

A classic oil painting portrait of George Washington, showing him from the chest up. He has white powdered hair, a serious expression, and is wearing a dark coat with a white cravat. The background is dark and indistinct.

George Washington:  
An Indispensable  
Man

Mrs. Scullane

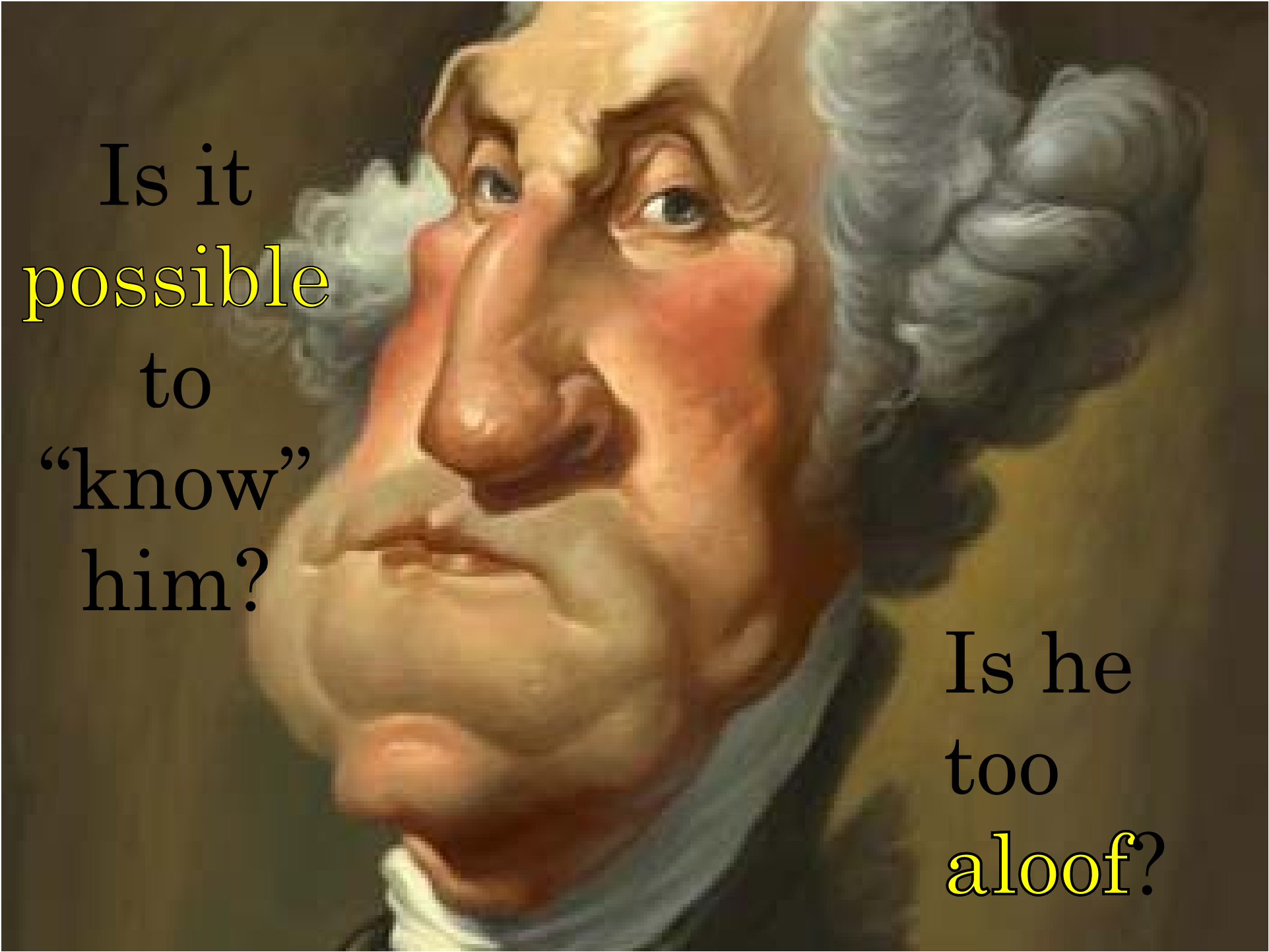
US I



**Washington is everywhere!**

**And yet... how much of  
what you “know” is true?**

**How much is false?**



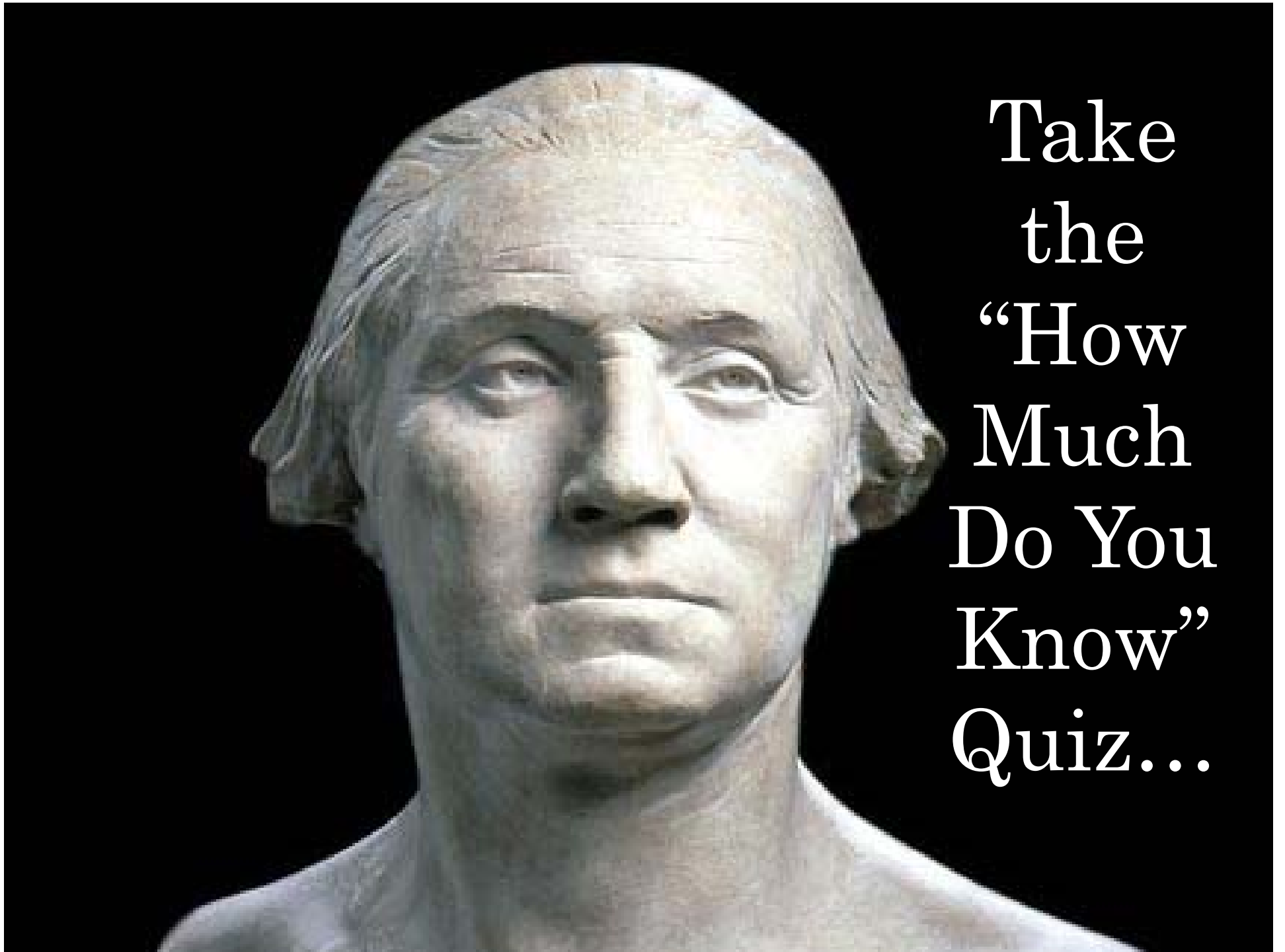
Is it  
possible  
to  
“know”  
him?

