Exploring Mount Vernon, a FREE Electronic Field Trip
Presented by Alabama Public Television

Date: The on-demand show is available to stream online beginning January 18, 2013 until the end of March 2013. Exploring Mount Vernon was originally broadcast on February 15, 2012.
Grade Levels: 4-8
Cost: FREE

Description: Meet George Washington!

The Revolutionary War hero and America’s first president will be presenting his home to students everywhere. Did you know that Mount Vernon is still a working farm? That it has a blacksmith who uses fire and centuries-old techniques to create tools? That Martha Washington hosted 677 overnight houseguests in a single year? Explore the famous Mount Vernon Estate in this electronic field trip to the historic home of the nation’s first president.

Exploring Mount Vernon is produced by The IQ Learning Network, a division of Alabama Public Television, in partnership with George Washington’s Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens.
Standards:
National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) Standards
U. S. History
Grades K-4

1.) LIVING AND WORKING TOGETHER IN FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES, NOW AND LONG AGO

- Understands family life now and in the past, and family life in various places long ago
- Understands the history of the local community and how communities in North America varied long ago

3.) THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES: DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES AND VALUES AND THE PEOPLE FROM MANY CULTURES WHO CONTRIBUTED TO ITS CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL HERITAGE

- Understands how democratic values came to be, and how they have been exemplified by people, events, and symbols
- Understands the causes and nature of movements of large groups of people into and within the United States, now and long ago
- Understands the folklore and other cultural contributions from various regions of the United States and how they helped to form a national heritage

4.) THE HISTORY OF PEOPLES OF MANY CULTURES AROUND THE WORLD

- Understands selected attributes and historical developments of societies in Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe
- Understands major discoveries in science and technology, some of their social and economic effects, and the major scientists and inventors responsible for them

Grades 5-12

3.) ERA 3: REVOLUTION AND THE NEW NATION (1754-1820s)

- Understands the causes of the American Revolution, the ideas and interests involved in forging the revolutionary movement, and the reasons for the American victory
- Understands the impact of the American Revolution on politics, economy, and society
- Understands the institutions and practices of government created during the Revolution and how they were revised between 1787 and 1815 to create the foundation of the American political system based on the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights

7.) ERA 7: AN AGE OF REVOLUTIONS, 1750-1914

The student in grades 5-12 should understand:
Exploring Mount Vernon

- the causes and consequences of political revolutions in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.
- the causes and consequences of the agricultural and industrial revolutions, 1700-1850.
- the transformation of Eurasian societies in an era of global trade and rising European power, 1750-1850.
- patterns of nationalism, state-building, and social reform in Europe and the Americas, 1830-1914.
- patterns of global change in the era of Western military and economic domination, 1850-1914.
- major global trends from 1750 to 1914.

**Alabama Standards: Social Studies**

**Grade 5**

7.) Identify events leading to the American Revolution.
8.) Identify major events of the American Revolution.
8a.) Describe the social and political impact of the Declaration of Independence.
8b.) Explain the role of key leaders and major events of the Revolutionary War.
8b.) Explain George Washington’s contributions to the American Revolution.
8d.) Locate on a map the major battle sites of the American Revolution.
9b.) Identify major ideas and concepts of the Constitution of the United States.
9c.) Identify main principles in the Bill of Rights.

**Grade 10**

3.) Trace the chronology of events leading to the American Revolution.
3c.) Compare roles in and perspectives of the American Revolution from different regions and groups in society.
3d.) Describe reasons for American victory in the American Revolution.
4c.) Describe the political system of the United States based on the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

**Mount Vernon Teachers’ Institute**

Learn how you can join other teachers to visit Mount Vernon in person this summer in order to learn more about George Washington and American history. Visit this website for more information: [http://www.mountvernon.org/content/teachers-institute](http://www.mountvernon.org/content/teachers-institute).
Field Trip Order:

Tour of the Mansion – Martha Washington herself joins our student reporter in the home’s grandest room, the Large Dining Room. The Washingtons hosted elegant dinners in this room for their numerous houseguests, and the American presidency began here when George Washington was informed that he had been unanimously elected first president of the United States. In addition to the Large Dining Room, students will also have the opportunity to visit the little parlor, the study, and the Washington’s bedroom. Afterwards, the host interviews Martha Washington, and student questions are answered.

