rich, and controls on banks and public utilities like electricity, heating fuel, and water.
- Under his leadership, which was challenged by his opponents, the Federal Government was granted the constitutional right to regulate the economy.
- He called his collective plans for improvement of the social good the "New Deal".
- He tried, unsuccessfully, to expand the number of justices on the Supreme Court from nine to thirteen judges, to help challenges to his policies be decided in his favor.
- At the beginning of WWII, he tried to keep the U.S. neutral and out of the war. Then, when France and Great Britain were attacked by Adolph Hitler and the Nazi Army, he arranged for non-military aid to be sent to Great Britain.
- When the Pearl Harbor Navy base in Hawaii was attacked by the Japanese air force in 1941, he directed all of his administration's and congress's efforts toward fighting an all-out global war.
- As the war went on, and the U.S. and its allies appeared to be heading toward victory, he began planning for a United Nations organization that would work toward preventing future wars.
- Prior to the end of WWII, and not too far into his fourth term as President, he died of a cerebral (brain) hemorrhage.
- As a direct response to FDR being elected four times, the 22nd Amendment to the Constitution was ratified (passed by congress). This amendment limits the number of times a person is eligible for election to the office of President to two terms.



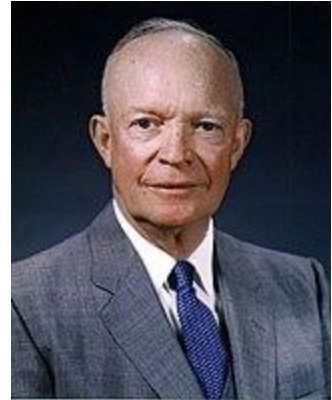
33. **Harry S. Truman (1945-1953) -Democratic-**

- Before becoming President, he worked as a farmer in the state of Missouri.
- He served in WWI as a captain in the field artillery.
- After WWI, he returned to Missouri, got married, and opened a haberdashery (men's clothing & accessories shop) in Kansas City, Missouri.
- He served as administrative judge in his home state, as well as a senator from Missouri.
- In the Senate, he headed the war investigating committee charged with preventing waste and corruption, saving the country billions of dollars.
- As FDR's newly chosen Vice President, he became President upon the death of FDR from a cerebral (brain) hemorrhage.
- Before becoming President, he was largely uninformed about the events of WWII, or relations with Russia, or the development of the Atomic Bombs that the U.S. and its enemies were all working on for use in the war.
- As President, after the War came to an end in Europe, he worked to secure a surrender from Japan to end the war, but Japan refused.
- He ordered the dropping of an Atomic Bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima, killing nearly 100,000 people instantly, and more than 10,000 more from radiation-related diseases in the years that followed. He called on Japan to surrender once again, but Japanese leaders refused.
- Another Atomic Bomb was then dropped on the Japanese city of Nagasaki, again killing nearly 100,000 people instantly, and more than 10,000 in the years that followed.
- After WWII ended, he was charged with bringing the allied countries together against Russia and supported the people of West Germany and Berlin with the Marshall Plan.
- As President, he presented Congress a 21-point program, proposing the expansion of Social Security, a full-employment program, a permanent Fair Employment Practices Act, and public housing and slum clearance. The program, he wrote, "symbolizes for me my assumption of the office of President in my own right." It became known as the "Fair Deal."
- He led the U.S. as President during the Korean War, in which the U.S. viewed its support of South Korea as necessary to prevent Communism spreading from Russia and China to North Korea, to all of Asia, and possibly to other continents on Earth, threatening the preservation of Democracy.
- He famously had a sign on his desk in the White House that read, "*The buck stops here.*" This slogan was meant to tell people that he would take responsibility for any decision that he made on behalf of the American People. (This was meant to be a counter expression to "*pass the buck*", which means passing the responsibility for something that has to be done, on to someone else)



34. **Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953-1961) -Republican-**

- He had a distinguished military career before being elected President.
- He commanded the Allied Forces landing in North Africa in November 1942, and on D-Day, 1944, he was Supreme Commander of the troops invading German-occupied France.
- In 1951, he was chosen to take supreme command over the new NATO forces, which is a cooperative effort of countries, primarily in Europe, working together to defend themselves from being overtaken by the U.S.S.R. (Russia).
- The very successful "I like Ike" campaign was used to help him win two Presidential Elections in the 1950's.
- He suffered a heart attack in 1955, but recovered and was re-elected in 1956.
- When the desegregation of schools began, he sent troops into Little Rock, Arkansas, to assure the right of Black Students to attend public school with white students, in compliance with the orders of a Federal court.
- He ordered the complete desegregation of the Armed Forces. Previously, white and Black soldiers were quartered (housed in barracks and tents), and fought separately by race. He wrote, "There must be no second class citizens in this country."
- Just prior to leaving office, he made a televised address to the nation, warning about the dangers of expansion of the 'military industrial complex'. He was worried about the cost an arms race (countries making missiles, bombs, and other weapons) with the Soviet Union would have, taking resources (tax money) away from other areas, such as building hospitals, schools and other needed infrastructure (roads, bridges, dams, etc.)