Is he  
too  
aloof?

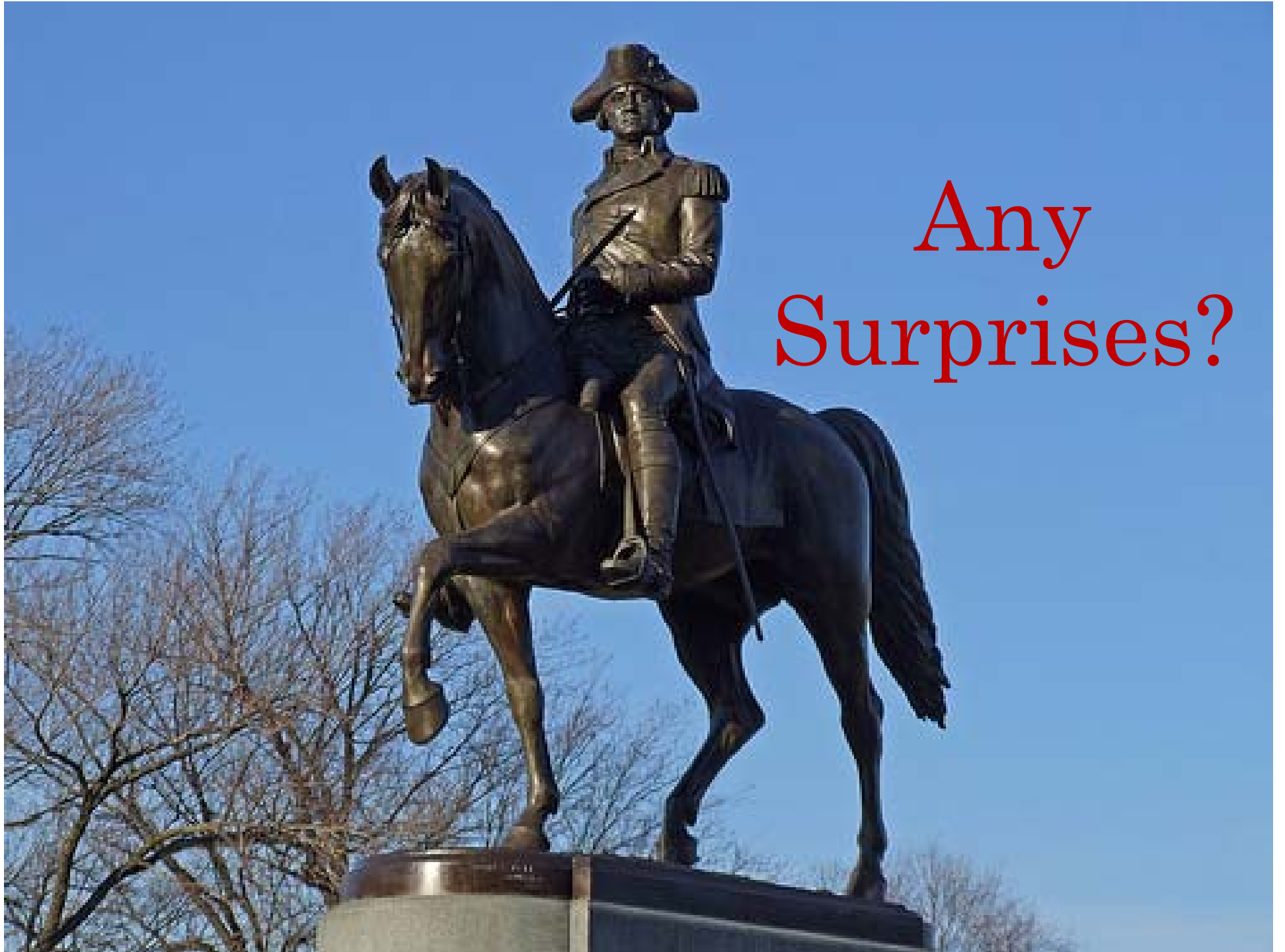
What are some things you know about or associate with Washington?





