



Read the biography. Then answer the questions that follow.

James Madison: The Forgotten Founder

by Mark Dziak

1 The presidents of the United States have made many great contributions to American history. These brave leaders charted the course for the nation by establishing the laws that would guide citizens for years to come. The first several presidents even led the fight for independence and helped lay the foundation for the country. One of these important leaders was James Madison: a president, a Founding Father, and one of history's greatest thinkers. Although Madison worked hard for the country, he is not very well known. His friend Thomas Jefferson, who was also a president, is far more famous. Examining the facts of Madison's life shows that he deserves more praise for all he did for our country.



A Founding Father

2 When he was only twenty-five years old, James Madison became a representative of the Virginia colony. This job helped Madison start his career in politics. It was in this position that he first met Thomas Jefferson, who would become Madison's lifelong friend and ally. During this time, Madison also exhibited his dedication to independence by passing new laws that would give the colonists freedom of religion.

3 In 1780, during the Revolutionary War, Madison was invited to join the Continental Congress, the group of leaders that helped form the new country. The youngest representative in the group, Madison attended the congress meetings for four years beginning in 1780. He helped make many critical decisions during these meetings. Meanwhile, his friend Thomas Jefferson only attended congress for about two years.

4 James Madison's service with the Continental Congress contributed to its greatest accomplishment. During the summer of 1787, a group of leaders began to review and change the laws that were already in place in America. The result of their work was the Constitution of the United States. This document set up the country's populist government, which allows citizens to express their individual ideas and beliefs. This accomplishment may never have occurred without the hard work and dedication of Madison. In fact, Madison is known as the Father of the Constitution because he played such an important part in its creation.



5 Not only was Madison important in drafting the ideas for the Constitution, but he also wrote much of the document. Madison wrote the Bill of Rights, which was designed to preserve the freedoms of American citizens. In addition, Madison joined Alexander Hamilton and John Jay in writing *The Federalist Papers*, essays that convinced leaders across the country to support the Constitution.

6 It is surprising that the person who added so much to the Constitution is not more popular today. By comparison, Thomas Jefferson became world famous for writing the Declaration of Independence, which helped the American colonies break away from Great Britain. Jefferson's work is legendary, even though the Declaration now has less effect on the everyday lives of American citizens than the Constitution does.

A National Leader

7 When Thomas Jefferson was elected the nation's third president, Madison became his secretary of state. In this position, Madison did something significant that helped expand America. In 1803, he oversaw the Louisiana Purchase, the purchase of a vast area of land from France. Part of this land was eventually divided into fifteen states. The Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the United States and ensured that the country would grow stronger. Although Madison played a crucial role in the deal, few people remember the work he did. Instead, most people give credit for the Louisiana Purchase to Thomas Jefferson.

8 In 1809, Madison became the nation's fourth president. A few years later, problems between the United States and Great Britain led to the War of 1812. This was the first American war since the Revolutionary War, and it tested the strength of the young nation. President Madison faced enormous challenges during this time, including a shocking setback. In 1814, British soldiers marched into Washington, DC, and burned down the White House and other government buildings.

9 Unfortunately, many people remember Madison primarily for this tragic event. However, Madison did not hide when the British army invaded. During the attack on Washington, the courageous president went into the streets to gather soldiers to fight back. Madison also helped citizens endure the long, difficult war and rebuild the country when the fighting ended. Even Thomas Jefferson never faced such a great challenge during his presidency.

10 James Madison was known to his friends and fellow leaders as a brave decision maker and a brilliant politician. He strongly supported citizens' rights, and he later worked against slavery as well. Madison wrote the Bill of Rights and played a critical part in the creation of the Constitution. He also helped expand the country through the Louisiana Purchase, and he preserved the nation after the War of 1812. James Madison truly deserves as much appreciation as any other American leader.



1 Answer Parts A and B below.

Part A

What does the phrase “charted the course for the nation” mean as it is used in paragraph 1 of the passage?

- A ran for an office
- B fought for more freedom
- C moved to a country
- D planned for the future

Part B

Which of the phrases from the passage best helps the reader understand the meaning of “charted the course for the nation”?