35. **John F. Kennedy (1961-1963) -Democratic-**

- He is probably best known as the youngest person ever elected President at 43 years of age, and the President who was assassinated by gunshot from a Dallas, Texas building window while riding in an open car (convertible). His wife, Jacqueline, was in the car by his side.
- Though the assassination was caught on grainy black and white film, there have been multiple theories about who was responsible for the killing.
- He served in the Navy, the House of Representatives, and the Senate, from the state of Massachusetts, prior to becoming President.
- He was the first person of the Roman Catholic faith to be elected President of the United States.
- In his Inaugural Address, he offered the memorable quote, "Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country."
- Military threats from Russia in the country of Cuba (not far from the state of Florida), and Berlin, West Germany caused great tensions for him, the U.S. Military, and for the people of the U.S. and Russia.
- Another famous speech he made on Space Exploration included this famous quote, "We choose to go to the Moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard."
- The U.S. war in Vietnam began under his Presidency, when he sent 400 'advisors' to help the military of South Vietnam.
- Later, despite his concerns about whether the U.S. involvement there was appropriate, under his authority, the number of troops grew into the thousands, which later led to full U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War.



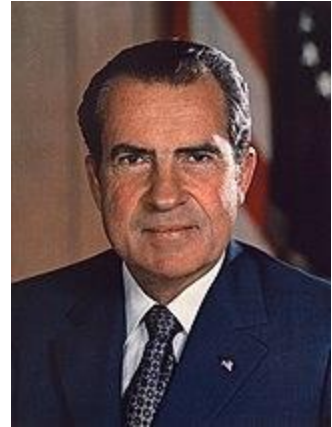
36. **Lyndon B. Johnson (1963-1969) -Democratic-**

- He served in the House of Representatives and the Senate, representing the state of Texas before accepting Kennedy's invitation to serve as his Vice President.
- As Vice President, he became President upon the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963.
- He took the Oath of Office in haste aboard the Presidential Airplane, Air Force One."
- The vision of this President was, "A Great Society", "...a place where the meaning of man's life matches the marvels of man's labor," for the American people and their fellow men elsewhere.
- He carried on the rapidly growing struggle to restrain Communist encroachment in Vietnam.
- His Presidency was beset (troubled) by the widing war in Vietnam, ultimately costing the lives of some 55,000 servicemen and women.
- The growing Civil Rights Movement, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and public unrest (riots) in many of the nation's large cities, like Los Angeles and Chicago, cast a shadow over his administration's many accomplishments.
- He did not seek a second full term as President, but instead used his remaining time in office to end the war and negotiate peace in Vietnam, an effort in which he was unsuccessful.



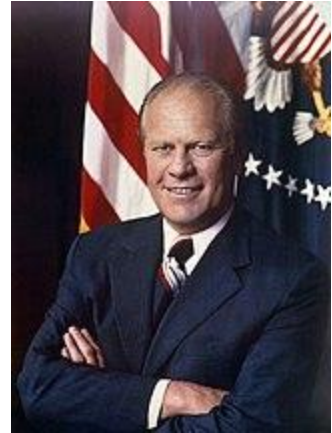
37. **Richard Nixon (1969-1974) -Republican-**