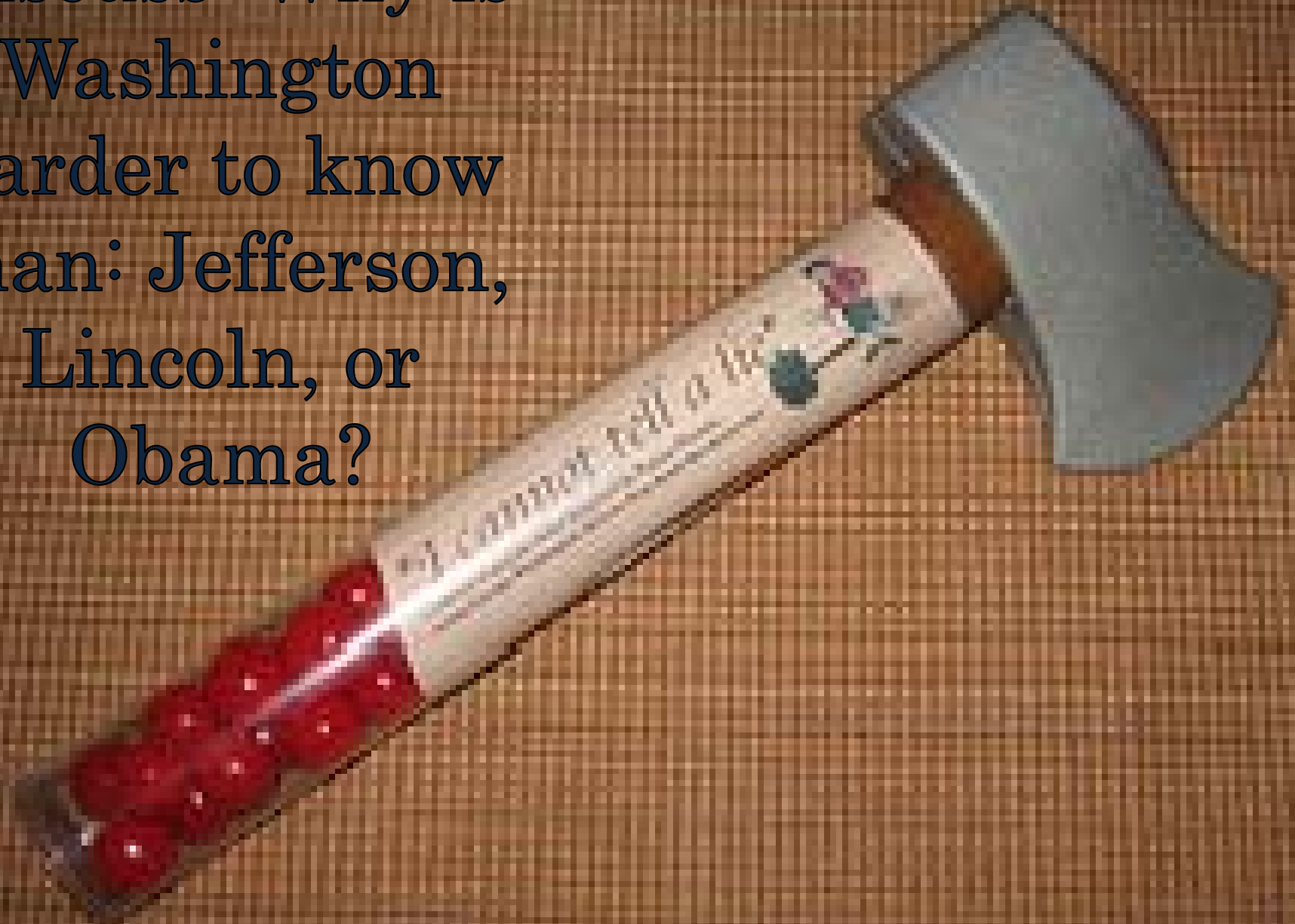


Take  
the  
“How  
Much  
Do You  
Know”  
Quiz...



Any  
Surprises?

Discuss: Why is  
Washington  
harder to know  
than: Jefferson,  
Lincoln, or  
Obama?



He has a lot of  
images or  
memorials in  
the public  
consciousness.



Many serve  
to reinforce  
the  
unknowable,  
heroic, iconic  
image we  
have of him.

# The Washington Monument

It was built between 1848 and 1884 as a tribute to George Washington's military leadership. It is 555 feet and 5 1/8 inches tall.



Washington is on our  
currency...



But he is cold and  
forbidding...





