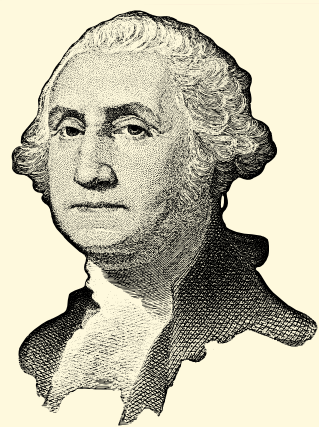
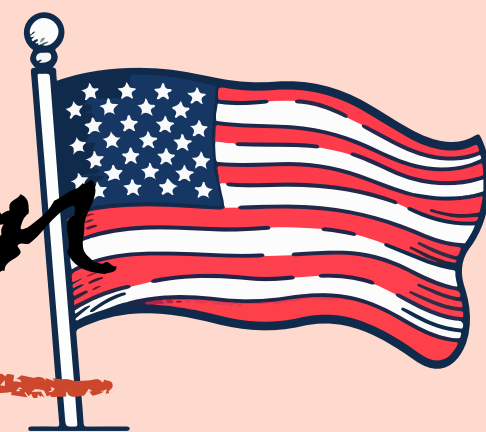


George Washington



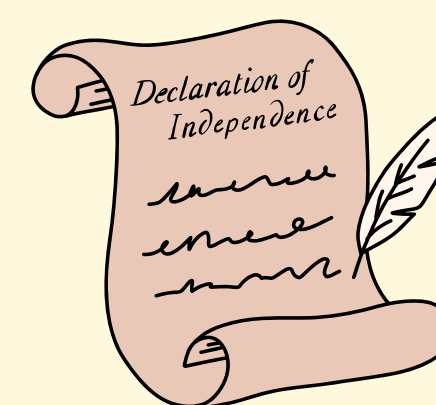
born in 1732
died in 1799

he gave his name to a state and the capital of the United States

he then became the object of an American cult: still a fantasized vision today. Many false claims about him persisted, such as the idea that he never lied, or that he was very physically strong. But who really was George Washington, the first president of the United States?

George Washington: a war hero

- he distinguished himself militarily during the Seven Years' War (1756-1763)
- he then fought against the British occupiers during the War of Independence (1775-1783), winning the battles thanks to military tactics using the attrition of the enemy
- once the war ended, he retired, becoming a national hero



slavery

- he's born into a family belonging to traditional colonial society
- After the Seven Years' War, he became a rich tobacco planter, and owned between 150 and 280 slaves.
- This part of Washington's life still constitutes an American taboo today: he is a military and political hero. Yet his views on slavery are crucial to understanding how racism became part of nation-building.
- Trump: "George Washington owned slaves": idea that he may have been a great president of the United States and a supporter of the slave trade: almost justification or clearance



The politician: the construction of the United States

- he began by sitting in the House of Burgesses in Virginia: proposed the boycott of British products. He becomes delegate from Virginia and asserts the rights of the colonies against the British government
- He then became president of the Philadelphia convention in 1787, and chaired the commission to draft the constitution
- he was unanimously elected by the college of electors as the first president of the United States: he will serve two terms, between 1789 and 1797. His example was retained, and subsequently the norm was for a president to be elected twice maximum
- he decides not to involve the United States in the war between France and Great Britain, inaugurating the isolationist tradition of the United States. It strengthens the executive power, the federal administration, and resolves the budgetary crisis