- He served in the Navy, the U.S. House of Representatives, and as a Senator from California before being selected to be President Eisenhower's Vice President.
- He ran for President against John F. Kennedy in 1960, but lost in a very close election.
- Some historians believe he lost, partly because, during the first-ever televised Presidential Election Debates, the majority of the public thought Kennedy looked better than him. For those who only heard the debates on radio, he was thought to have fared better in the debates.
- As President, he worked toward withdrawing American soldiers from Vietnam, which was a terribly unpopular war among the American People, where some 55,000 soldiers ultimately were killed. American troops did finally evacuate Vietnam during his Presidency.
- He worked to improve international relations with the U.S.S.R. (Russia) and China.
- His administration was torn apart because of the so-called "Watergate" scandal, which began as a break-in at the offices of the Democratic National Committee in the Watergate Hotel during the 1972 Presidential Campaign. The break-in was traced to officials of the Republican Committee to Re-elect the President, who were spying on the Democrats' campaign efforts. When an investigation by reporters from the Washington Post newspaper revealed more and more details about this crime, he tried to cover up the crimes and his involvement. A Congressional Investigation found that he had knowledge of the crimes and that he had tried to cover them up.
- Faced with almost certain impeachment by Congress and likely forced removal from office, he announced on August 8, 1974, that he would resign the next day. He had recently appointed Gerald Ford to be his new Vice President, and had hatched a plan with Ford where he would resign (quit), and that Ford would become President, and then pardon him (forgive him of his crimes, avoid prosecution, and possibly years in prison).
- He became the only President to ever resign the office.



38. **Gerald Ford (1974-1977) -Republican-**

- He was born with the name Leslie Lynch King Jr. in Nebraska, but did not keep the name for long. Weeks after he was born, his mother went to live in her parents' Michigan home to escape the abuse of her husband. About three years later, his mother remarried and took his stepfather's name, which he legally recorded when he was 22 years old.
- He became an Eagle Scout. He starred in football in high school and at the University of Michigan.
- He turned down the chance to play pro football to attend Yale Law School.
- He served in the Pacific in WWII.
- He served in the U.S. House of Representatives prior to being selected to assume the office of Vice President by embattled (person in trouble) President Richard Nixon.
- He became President himself less than a year after becoming V.P. when Nixon resigned the Presidency because of the Watergate Scandal.
- Not long after, he announced that he was pardoning (excusing) Nixon of all current and future charges for crimes Nixon had committed. This prevented Nixon from having to face a trial, or a possible disgraceful prison sentence.
- He survived two assassination attempts, both by female shooters.
- He struggled with a declining economy and the looming energy crisis.
- His reputation as a man of integrity suffered greatly with the Nixon Pardon, as many Americans disliked his decision to grant the pardon.



39. **James “Jimmy” Carter (1977-1981) -Democratic-**

- Before being elected President, he served in the Navy for seven years, and as Governor of Georgia.
- Like his predecessor, Gerald Ford, he struggled with the challenges of an energy crisis (shortages of oil) that was artificially created by oil companies in the U.S. and around the world, who were conspiring to drive up fuel prices.
- His Presidency was also troubled by a declining economy, spurred by inflation (higher prices) on consumer goods like food, clothing, housing, and necessary household items.
- During his presidency, interest on home loans soared above 10%, making buying a home was unaffordable for most people. By comparison, historical home loan rates have ranged from 2% - 7%.
- He made strident efforts to help negotiate peace between Israel and Egypt.
- He negotiated an arms reduction treaty with Russia.
- He worked to improve environmental protections, especially on public lands.
- His administration created the Federal Department of Education. (Public Education in the U.S. had been solely managed by each of the 50 state governments beforehand.)
- During his administration, the U.S. Embassy in the country of Iran was taken over, and 52 Americans were held hostage for 444 days. This was despite his administration's diplomatic efforts to release them, and military efforts to free them. The hostages were finally released safely, but not until his successor, Ronald Reagan, took the Oath of Office.
- During his Presidency, the Soviet Union (Russia) military invaded the country of Afghanistan. He insisted that the Russians withdraw their troops, or the U.S. and its allies would boycott (refuse to participate) the Summer Olympic Games to be held in Moscow, Russia later that year. Russia ignored the threat, and the U.S. and many other country's athletes missed out on a chance to compete.
- Treaties he helped negotiate gave the nation of Panama (in Central America) eventual control of the Panama Canal, which had formerly been considered by the U.S. to be *de facto* ('in fact') U.S. territory.
- Long after leaving the White House, he was awarded the 2002 Nobel Peace Prize for his work in finding peaceful solutions to international conflicts, advancing democracy and human rights, and promoting economic and social development in various countries throughout the world.



