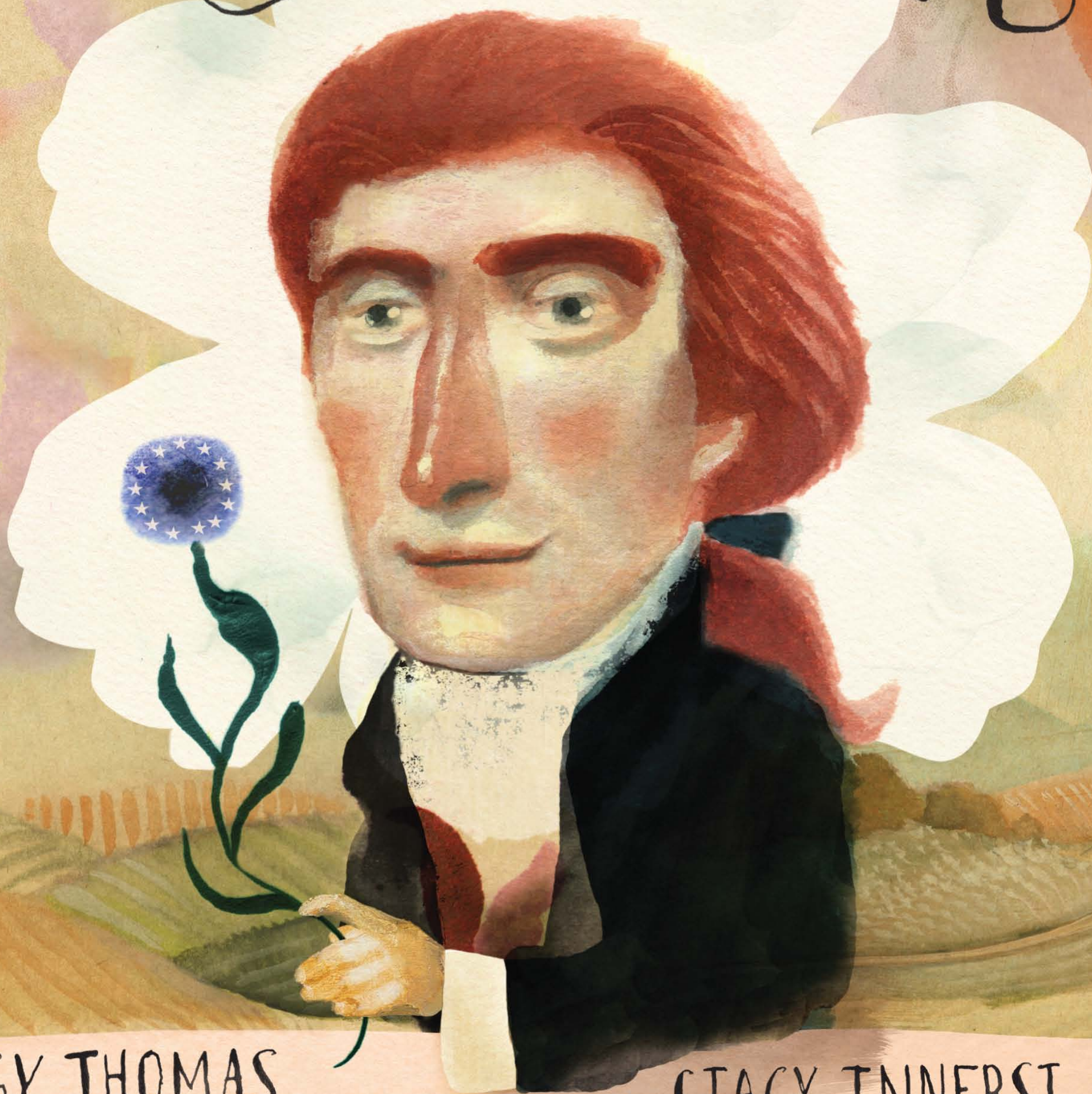


THOMAS JEFFERSON

Grows a  
Nation

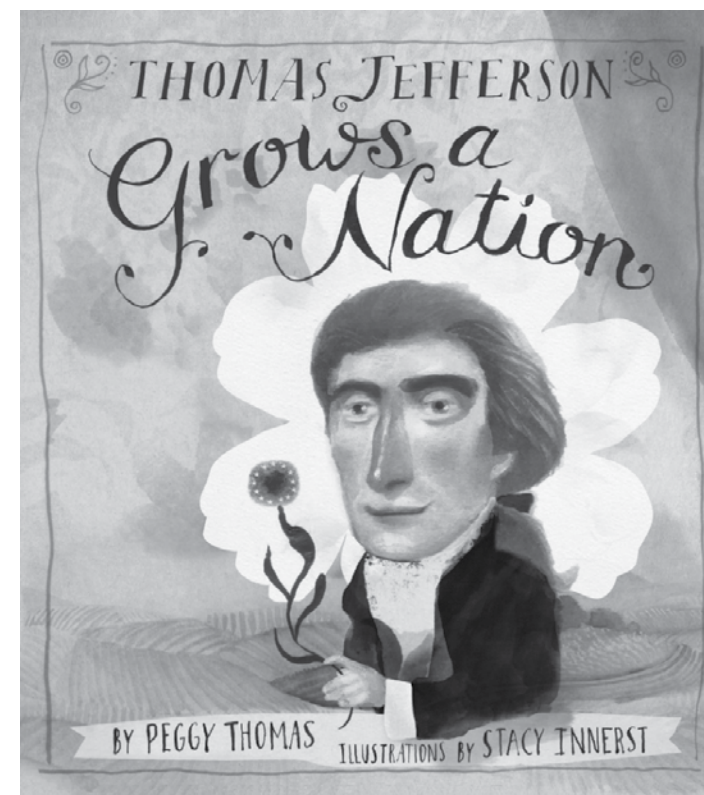


BY PEGGY THOMAS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY STACY INNERST



# AN EDUCATOR'S GUIDE TO THOMAS JEFFERSON *Grows a Nation*



978-1-62091-628-5  
Grades 3 and up  
Ages 9 and up  
\$16.95 U.S. / \$21.00 CAN

BY PEGGY THOMAS  
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**T**homas Jefferson *Grows a Nation* is a fresh and fascinating look at how our nation's third president nurtured America's development in its early days. His endeavors in agriculture, education, government, and more, had profound effects on the United States of his time—and on the country's future.

Students will be impressed by Jefferson's insatiable curiosity and by the depth and breadth of Jefferson's interests and accomplishments. This guide is designed to enhance their reading of the book and to open up new avenues of discovery.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH

The author begins the book with a quote from Thomas Jefferson: "No occupation is so delightful to me as the culture of the earth." What does Jefferson mean by "culture"? (RI 3.4)

After Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, he set his mind to creating a "nation of farmers." Why did Jefferson think farmers were important to the young country? (RI 3.1)

Who was Count Buffon? Why was it important for Jefferson to disprove what the Count had written? What did Jefferson do to contradict the lies that were being told about the New World? (RI 3.1)

Where did Thomas Jefferson travel in July 1784? Why? What did he bring with him to show Count Buffon? (RI 3.1)

Count Buffon remained unconvinced that American wildlife dwarfed the wildlife of Europe. What animal did Jefferson believe would convince Buffon to change his mind? How did Jefferson manage to show a large American animal to the Count in France? (RI 3.1)