# Stamps!



Copyright USPS 2000

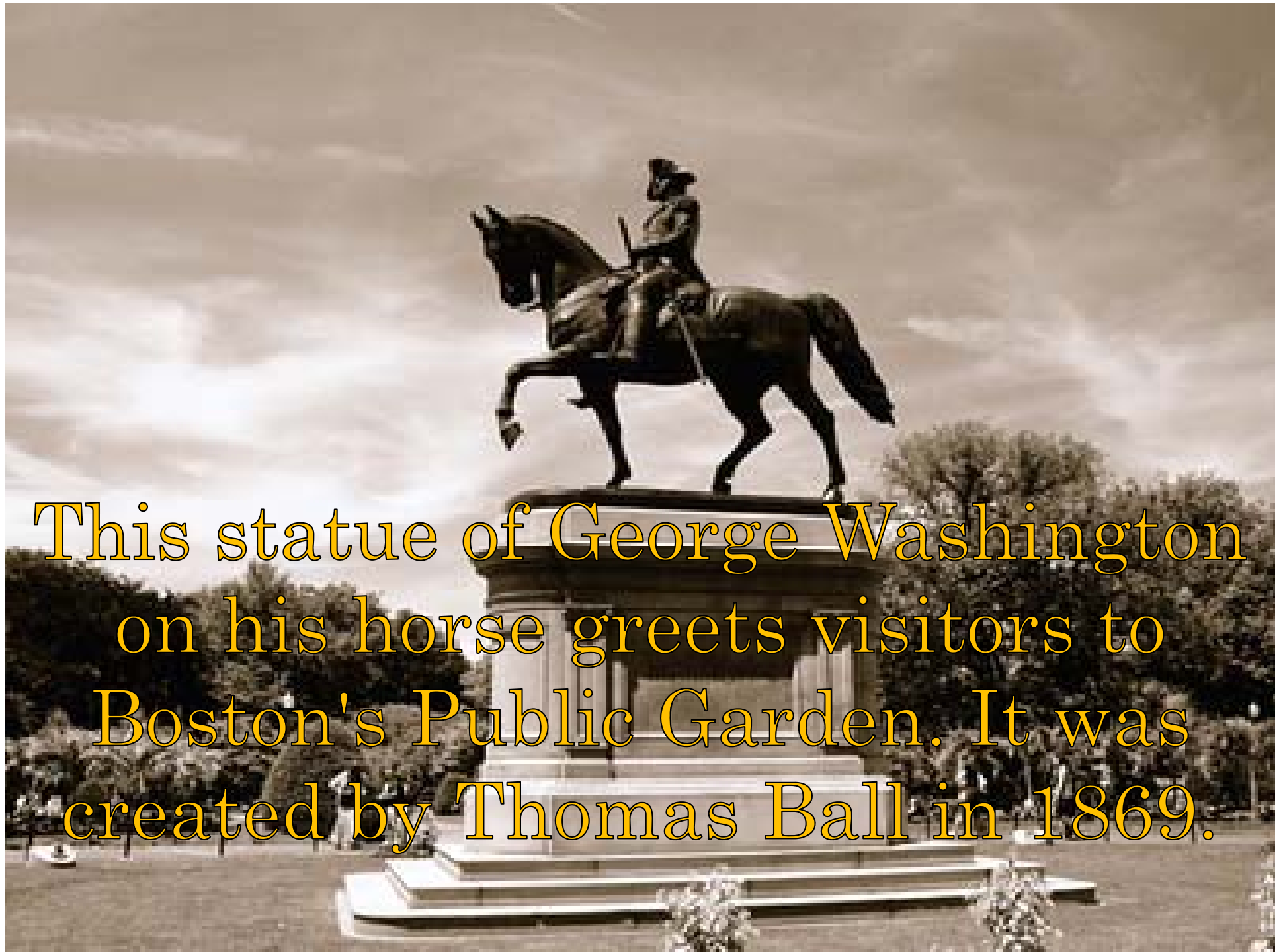




Washington State...

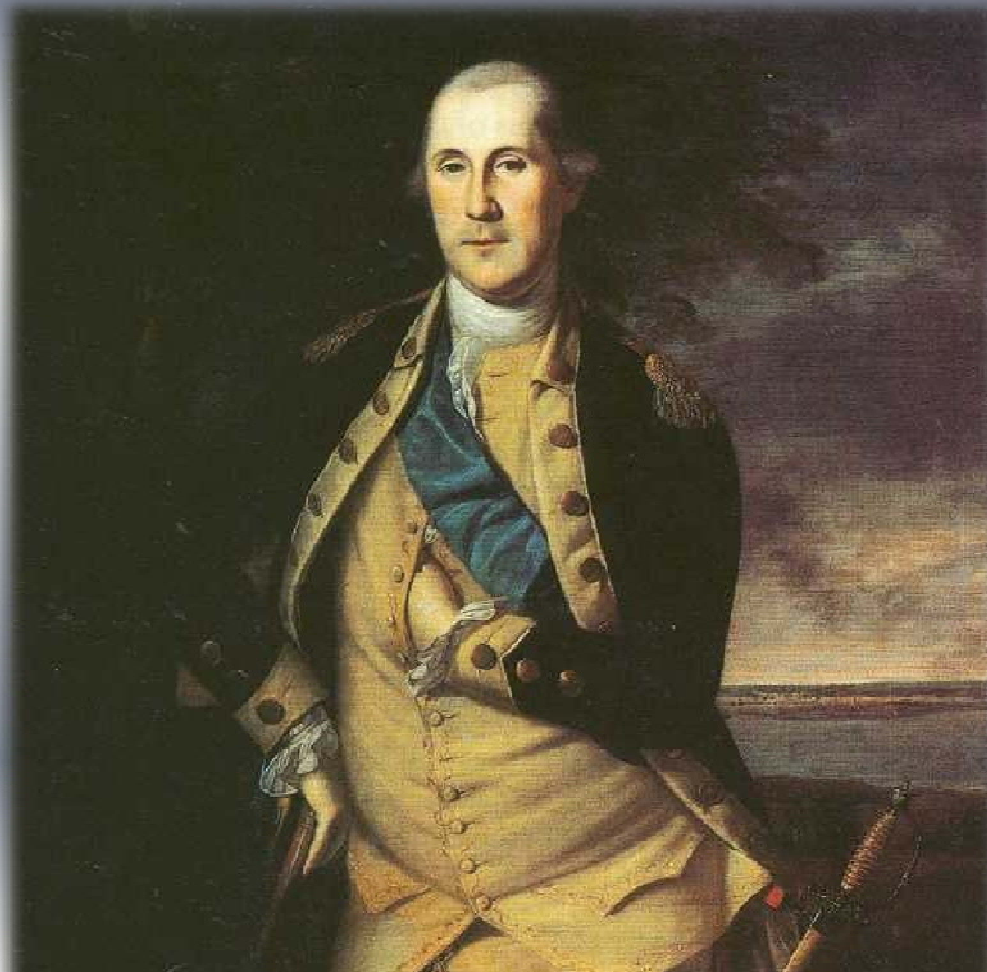
# Washington, D.C.



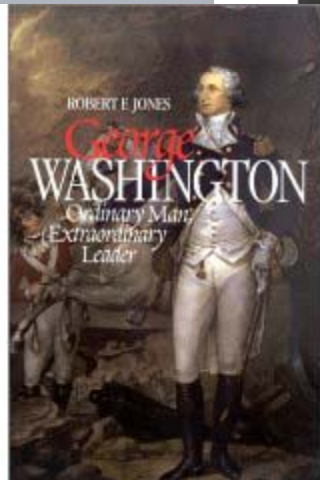
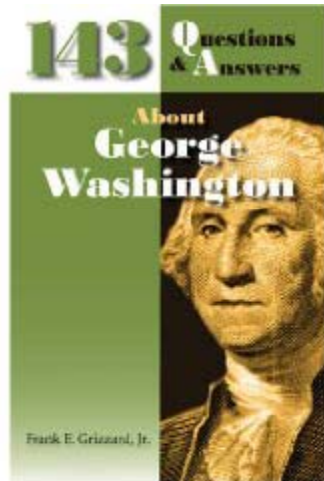
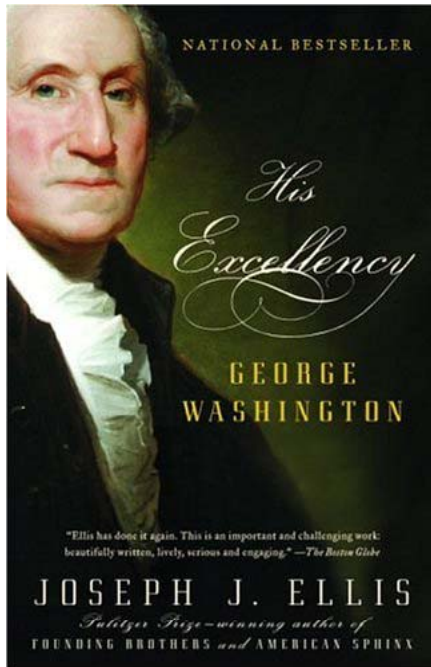


This statue of George Washington on his horse greets visitors to Boston's Public Garden. It was created by Thomas Ball in 1869.

