

George Washington (Lansdowne Portrait), 1796 by GILBERT STUART [1755–1828]

1. Ask students to describe Washington's facial features, hairstyle, and clothes.
2. How old do students think Washington appears in this painting? Why?
3. Gilbert Stuart wanted to reflect his sitters' inner character through their faces and outward appearance. From this portrait how would you describe Washington's inner character?
4. Stuart saw great passion in Washington's features. Ask students if they also see this. Why or why not?
5. Ask students to find these objects and tell what they might represent.
 - a. Rainbow:
 - b. Medallion with stars and stripes:
 - c. Ink stand with quill:
 - d. Books (on and below the table):
 - e. Saber:
6. Compare this portrait to the one on a dollar bill.
7. Encourage students to notice the details of the background: the drapery, columns on a plain wall, clouds in the sky, and the rainbow. Explain that this type of background was often used in European portraits of nobles and that Gilbert Stuart had studied painting in Europe.
8. Ask students why they think Stuart painted Washington with his arm outstretched.
9. Ask students how Washington's appearance reflects how he wanted people to see him. Remind them that contemporary
10. European rulers wore ornate wigs and brightly colored clothes.
11. Ask students why Stuart made copies of this painting. Why did so many people want portraits of George Washington?

Historical Connections: French and Indian War; U.S. presidents; Constitutional Convention

Historical Figures: George Washington; John Jay; Alexander Hamilton; the Marquis de Lafayette

Civics: U.S. Constitution; powers and duties of the three branches of government

Geography: cities of colonial and Revolutionary America (Boston, Philadelphia, etc.)

Literary Connections and Primary Documents: *George Washington's Birthday: Wondering*, Bobbie Katz (elementary); "Occasioned by General Washington's Arrival in Philadelphia, On His Way to His Residence in Virginia," Phillip Freneau (middle, secondary); Washington's Farewell Address (1796); *Federalist Papers* (1787–1788); Virginia Declaration of Rights (1776); Massachusetts Body of Liberties (1641); Mayflower Compact (1620); John Locke's *Treatise of Civil Government* (1690); English Bill of Rights (1689)

Arts: portraiture; Roman Republican and Iroquois images (eagle and clutched arrows)