As minister to France, Thomas Jefferson took his job very seriously and worked diligently to grow America's economy. What were some of the trade agreements he established? How did he educate the French about American goods? (RI 3.1)

According to Jefferson, "Every discovery which multiplies the subsistence of men, must be a matter of joy to every friend to humanity" (page 13). What does the word "subsistence" mean? What were some of the "discoveries" Jefferson made in Europe that helped American farmers? (RI 3.4, 3.1)

Jefferson believed that "The greatest service which can be rendered any country is, to add an useful plant to its culture" (page 15). What were some of the plants Thomas Jefferson brought to America? How did those plants do in America? (RI 3.1)

When Thomas Jefferson became secretary of state for President George Washington, Alexander Hamilton was the secretary of the treasury. How was Hamilton's vision for America different from Jefferson's? (RI 3.1)

What "invaded" America? What were some of the methods Jefferson tried to turn back the invasion? (RI 3.1)

When Thomas Jefferson returned to Monticello in 1794, he discovered that the fields and fences were in rough shape. What did he do to remedy the situation? How were his farming methods different from those of his neighbors? (RI 3.1)

After a few years at Monticello, Jefferson returned to politics and served as John Adams's vice president. How did Jefferson like Washington, D.C.? How did he spend his time? (RI 3.1)

After Jefferson became president in 1801, he sent an emissary to France to negotiate the purchase of New Orleans. What happened? Why did the illustrator use a needle and thread in his picture of the Louisiana Territory? (RI 3.1, 3.7)

On page 29, the author writes, "For years, Thomas had yearned to discover what lay in the vast wilderness to the west." What did Jefferson do to satisfy his curiosity? Who led the expedition? (RI 3.1)