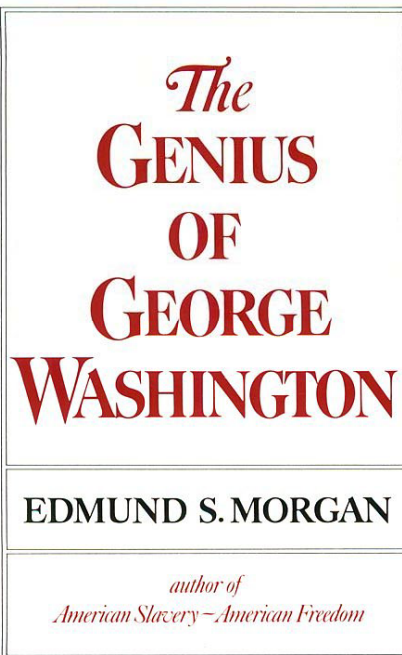
These are examples of the public  
Washington we all know...  
What about his real life?







Lots of books are written about Washington ...but does the public understand him?





So much of the Washington  
legend is false...



“I cannot tell a  
lie...”

Story created  
by Parson  
Weems to  
demonstrate  
Washington’s  
honesty.

# Arnold Friberg's "The Prayer at Valley Forge"

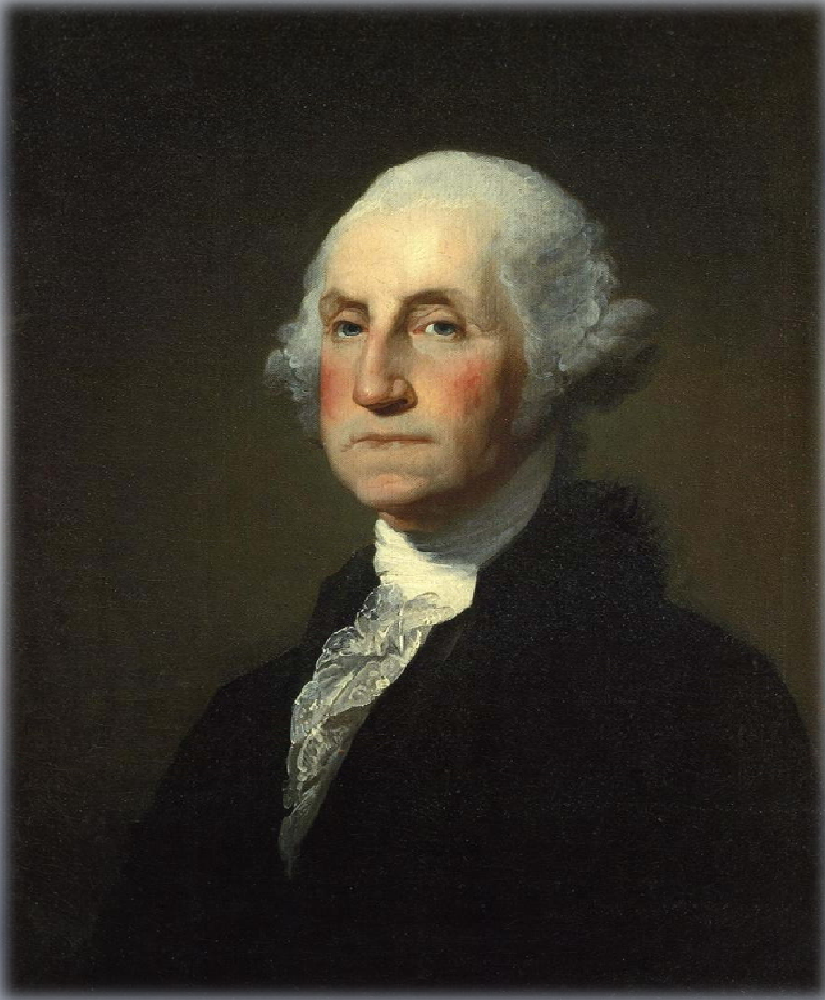




Lithograph of George Washington  
Praying at Valley Forge



# Compare these portraits:

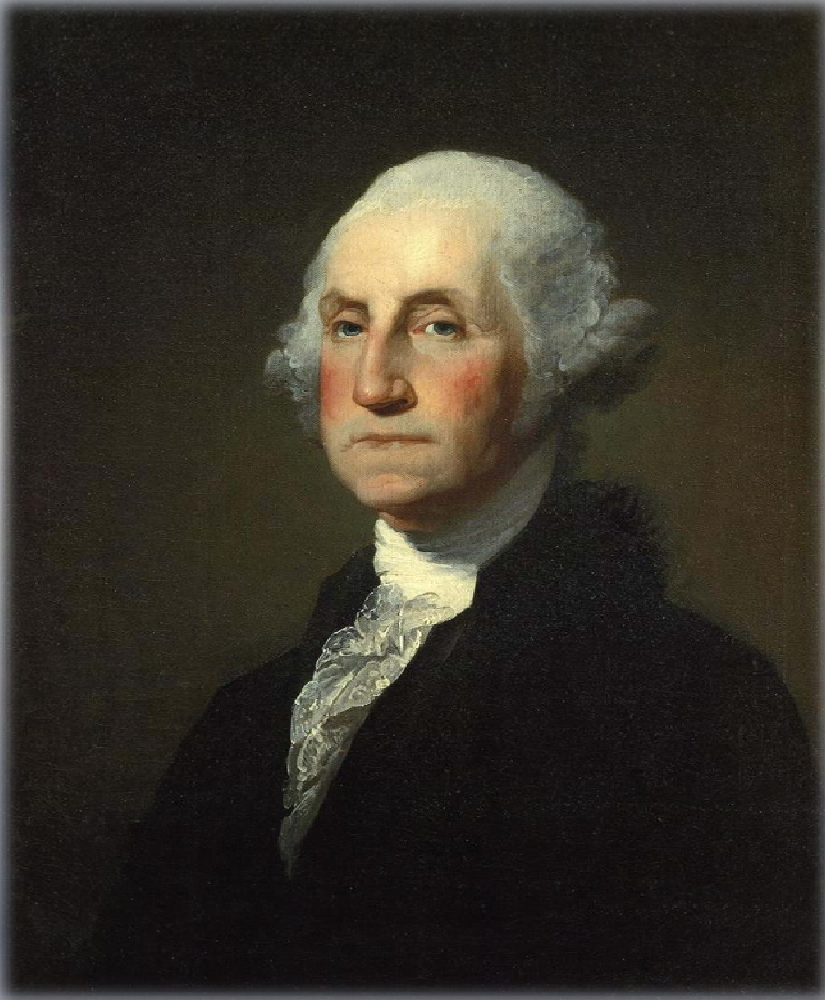


Based on the uncompleted Athenaeum portrait by Gilbert Stuart



1772, by Charles Willson Peale

# Which is more humanizing?



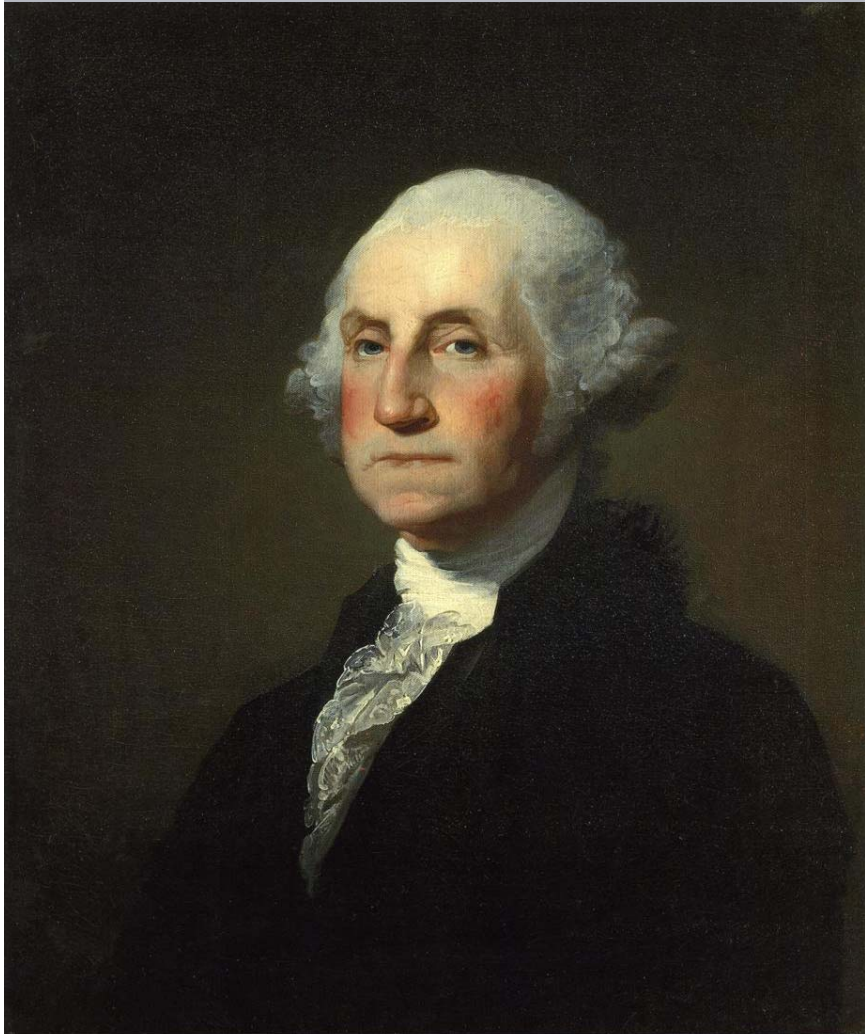
Based on the uncompleted Athenaeum portrait by Gilbert Stuart



1772, by Charles Willson Peale



# Compare these portraits:



Based on the uncompleted Athenaeum portrait by Gilbert Stuart