Visit to the Pioneer Farm Site – Mount Vernon was more than just a home. It was a small self-contained community. Five farms, each with its own overseers, work force of slaves, livestock, equipment, and buildings provided food for the estate. Our student reporter will explore the Pioneer Farm site with an historical interpreter and see how food was grown and produced. Just like in George Washington’s day, horses will tread grain in Washington’s 16-sided treading barn and wheat will be winnowed and ground into flour at a water-powered gristmill. Afterwards, the host interviews the farm manager, and student questions are answered.

Meet the Blacksmith – Keeping the farms at Mount Vernon running smoothly required many skilled artisans, including the blacksmith. Our student reporter will visit the blacksmith shop and discover how nails, hooks, and shoes for Washington’s horses were crafted. The Mount Vernon blacksmith will demonstrate his coal powered forge while pounding out red-hot metal to create an axe-head. The sparks will fly! Afterwards, the host interviews the blacksmith, and student questions are answered.

Tour the Mount Vernon Education Center – George Washington wore several sets of dentures throughout his lifetime, but contrary to popular belief, not one was made of wood. Many little-known facts and curious truths about our first president are explored in the Mount Vernon Education Center. From young surveyor to President of the newly formed union, our student reporter will lead the way recounting the accomplishments of President Washington. Afterwards, the host interviews George Washington, and student questions are answered.
Pre-Field Trip Activities

The following is a list of suggested activities and digital resources that teachers can use with students prior to viewing the electronic field trip.

The Mansion

- Learn about the various rooms of the estate and the antiques that can still be found on display at Mount Vernon by reading "The Antiques of George Washington's Mount Vernon." Discover Mount Vernon's treasures by visiting its e-museum.

- George and Martha Washington received many guests at Mount Vernon. Students can learn how guests were entertained with music and dancing. For information about the music, dancing, and musical instruments of George Washington's time, read "The Music of George Washington's Time," by John Tasker Howard. To listen to some of the popular music of the time, visit this webpage titled "The Music of Early America: Music During George Washington's Life" or watch this YouTube video (13:22), titled "George Washington – Music for the First President." Watch Mount Vernon’s George Washington interpreter give a dance lesson to a student (YouTube video, 2:53) and watch a colonial dance (YouTube video, 1:47).

The Pioneer Farm Site
Students can learn about the gardening and farming practices at Mount Vernon by viewing this slideshow that was created by a 4th grade teacher who attended the Mount Vernon Teacher Institute in 2010. Explore the various tools that were used on farms during colonial times by visiting the Colonial Williamsburg website.

The Blacksmith Shop

Visit Mount Vernon's official website to read a brief overview about the work done in the blacksmith's shop and to view pictures of the shop and of the blacksmith at work. Browse the website to learn about other trades that were represented at Mount Vernon. View these student-created reports about blacksmiths in colonial times.

The Mount Vernon Education Center

Learn about George Washington's life by viewing this interactive chronology of his life from the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association and by watching "The Life of George Washington – The Movie" (3 segments, total 35 minutes). You also may want to read about the President's career as a land surveyor and cartographer – "The Mapmaker of Mount Vernon," by Edward J. Redmond. Learn about Martha Washington by visiting this website produced by George Washington's Mount Vernon and the Center for History and New Media. Students can view portraits of the Washingtons during the presidential years by visiting the National Portrait Gallery's website.

Additional Suggested Activities

Request a portrait of George Washington for your school or classroom from Mount Vernon. To receive a FREE portrait along with supporting curriculum materials, follow the instructions on this web page.

To learn even more about George Washington, visit George Washington Wired, a Mount Vernon website. Read about interesting objects that were used at Mount Vernon, such as a hunting horn, plate warmer, and George Washington's shaving gear. Visit George Washington's World for Kids to play 3D games on your internet browser (NOTE: free download required).
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Post-Field Trip Activities:

The following is a list of suggested activities and digital resources that teachers can use with students following the electronic field trip.