Jefferson served as president for two terms. In 1809, he retired to Monticello. The word *retirement* means ceasing to work. What did retirement mean for Jefferson? (RI 3.1)

In 1817, Thomas Jefferson "measured out the foundation for the University of Virginia" (page 34). How long did Jefferson work on this project? What were some things he did to "grow" the university? (RI 3.1)

Thomas Jefferson died on July 4, 1826. What was significant about that day? (RI 3.1)

At the end of the book in a section called "Thomas Today," the author writes, "Thomas never seemed to let failure stop him. He always had another project to work on and more information to share. That resilience and optimism are important parts of the American spirit" (page 37). What is *resilience*? Give an example of how Jefferson demonstrated his resilience. (RI 3.4, 3.1)

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

On page 10, the author says that Thomas Jefferson's book, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, inspired many writers "to promote America as a big, beautiful, and bountiful nation." Who were some of the writers Jefferson inspired? What were some of the books these authors wrote? (SL 3.1)

On page 16 of this book, Thomas Jefferson is quoted, "I have always thought that if in the experiments to introduce . . . new plants, one species in an hundred is found useful and succeeds, the ninety nine found otherwise are more than paid for." What does this quote tell you about Thomas Jefferson? What are some adjectives you would use to describe him? (SL 3.1)

In 1789, Thomas Jefferson became the secretary of state for George Washington. What does a secretary of state do? (RI 3.4)

The Louisiana Purchase added 800,000 square miles to the United States in one day: "Now it reached to the Rocky Mountains, stretched north to Canada, and dipped its toe in the Gulf of Mexico" (page 29). How much did that purchase cost the United States? Do you think it was a good buy? (RI 3.1, SL 3.4)

There are many famous Americans named in *Thomas Jefferson Grows a Nation*—from James Madison and Alexander Hamilton to James Monroe and John Adams. Choose one person from the book and write a paragraph about them describing some of their accomplishments. How did the person you chose help "grow" the United States? (W 3.7)

There are several words in the book that may be new to you. Look up the meaning of the following words: *plenipotentiary*, *commerce*, *chrysalis*, *infestation*, and *degradation*. How does the author use these words in the book? (L 3.4)

## EXTRA CREDIT

Thomas Jefferson grew many plants at Monticello—from potatoes and peppers to peaches and peas. In the book, the author mentions some other plants Jefferson grew that are less familiar. What are pippins? Persimmons? Sassafras? Sorrel?

The author writes, "Thomas loved to grow things. He grew seeds and science, liberty and learning, farmers, freedom, and democracy." Jefferson was talented and learned in so many areas—he could

converse in French, Greek, Italian, Spanish, and Latin. He studied law, philosophy, and architecture, and he loved music. He is often described as a true "Renaissance man" or "polymath." What do those words mean? What were some other things that Jefferson studied?

Lewis and Clark's expedition to "explore the Missouri river, & . . . the most direct & practicable water communication across this continent" was a dream fulfilled for Thomas Jefferson. Visit <http://classroom.monticello.org/kids/resources/profile/580/Middle/Jefferson-Prepares-for-the-Lewis-and-Clark-Expedition/> for information about the preparations for the journey. Travel along with the expedition at <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/west/main.html>, or by reading *How We Crossed the West: The Adventures of Lewis & Clark* by Rosalyn Schanzer. Learn more about Lewis and Clark's Shoshone guide by reading *Sacagawea* by Louise Erdrich.

Thomas Jefferson was a true bibliophile and collected thousands of books over the course of his life. In fact, he donated over 6,500 books to start a new Library of Congress after the British burned the first Library of Congress in 1814. For more information about Jefferson and his love of books, read *Thomas Jefferson Builds a Library* by Barb Rosenstock.

In addition to serving many roles in the new government and making inroads in agriculture for the United States, Jefferson was an inventor. In the book, the author explains how Jefferson liked to tinker and how he built a new plow device. Visit <http://classroom.monticello.org/kids/gallery/home/6/> to find out more about Jefferson's innovations.

Washington, D.C., was not the first capital of the United States. What was? Who was the first president to live at the White House?

## FURTHER READING

*Monticello* by Sarah Tieck

*Thomas Jefferson: Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Everything* by Maira Kalman

*Thomas Jefferson Builds a Library* by Barb Rosenstock, illustrated by John O'Brien

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For the complete Common Core State Standards, visit [corestandards.org/ELA-literacy](http://corestandards.org/ELA-literacy).

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