US History Biographies Unit 1

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| **US History Biographies** | | |
| **Knowledge and Skills Statements** | **Student Expectation** | **Biography** |
| (US.1) **History**. The student understands the principles included in the Celebrate Freedom Week program.  (US.22) **Citizenship**. The student understands the concept of American exceptionalism. | C. Explain the contributions of the Founding Fathers such as Benjamin Rush, John Hancock, John Jay, John Witherspoon, John Peter Muhlenberg, Charles Carroll, and Jonathan Trumbull Sr.  A. Discuss Alexis de Tocqueville’s five values crucial to America’s success as a constitutional republic: liberty, egalitarianism, individualism, populism, and laissez-faire. | **Benjamin Rush (1745-1813)** Benjamin Rush, eminent Physician, writer, educator, humanitarian, is as interesting a figure as one could find in the formation of the United States. He was born in December of 1745 in Byberry, Pennsylvania. He was active in the Sons of Liberty in Philadelphia during 1773. In June of 1776 he was elected to attend the provincial conference to send delegates to the Continental Congress. He was appointed to represent Philadelphia that year and so signed the Declaration of Independence. In 1777 he was appointed surgeon-general of the middle department of the Continental Army. In 1789 he wrote in Philadelphia newspapers in favor of adopting the Federal constitution. He was then elected to the Pennsylvania convention which adopted that constitution. He was appointed treasurer of the US Mint where he served from 1797 to 1813. He died at the age of 68 at his home in Philadelphia, the most celebrated physician in America. |
| **John Hancock (1737-1793)** Born in Braintree, Massachusetts. Hancock became very involved in revolutionary politics and his sentiments were, early on and clearly, for independence from Great Britain. He was in company with the Adamses and other prominent leaders in the republican movement in New England. He was elected to the Boston Assembly in 1766, and was a member of the Stamp Act Congress. In 1774, he was elected to the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts and simultaneously to the Continental Congress. When Peyton Randolph resigned in 1776, Hancock assumed the position of President. The signature of John Hancock on the Declaration of Independence is the most flamboyant and easily recognizable of all. He was elected to the Governorship of the state where he served for five years, declined reelection, and was again elected in 1787. He served in that office until his death in 1793. |
| **John Jay (1745-1829)** In early 1774 he was one of the most prominent members of the New York Committee of Correspondence. In September of that year he attended the First Continental Congress as the second youngest member, at age twenty eight. He retired from the Congress in 1776 rather than sign the Declaration of Independence. He became deeply involved in the development of a new state government for New York. In 1777 he attended the New York constitutional convention, and was selected to draft that constitution. In 1782 Jay, along with Adams, Franklin, and Laurens signed the treaty of peace with Great Britain. When he returned to Congress, he had already been appointed Secretary of Foreign Affairs. In 1787 Jay authored three of the articles now collectively called *The Federalist*, in which he, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton argued effectively in support of the ratification of the new Federal Constitution. In 1789, Washington appointed him Chief Justice to the Supreme Court under the new federal constitution. In 1794 he was appointed an envoy extraordinary to Great Britain, in order to seek a resolution to continuing conflicts on the western border, and in commercial relations. The result of this was the *Jay Treaty*, which proved very unpopular with the public, but was nonetheless approved of by the Washington administration. Upon his return home Jay found that, in his absence, he had been elected Governor of New York. |
| **John Witherspoon (1723-1794)** In 1776 he was elected to the Continental Congress in time to vote for R. H. Lee's Resolution for Independence. He voted in favor, and shortly after voted for the Declaration of Independence. He made a notable comment on that occasion; in reply to another member who argued that the country was not yet ripe for such a declaration, that in his opinion it "was not only ripe for the measure, but in danger of rotting for the want of it." Whitherspoon was a very active member of congress, serving on more than a hundred committees through his tenure and debating frequently on the floor. |
| **John Peter Muhlenberg (1746-1807)** During the Revolutionary War, raised and commanded the Eighth Virginia (German) Regiment, commissioned brigadier general of the Continental Army in 1777, and brevetted major general in 1783. He returned to Pennsylvania and settled in Montgomery County. Muhlenberg was elected to the First Congress (March 4, 1789-March 3, 1791), the Third Congress (March 4, 1793-March 3, 1795), and the Sixth Congress (March 4, 1799-March 3, 1801). He was elected to the United States Senate and served from March 4, 1801, until his resignation on June 30, 1801. He was appointed by President Thomas Jefferson supervisor of revenue for Pennsylvania in 1801 and collector of customs at Philadelphia in 1802, in which latter capacity he served until his death at Gray’s Ferry, Montgomery County, PA, October 1, 1807. |
| **Charles Carroll (1737-1832)** In 1772 he anonymously engaged the secretary of the colony of Maryland in a series of Newspaper articles protesting the right of the British government to tax the colonies without representation. He visited the Continental Congress in 1776, and was enlisted in a diplomatic mission to Canada, along with Franklin and Chase. Shortly after his return, the Maryland Convention decided to join in support for the Revolution. Carroll was elected to represent Maryland on the 4th of July, and though he was too late to vote for the Declaration, he did sign it. Charles Carroll was the last surviving member of those who signed the Declaration. He died the last survivor of the signers of the Declaration, in 1832 at the age of 95. |
| **Jonathan Trumbull Sr. (1710-1785)** was one of the few men who served as governor in both a pre-Revolutionary colony and a post-Revolutionary state. He was born in Lebanon, Connecticut. He became a merchant with his father in 1731, participating more fully in the business after the death of his brother at sea in 1732. From 1733-1740 he was a delegate to the general assembly, and in 1739-40 was Speaker of the House. He was appointed lieutenant colonel in Connecticut's militia in 1739. He served as deputy-governor of the Colony of Connecticut from 1766-1769, and on the death of the governor became Governor of Connecticut in 1769, serving in that capacity until 1784. He was a friend and advisor of General Washington throughout the revolutionary period, dedicating the resources of Connecticut to the fight for independence. He was the only colonial governor to continue in office through the American revolution. He is the father of John Trumbull (1756-1843) who is known as the “Painter of the American Revolution” |
| **Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859)** Tocqueville, a French political thinker and historian, best known for authoring Democracy in America which deals with issues like religion, the press, money, class structure, racism, the role of government, the judicial system, etc. -- issues that are just as relevant today as they were then. Democracy in America has undergone several periods of popularity throughout the century, but it's never been as popular as it is now. Scores of colleges around the country use the text in political science and history courses, and historians consider it one of the most comprehensive and insightful books ever written about the U.S. |