

George Washington's Teeth

Grade Levels: K-2

Time Allotment: 45 minutes

Common Core Standards

CCSS.ELA.Literacy.RL.K-2.1	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
CCSS.ELA.Literacy.RL.K-2.3	With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.
CCSS.ELA.Literacy.RL.K-2.5	Recognize common types of texts (e.g., storybooks, poems).
CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.OA.A.2	Solve addition and subtraction word problems, and add and subtract within 10, e.g., by using objects or drawings to represent the problem.
CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.1.OA.A.1	Use addition and subtraction within 20 to solve word problems involving situations of adding to, taking from, putting together, taking apart, and comparing, with unknowns in all positions, e.g., by using objects, drawings, and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem.

Objectives

- In the process of thinking about how many teeth George Washington had, students will be able to subtract one-digit numbers.
- Students will understand the plot of the story and be able to recall details of it, like who, what, where, why, as well as be able to analyze the character's choices.

Materials

- *George Washington's Teeth* by Deborah Chandra and Madeleine Comora
- Worksheets below
- Writing materials

Anticipatory Set

- The teacher will begin the class by putting a picture of George Washington on the board. They will ask students what they know about George Washington.
- As students give different facts about Washington, the teacher will write them on the board.

- By the end of the activity, the class should understand that George Washington was an important figure in the American Revolution and was the country's first president.
- The teacher will ask if any students have heard something before about George Washington's teeth.
 - The teacher will explain that throughout history there have been many myths about his teeth, like that he had completely wooden teeth.

Teacher Presentation and Modeling

- The teacher will explain that they will be reading aloud a book about George Washington's teeth and will learn more about him and his life through it.
- Have students make predictions at the beginning of the book based off the two quotes:
 - "But another battle with his teeth had only just begun..."
 - "They've knocked out my *last one!*"
- At the end of the book, ask students if they thought the beginning foreshadowed events at the end of the book.
- As the teacher reads aloud, they can choose to highlight some of the following:
 - Vocabulary words:
 - "Inside he rubbed his swollen gums with soothing oil of myrrh, until a sentinel cried out, 'Here come the British, sir!'"
 - Swollen gums: Gums are part of someone's mouth that is pink, below your teeth
 - Myrrh: A part of a tree mixed with other things for medicine
 - Sentinel: A soldier whose job it is to keep watch
 - "He spat into his handkerchief, another tooth came out!"
 - Handkerchief: a small piece of fabric that people would blow their nose into or use for other reasons
 - "The Redcoats fled - George won the war!"
 - Redcoats: a nickname for British soldiers since they wore red jackets
 - "Ashamed his friends would see."
 - Ashamed: a synonym for embarrassed
 - "With plaster and those teeth he found..."
 - Plaster: a building material that starts off soft and hardens
 - Events associated with the Revolutionary War:
 - "George reached New York as British ships invaded every port. Preparing for a fierce attack, his soldiers built a fort."

- This is in reference to the Battle of Long Island, where soldiers built various forts as the British tried to take over New York City
- “George crossed the icy Delaware with nine teeth in his mouth.”
 - This is in reference to Washington crossing the Delaware River, a major turning point for the war since it led to winning the Battle of Trenton.
- “Snow fell in Valley Forge, his blue coat hung in tatters.”
 - This references the Valley Forge encampment, where the Continental Army stayed all winter. It was cold and they were low on supplies, so it was a very tough time.

Guided and Independent Practice

- After reading and discussing the book, students will be instructed to do a literacy worksheet and a math worksheet.
- Students will first work on the worksheet that focuses on the literary aspect of the story.
 - Students will answer questions on the worksheet relating to aspects of who, what, where, when, why of the story.
 - They will describe plot details of the story.
- Next, students will test their math skills using the worksheet provided.
 - They will be given questions regarding plot details and how many teeth he had before subtracting the amount he loses.
 - This will help students practice their subtraction skills.

Closure

- The teacher will lead a discussion about fact and fiction regarding George Washington and his teeth.
- The teacher will go back to the beginning activity, restating that lots of people believe George Washington had wooden teeth. The teacher will ask the students if they think this is true after reading the book.
- The teacher will ask the class the following questions:
 - Why do you think George’s teeth kept falling out? What could he have done to prevent this?
 - What facts have you learned about George Washington since reading this book?
 - The teacher will refer to the original answers they put on the board at the beginning of class.

Assessment

- The teacher will assess the literacy worksheet to see if students understood the questions being asked of them and answered them correctly with support from the text.
- The teacher will assess the math worksheet to see if students are able to subtract correctly.
- The teacher will assess students' answers to the discussion questions provided throughout the activity to see if they know fact from fiction and can use the skills of prediction.

Extension of the Lesson:

- Students can read other books about George Washington, like *George Washington and the General's Dog* by Frank Murphy.
- Students can create a timeline of the events in the book, similar to the one at the end of the book.

Resources

- *George Washington's Teeth* by Deborah Chandra and Madeleine Comora
- *George Washington and the General's Dog* by Frank Murphy