40. **Ronald Reagan (1981-1989) -Republican-**

- Before his election as a two term President, he served in the Army (as an actor), and following WWII, worked as an actor in many films (from the black & white era).
- He served as President of the Screen Actors Guild (a union that negotiated pay and benefits for actors in Hollywood).
- His political views changed over time from liberal to conservative.
- He started out as a Democrat, but then changed his party affiliation to Republican.
- He toured the country as a television host, becoming a spokesman for conservatism.
- He served as Governor of California for eight years.
- Because of the Iran Hostage Crisis and the struggling economy at the time, he won the 1980 Presidential Election easily against incumbent President Jimmy Carter.
- He won with a landslide result of 489 Electoral Votes to only 49 for incumbent President Carter.
- Only 69 days after he took office, he was shot by a would-be assassin, with a bullet lodged in his body only inches from his heart. He was rushed to a nearby hospital where surgeons saved his life. His recovery was considered remarkable for a person his age (70). He recovered quickly and returned to the White House less than two weeks later.
- His ["namesake"] Revolution, aimed to reinvigorate the American people and reduce their reliance upon Government.
- His tax reform policies included tax cuts for the wealthy, and elimination of income taxes for very low wage earners.
- He evangelized deregulation of many industries. These included the oil industry, the airlines, telecommunications (phones & Internet), and the entertainment industry. This deregulation (the removal of many rules disliked by businesses) brought great prosperity to these companies, along with lower prices, innovation, and more product and service choices to consumers.
- He favored a policy of peace through strength in his support of greater U.S. military spending. Doing so helped lead to the economic fall of the U.S.S.R. (Russia), and a reduced threat of nuclear war during the 1980's. Successful meetings with Soviet (Russia) leader Mikhail Gorbachev were part of his approach. Together, the two world leaders negotiated a treaty that would eliminate intermediate-range nuclear missiles.
- He was the first President to nominate a female justice (Sandra Day O'Connor) to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court, who was quickly confirmed by the Senate..



41. **George H.W. Bush** ("Bush Senior") (1989-1993) -*Republican-*

- He served in the Navy as a pilot in WWII, flying 58 combat missions.
- He served as Ambassador to the United Nations.
- He served as Vice President to Ronald Reagan.
- He pledged his desire toward making the United States "a kinder and gentler nation."
- In his Inaugural Address, he pledged in "a moment rich with promise" to use American strength as "a force for good."
- He graduated from Yale university.
- Following graduation, he moved to west Texas to work in the oil industry.
- He served two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, but was unsuccessful in his two runs for a Senate seat.
- Among other high level government positions, he served as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).
- He sent American troops into Panama to overthrow the corrupt regime of General Manuel Noriega, who was threatening the security of the Panama Canal, and the Americans living there. Noriega was brought to the United States for trial as a drug trafficker.
- When Iraqi President Saddam Hussein invaded the small Middle Eastern country of Kuwait, he pledged to free Kuwait. To do this, he rallied the United Nations, the U.S. people, and Congress to support the war effort, which included 425,000 American troops and 118,000 troops from allied nations. The 100 hour war, dubbed Desert Storm, was roughly only four days long, and was won easily with advanced U.S. military technology, against Iraq's poorly equipped million-man army.
- Largely due to a poor economy, and the violent riotous response to the verdict in the trial of the police officers who beat Rodney King, he lost his re-election bid in 1992.



42. **William “Bill” Clinton (1993-2001) -Democratic-**

- He was the first “baby-boomer” generation (a child born after WWII) President.
- He was born three months after his father died in a traffic accident.
- He graduated from Georgetown University, and also attended Yale, as well as Oxford in England.
- Before becoming President, he served as Governor of the state of Arkansas.
- He prevailed (won) both of his Presidential Elections, partly due to the fact that he ran against a Republican, and a third party candidate (Ross Perot), who largely took votes away from the Republican candidate.
- While President, the U.S. enjoyed general peace and economic well being.
- He was the first Democratic president since Franklin D. Roosevelt to win a second term.
- He governed over one of the lowest unemployment rates in recent decades, and the lowest inflation rate in 30 years.
- Home ownership in the country grew while he was President, though many buyers later foreclosed on the loans they couldn’t pay back, and lost their homes just a few years later.
- Crime rates fell in many places, and reduced welfare rolls were also positive trends while he was President.
- He proposed the first balanced federal budget in decades, and achieved a budget surplus in several of his eight years as President.
- He traveled through South America, Europe, Russia, Africa, and China, advocating U.S. style freedom.
- He was mired in investigations into his extramarital affairs, and whether he answered questions about them truthfully, throughout his Presidency. These were pressed by his political opponents (Republicans).