- A “made many great contributions”
- B “establishing the laws”
- C “guide citizens for years to come”
- D “one of history’s great thinkers”

2 The author thinks that Madison has not been recognized enough for his accomplishments, while other presidents may have been recognized too much for theirs. Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the above statement?

- A “It was in this position that he first met Thomas Jefferson, who would become Madison’s lifelong friend and ally.”
- B “When Thomas Jefferson was elected the nation’s third president, Madison became his secretary of state.”
- C “Instead, most people give credit for the Louisiana Purchase to Thomas Jefferson.”
- D “Unfortunately, many people remember Madison primarily for this tragic event.”

Answer Form

1A (A) (B) (C) (D)

1B (A) (B) (C) (D)

2 (A) (B) (C) (D)

3 (A) (B) (C) (D)

4 (A) (B) (C) (D)

5 (A) (B) (C) (D)

6 (A) (B) (C) (D)

Number
Correct

7



3 Read the sentence below.

Madison also helped citizens endure the long, difficult war. . . .

What does the word “endure” **most likely** mean?

- A** live through
- B** plan for
- C** fight in
- D** escape from

4 Read these sentences from the passage.

The youngest representative in the group, Madison attended the congress meetings for four years beginning in 1780. He helped make many critical decisions during these meetings. Meanwhile, his friend Thomas Jefferson only attended congress for about two years.

Why does the author **most likely** include these lines in the passage?

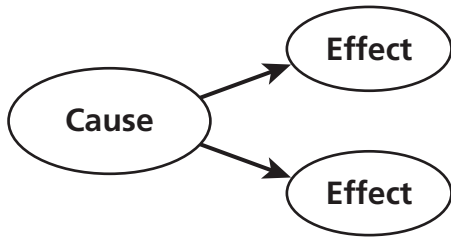
- A** to suggest that Madison did more than Jefferson
- B** to describe the decisions made by leaders of the past
- C** to compare leaders from long ago with leaders today
- D** to show that Madison and Jefferson were friends

5 How does paragraph 10 help to develop the ideas in the passage?

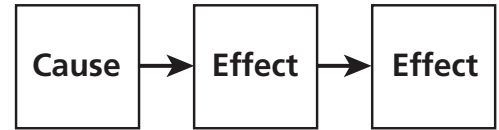
- A** It introduces important new arguments into the passage.
- B** It offers readers an alternative view of the author’s opinions.
- C** It reminds readers of the author’s most important points.
- D** It compares two different people mentioned in the passage.



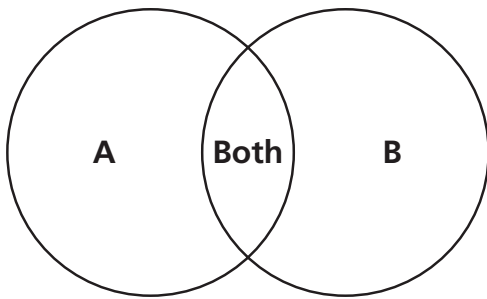
6 Which graphic **best** represents the structure of "James Madison: The Forgotten Founder"?



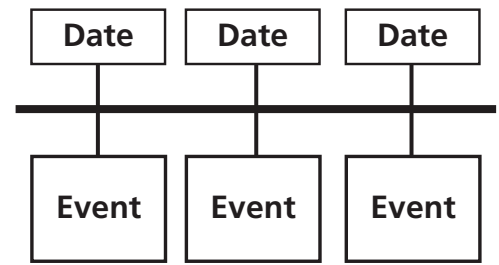
A



C



B



D

7 Read this sentence from the passage.

During this time, Madison also exhibited his dedication to independence by passing new laws that would give the colonists freedom of religion.

Write a paragraph explaining how this sentence contributes to the development of ideas in the passage. Use details from the passage to support your answer.



8 Read this sentence from paragraph 4 of the passage.

In fact, Madison is known as the Father of the Constitution because he played such an important part in its creation.

Write a paragraph explaining how this sentence contributes to the development of ideas in the passage. Use details from the passage to support your answer.

9 Write a paragraph explaining why the author most likely included paragraph 9 and how that paragraph reflects the author’s point of view. Use details from the passage to support your answer.