- 1) Washington didn't like the painter, Gilbert Stuart, who was a drinker.
- 2) His mouth is stuffed with cotton to try to reshape it – his lips look puffy.
- 3) His demeanor is cold, distant.
- 4) This is the most well-known image of Washington! The dollar bill is based on it.



# Compare these portraits:

1) In uniform, as colonel of the First Virginia Regiment (1772).

2) Peale knew the general better than any other artist.

3) Peale painted George Washington more times from life than any other artist.



Another Stuart  
painting...

<http://www.georgewashington.si.edu/portrait/index.html>



# Washington as a young man...

- See reading from [www.mountvernon.org](http://www.mountvernon.org)

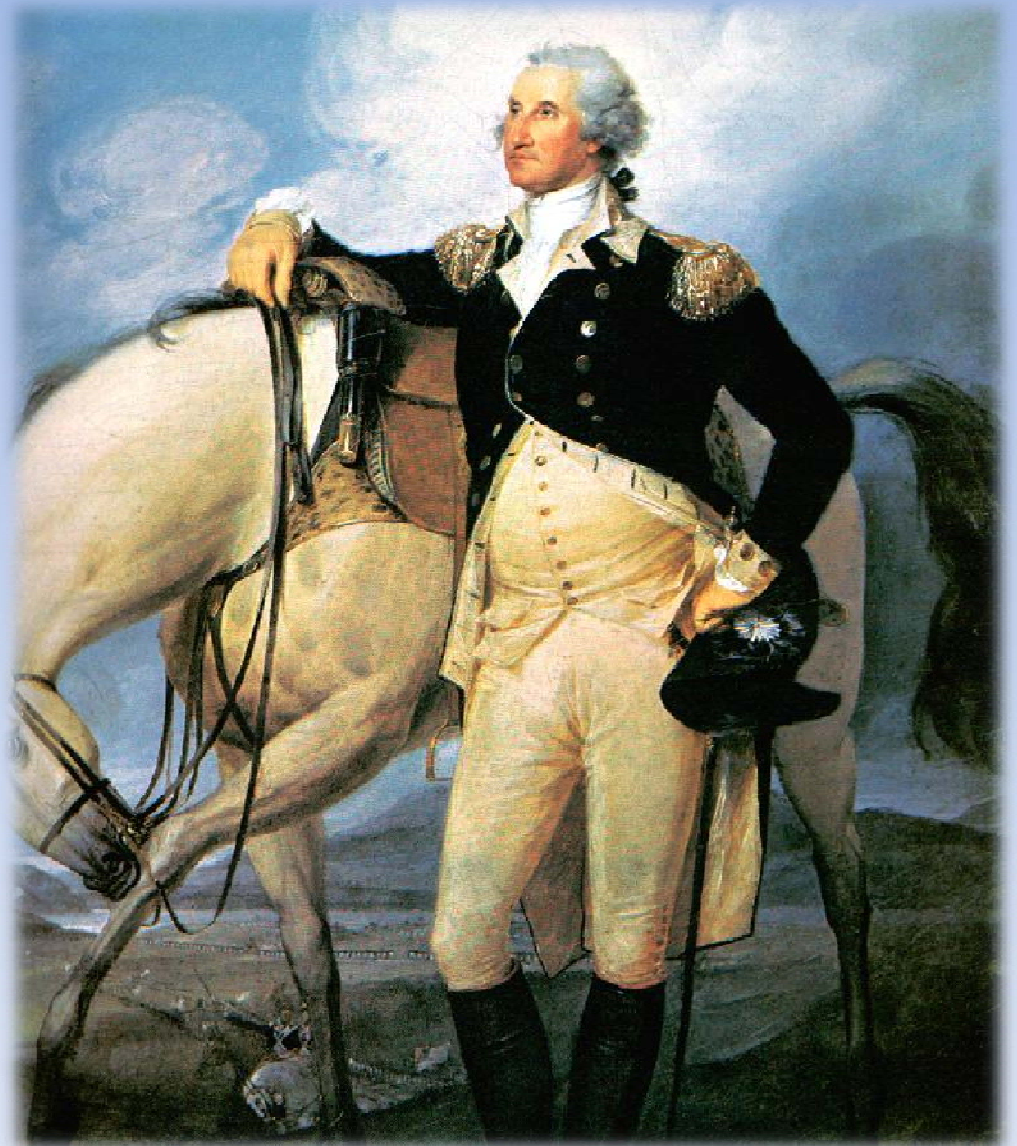
- Also, see “Rules of Civility” worksheet.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lawrence Washington". The script is cursive and somewhat stylized, with a prominent flourish at the end.