43. **George W. Bush** (“Bush Junior”) (2001-2009) -*Republican-*

- His father was President of the United States from 1989-1993.
- The first son of a previous President since John Quincy Adams/John Adams in 1824.
- Prior to being elected President, he graduated from Yale and also attended Harvard University, and then entered the oil business in Texas.
- His 2000 Election against sitting Vice President Al Gore was the closest in history. Gore won the popular vote, but Presidential Elections are decided by the Electoral College Vote. After 49 states had certified their results, the election was tied. It was all up to Florida, and that state’s vote count was also tied, with only one Florida county’s votes left to verify. By just a few votes, he was declared the winner. The result was challenged by Al Gore in the U.S. Supreme Court, but the court ruled against Gore, making him President with an electoral count of 271 to 266.
- He was transformed into a wartime President only eight months into office in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 airborne terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center buildings in New York, and the U.S. military headquarters (The Pentagon).
- In response to the terrorist attacks, he formed a new cabinet-level Department of Homeland Security. This agency developed a color-coded system to alert the public about potential terrorist threats.
- He presented a controversial plan to mount a military invasion of the country of Iraq to the American People. It was based on his belief that the Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein, was in possession of nuclear and/or biological weapons, and was a threat to the United States.
- Unlike his father’s military conflict with Iraq, he was unable to convince many U.S. allied countries to support and/or participate in this new invasion, as they were not convinced of the threat he described. Saddam Hussein was captured (and was later executed by his own countrymen), but the disruption of Iraq and the killing of American servicemen (and friendly Iraqis) challenged his administration, and his ability to lead.
- He supported the idea of trying to bring American-style democracy to the countries of Iraq and Afghanistan, but neither military/diplomatic effort was successful.
- He was re-elected in another close election.
- He was known for having difficulty pronouncing names of other countries and names of foreign leaders.
- In his second term in office, his administration was focused on “compassionate conservatism,” which focused on education, tax reductions and volunteerism.
- In his last year in office, there was an economic catastrophe that had a domino effect on many segments of the economy. He had little ability to overcome this problem, and it was left to his successor, Barack Obama, to deal with.



44. **Barack Obama (2009-2017) -Democratic-**

- He was born and raised, for most of his youth, in the state of Hawaii. He was raised primarily by his maternal grandmother.
- As a child, he did not have a relationship with his father, who left (and later divorced) his mother, to pursue a Ph.D. at Harvard.
- He was one of only three Black students at his prestigious high school.
- He attended Occidental College in Los Angeles, and then transferred to Columbia University.
- He worked as a community organizer on the south side of Chicago, Illinois.
- Later he attended Harvard Law School, where he served as the first African American President of the Harvard Law Review.
- In Chicago, he joined a small law firm that specialized in civil rights cases.
- He married Michelle Robinson, another Harvard-educated lawyer. They have two daughters.
- He wrote an autobiography in 1995 (when he was only 34), entitled, *"Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance"*.
- Prior to his election, he served in the Illinois State Senate where he served as chairman of the Illinois Senate's Health and Human Services Committee. He worked with law enforcement to require the videotaping of interrogations (suspected criminal interviews) and confessions (telling the truth) in all murder cases after a number of death-row inmates were found to be innocent.
- He was an early opponent of President George W. Bush's push to go to war with the country of Iraq after the 9/11 attacks. In October 2002, he was quoted as saying, "I am not opposed to all wars. I'm opposed to dumb wars,"
- He served in the U.S. Senate.
- He became the first African American to hold the office of President of the United States.
- He served two terms.
- His Inauguration Ceremony was attended by an estimated crowd of 1.8 million people.
- He proposed enormous federal spending initially, to revive the economy that had collapsed in the final year of George W. Bush's Administration.
- He proposed the idea of 'Affordable Health Care' that had previously been championed, but never adopted into law, by Hillary Clinton. After many years of effort and many court challenges, it was put into law.
- He stated, when challenged about the flexibility of the new law, "If you like your doctor, [under my plan], you can keep your doctor," which was not entirely true. He was forced to apologize for misleading many Americans about this.
- He became the fourth president to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.
- As President, he signed the Paris Accords, which was a treaty of agreement of 195 countries to try to reduce carbon pollution to slow down the rise in global temperatures and ocean levels.
- He dealt with wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and strained relations with Iran.
- In his last year in office, he spoke of the progress made in Civil Rights and what lay ahead. He said, "Our union is not yet perfect, but we are getting closer," and... "And that's why we celebrate, mindful that our work is not yet done."
- He wrote a best-selling book entitled, *"The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream"*.