The Mansion

- *Necessity is the mother of invention.* Have students conduct research about the inventions found in George Washington's study (the fan chair and copy press), as well as George Washington’s invention, the 16-sided barn. Check out this webpage to see the President’s sketches of the barn.

- *The first lady then and now.* Discuss with students how Martha Washington's role as the 1st first lady compares to that of modern first ladies. Have students prepare a report or essay comparing Martha Washington with a first lady of their choice. Another idea is to have students role play or dress up as first ladies and explain their greatest accomplishments to the class. The White House website includes a brief biography of each of the country's first ladies.

The Pioneer Farm Site

- *Bread.* Make bread with students at school, or ask parents to make bread at home with their children. Sample various types of homemade bread. Have students compile their own cookbook with a variety of bread recipes. You may want to use a lesson plan on bread and butter making from Utah Education Network or use a colonial bread recipe from The Fresh Loaf.

The Blacksmith Shop

- *Colonial trades.* Have students research the various types of trades in colonial times, as listed on the Colonial Williamsburg website. Discuss the trades that were represented at Mount Vernon – blacksmith, cooper, farmer, etc. This school website lists several activity ideas to use with 5th graders when studying colonial trades. Check out this teacher-created WebQuest that gives 4th grade students the opportunity to "travel" back to colonial days. Have students create Vokis to represent 18th century workers. For examples of Vokis used in the classroom, view these Vokis created by a group of 4th graders from Alabama.

The Mount Vernon Education Center

- *George Washington's professions.* George Washington is most often remembered for being a heroic army general and the first president, but he was also a land surveyor by trade. You may want to use this lesson plan from the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery to teach students
about the importance of land surveying in the 18th century and about George Washington's career as a surveyor. Mount Vernon's education department created this lesson plan for middle school that includes a hands-on activity through which students use a GPS to map a site at their school. Finally, upper elementary teachers can utilize this Mount Vernon lesson plan to engage students in examining the leadership qualities that made George Washington a good president.

- **George Washington's slaves.** George Washington owned slaves, but they were freed upon his and Mrs. Washington's deaths. What did the President think about slavery? What was slave life like at Mount Vernon? Using this lesson plan from the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, have students read and interpret documents written by George Washington regarding the issue of slavery. Middle school teachers may find this lesson plan from PBS helpful in teaching students about George Washington and slavery.

**Extension Activities**

- **Myth vs. fact.** Read "Ten Myths about George Washington" and discuss the most common myths about the President (chopping down the cherry tree, wooden teeth). Colonial Williamsburg and Mount Vernon jointly created this teacher guide and lesson plan to teach students to distinguish between truths and falsehoods about George Washington. Here are two quizzes students can take to see if they have learned the truth about the 1st president: Quiz 1 and Quiz 2.
• **Colonial school life.** What did George Washington study in school as a boy? Give elementary and middle school students colonial assignments to complete, such as those suggested in this article from Education World. Following this lesson plan from the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery study the "Rules of Civility" and have students compose their own modern etiquette rules.

• **Music of the 18th century.** Collaborate with the music teacher to study the popular music of the Washington's time. In addition to the harpsichord, what types of instruments were used? Students will enjoy playing Harpsichord Hero (like the popular Guitar Hero). Check out this Mount Vernon lesson plan for middle school students to analyze the war song "Yankee Doodle" and write their own song verses.

• **The science of agriculture.** Collaborate with the science teacher to replicate a science experiment done by George Washington on his farm: test the efficacy of various fertilizers by growing seeds fertilized with different products. Read "George Washington, The Revolutionary Farmer: America's First Composter," by Dennis J. Pogue and Robert Arner, to learn about how the President used the technique known as composting to grow healthy crops.

**Vocabulary**

Harpsichord

Thresh

Grist

Cooper

Apprentice

Journeyman

Click [here](#) to access additional classroom resources and Web 2.0 activities.