Lawrence Washington, half-brother



Some  
interesting,  
less-known, or  
important facts  
about  
Washington:





# Is it true that Washington never told a lie?

Have you?

Although Washington is rightfully known for his character, honor, and integrity, **OF COURSE** this is not true.

Proof?

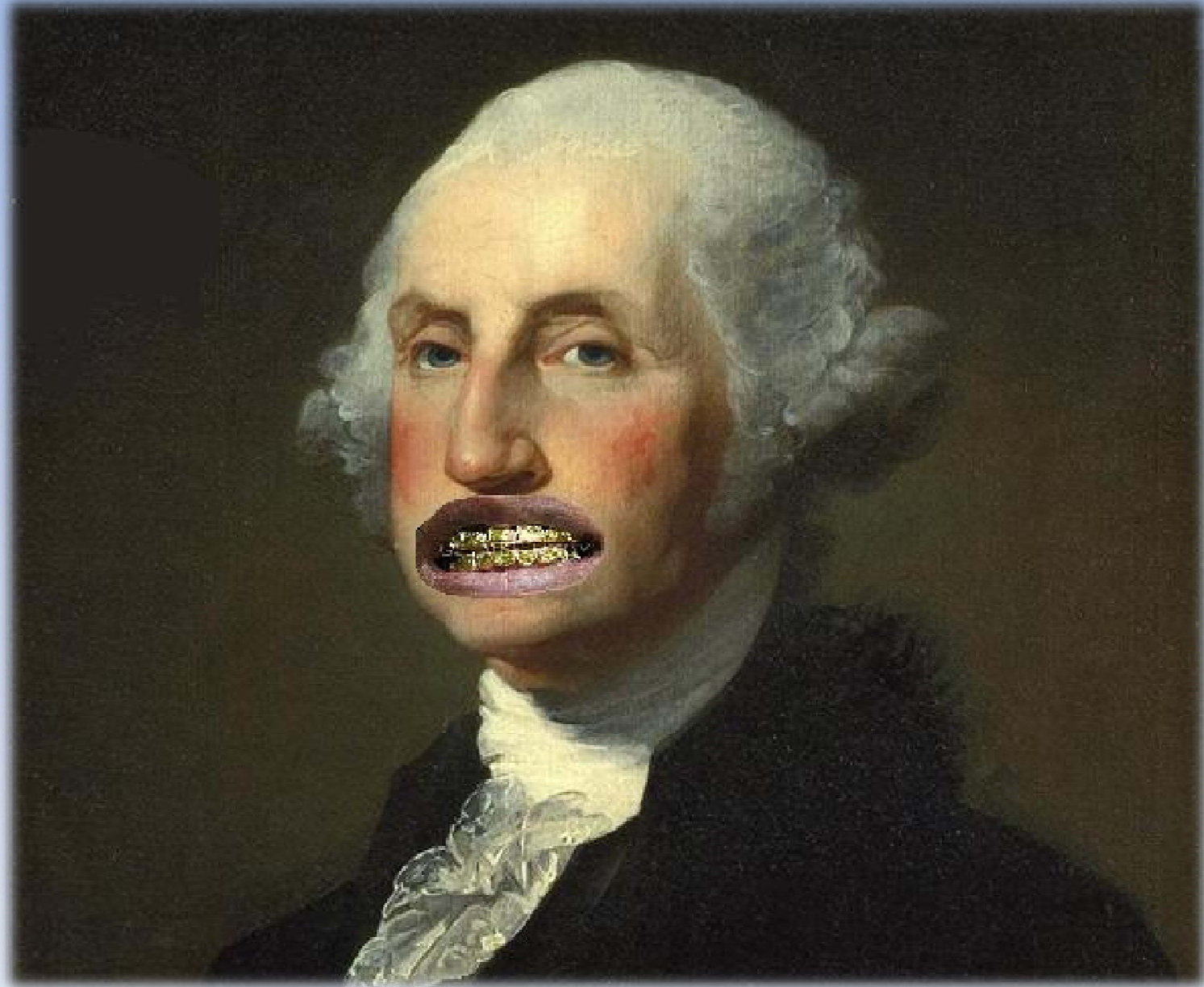
He personally managed American espionage during the Revolutionary War.



Grant Wood jokingly used the famous image of Washington in this depiction of the Parson Weems fable.



Did he have wooden teeth?



No!

He did have false teeth, though, six sets made out of ivory, gold, animal and even human teeth.



[http://www.history.com/video.do?name=american history&bcpid=1676043206&bclid=1716449968 &bctid=1640107103](http://www.history.com/video.do?name=american%20history&bcpid=1676043206&bclid=1716449968&bctid=1640107103)

“I heard he was really strong...”



- He was 6' 3 1/2 .
- He weighed 210 – 220 pounds.
- Stories said that he was the strongest man in the army, and that he was a skilled horseman.

# What did Washington think of slavery?

- He was born into a society that relied on slavery.
- He owned several hundred slaves.
- Over time, he began to think the country would be better off without slavery.
- He thought the slave trade “wicked, cruel, and unnatural.”
- He thought slave labor inefficient and saw that the northern colonies were prospering without it.
- Ethical and moral thoughts began to bother him.
- He felt caught between needing the slaves and wanting to free them.