45. **Donald Trump (2017-2021) -Republican-**

- He was educated at the New York Military Academy and the Wharton Business School in Pennsylvania.
- As a young man, he took over his father's real estate company (buying & selling homes, buildings, and land). He renamed the company the Trump Organization.
- All of his businesses, and most of the buildings he owns have the name TRUMP on them.
- He claimed to be a multi-billionaire.
- His first of many books he wrote was, "*The Art of the Deal*."
- He defeated more than a dozen experienced Republican candidates in the Republican Primary Election, prior to running against Democratic Candidate, Hillary Clinton in the General Election.
- His approach to debating opponent candidates was to use 'put downs' and 'insults', and creating demeaning nicknames for his challengers.
- His campaign slogan was "*Make America Great Again*," which was copied from the campaign of Ronald Reagan 40 years before.
- With the help of Mitch McConnell, the Republican Leader of the Senate, he pushed through tax cuts (reductions) for very wealthy Americans and corporations.
- For most of his Presidency, the economy, stock market, and real estate values grew tremendously.
- For most of his Presidency, the unemployment rate was very low.
- In just one 4 year term as President, he was able to appoint 3 conservative justices to the Supreme Court.
- He followed through on part of a campaign promise to begin building a wall at the U.S. Border with Mexico. This wall was intended to slow illegal immigration from Mexico and Central American countries, along with drug smuggling. He also promised that, "Mexico would pay for it," which they never agreed to do. He moved money in the U.S. Federal Budget, without permission from Congress, intended for the military, to pay for the wall construction.
- He removed the U.S. from the Paris Climate Accords, saying it was unfair and bad for the U.S. Economy.
- He tried to renegotiate tariffs (import/export taxes) with countries like Canada, Mexico, Japan, S. Korea, and China. Some negotiations were successful, others were not.
- He was adamant about having Obama's Affordable Medical Care laws overturned, but he lost that battle in both Congress and with the Supreme Court.
- He pledged to force pharmaceutical companies to lower medication prices, but did not.
- He claimed he would address the opioid/illegal drug use crisis that had led to so many overdose deaths and poverty. As with previous Presidents, little progress was made.
- He successfully urged North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member countries to increase their contributions to their defense from Russian-allied countries.
- He dealt with adversary nations' nuclear programs, including North Korea and Iran, in an authoritarian manner.
- He worked with, and against U.S. health agencies, in creating safety guidelines for public COVID-19 mask-wearing and social distancing.
- He worked with pharmaceutical companies like Moderna™, Psizer™, and Johnson & Johnson™ on the creation of usable COVID-19 vaccines in record time.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, he opposed the use of mail-in ballots.
- He lost an incredibly close election for a second term to Joseph Biden. He still contests the results of that election to this day.



46. **Joseph Biden** (2021-incumbent) -Democratic-

- He graduated from the University of Delaware and Syracuse Law School.
- Just weeks after his victorious Senate election, a terrible tragedy struck his family when his wife and daughter were killed, and two sons were critically injured in an auto accident.
- In order to spend more time with his family, he commuted by train daily from Delaware to Washington, D.C.
- Before becoming President, he served for 36 years in the U.S. Senate, and for eight years as President Obama's Vice President.
- As Vice President, he assisted President Obama with the passage of the Affordable Care Act Legislation (set of laws).
- His wife of 44 years, the First Lady, Dr. Jill _____, is not a medical doctor, but earned a Doctorate Degree in Education, and has served as an English professor at a community college.
- His son, Beau _____, served as Attorney General of Delaware, until his death in 2015 after battling brain cancer.
- His son, Hunter _____, has involved himself in many questionable business pursuits.
- He won a very narrow victory over Donald Trump in the 2020 Election, whose results Trump contested, and never conceded to him.
- He advocated for the public use of masks and safe school reopenings during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- He encouraged Congress to pass legislation that funded relief checks (money) to all Americans, based on age and income, and guaranteed Federal Unemployment Benefits beyond what unemployed people received in their state of residence. While adding trillions of dollars to the National Debt, an economic depression was avoided, and the troubled economy dragged down by all the business closures began to recover. The terribly high unemployment rate returned to pre-pandemic levels and entry level wages for newly-hired employees rose dramatically.
- He re-entered the U.S. into the Paris Climate Accords, saying participation was essential to saving the world from the dire (bad) consequences of carbon pollution, mainly to slow down the rise in global temperatures and ocean levels.
- He authorized the removal of all troops from the country of Afghanistan, as his predecessor Presidents promised to do, but at the expense of the stability of the country. The lives of many U.S. Military Service Personnel were lost during the evacuation period, as well as the lives of many Afghan and foreign civilians (people not in the military).