“To be plain I wish to get quit of Negroes.”



# Did Washington free any slaves?



- Yes, in his will.
- All HIS slaves were freed.
- He could not free the slaves that belonged to Martha from her first husband.
- He made provisions for the very old, very young, and sick.
- He provided for teaching reading and writing, or for job training.
- He also said none could be sold or transported out of Virginia.
- This was more than most of his peers did about slavery.

# Did Washington turn down the chance to be King???

- It is thought that some members of the army, frustrated with Congress, wanted him to become king.
- WASHINGTON NEVER WANTED ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT.
- He firmly wanted a republic, with civilian rule.





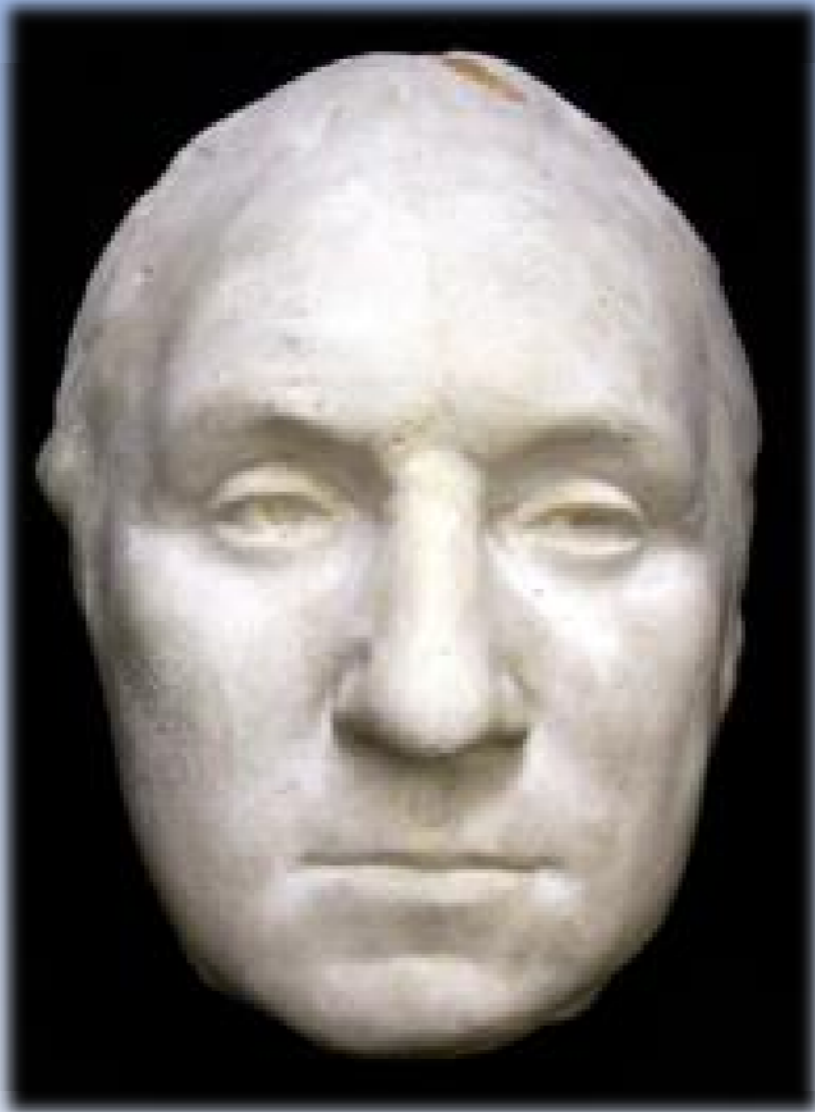
# How did Washington die?





Washington's  
tomb at  
Mount  
Vernon.

- December 14, 1799
- He was going about his business as usual, and was out in rain and snow. He sat down to dinner without changing his clothes.
- He developed a sore throat.
- He woke in the middle of the night having difficulty breathing.
- Martha wanted to get a servant, but he wouldn't let her go for fear she might catch a cold.



Washington's death mask.

- In the morning, a doctor was sent for.
- Many attempts were made to help him, including: Bleeding, gargles, blisters.
- Nothing worked; he slowly suffocated as his throat closed.
  
- “Doctor, I die hard; but I am not afraid to go; I believed from my first attack that I should not survive it; my breath cannot last long.”

Modern medical opinion is that he died from acute bacterial epiglottitis.

He had an infected upper windpipe that became swollen shut; he suffocated.

Antibiotics or a tracheotomy would have cured him; one didn't exist, the other was too new a procedure, and they didn't dare.

# What is Washington's legacy?



The poster features a central illustration by Norman Rockwell showing an older man in a dark coat and a young boy in a Boy Scout uniform. The man is holding the boy's shoulder, and the boy is holding a book. The background is a dark, textured surface with a large, faint image of a horse's head. The illustration is framed by a decorative border with small vignettes of American history and culture. At the top center is an eagle with wings spread, flanked by stars. The text 'OUR HERITAGE' is written in small letters at the bottom left of the illustration, and 'Norman Rockwell' is at the bottom right. Below the illustration, the text 'BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA' is written in large, bold letters, with the Boy Scouts logo in the center. Below that, the title 'OUR HERITAGE' is written in bold. The main text of the poster reads: 'American boys have the greatest heritage ever bequeathed to anyone on the face of the earth. They have the heritage of freedom. They are free to worship in the church of their choice. They can speak as they think, work where they wish, and read what they choose. They have the heritage of opportunity. Any boy can grow up to be what he chooses. The sons of immigrants have become millionaires. A rail splitter was elected president.'

**BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA**

**OUR HERITAGE**

American boys have the greatest heritage ever bequeathed to anyone on the face of the earth.

They have the heritage of freedom. They are free to worship in the church of their choice. They can speak as they think, work where they wish, and read what they choose.

They have the heritage of opportunity. Any boy can grow up to be what he chooses. The sons of immigrants have become millionaires. A rail splitter was elected president.

- Continental Army Commander
- President of the Constitutional Convention
- First President of the United States
- Courage, leadership, commitment to the rule of law



1) Washington is and was a hard man to know.

2) The heroic image that in which we have cast him already enveloped him in his own lifetime.

3) He was very conscious of his reputation – He recognized that he was on trial, that the character of the government...would be measured by the respect that he himself demanded and commanded.

(Edmund S. Morgan, *The Genius of George Washington*)

