

Name _____ Class _____

Target Lesson: Finding the Best Evidence with “Two Famous Friends”

PART 1: Warm-Up: Writing

Directions: Look at the picture and answer the question.

Thomas Jefferson and John Adams were friends and worked together to create the United States.



John Adams and Thomas Jefferson

(left)

(right)

[“Leaders of the Continental Congress--John Adams, Morris, Hamilton, Jefferson”](#) by Augustus Tholey is in the Public Domain.

Today you’re going to read about the friendship between Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, two “Founding Fathers” of the United States of America.

- In your opinion, what makes a good friend?
- How should friends handle disagreements?

Take **three minutes** to write down your ideas.

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PART 2: Video Introducing the Target Skill

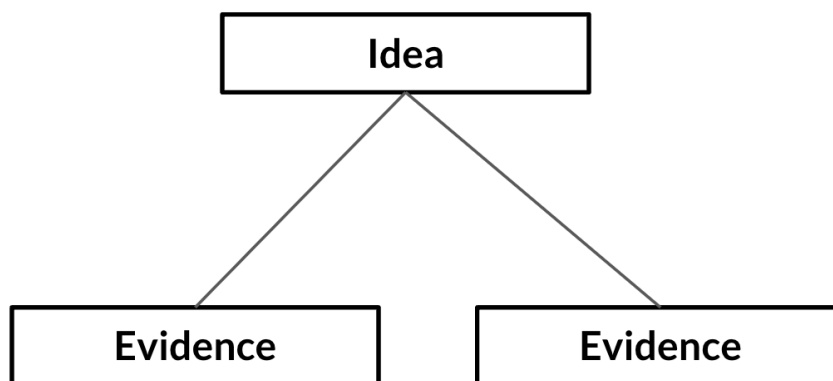
Directions: Watch the video and then answer the questions.

1. In your own words, what is evidence?

2. What reading skill are you practicing today as you read about Thomas Jefferson and John Adams?

PART 3: Review the Target Skill - Finding the Best Evidence

Today we will practice identifying the best evidence to support ideas.



Ask yourself: “Which piece of evidence BEST supports the idea?”

PART 4: Reading and Answering Questions

Directions: Read the text and answer the questions.

Two Famous Friends

by Jean K. Potratz

[1] Did you ever have an argument with a friend? Did you stop being friends? Forever? Or after a while were you friends again?

[2] Two famous friends who had their ups and downs were John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. They met in 1775 when they both served in the First Continental Congress.¹ A strong bond grew between them as they worked on the Declaration of Independence. After the end of the Revolutionary War² they were both sent to France, to serve their country by making trade treaties.³

[3] When Adams was then sent to London, the two men wrote to each other. Jefferson's letters expressed his "sincere esteem⁴ and respect" for Adams. When Jefferson visited the Adamses in London in 1786, Adams's wife, Abigail, wrote to her sister that Jefferson was "one of the choice⁵ ones of the earth."

[4] But in 1789 the two friends disagreed over the revolution in France. Jefferson supported it, but Adams was not so sure.

[5] They also disagreed about the role of government in their own new nation. Adams, a Federalist, wanted a strong central government. Jefferson, a Republican, believed that states' rights were most important.

Paragraph 2

1. Which detail from the passage shows that John Adams and Thomas Jefferson had a special friendship?
- A. "Did you ever have an argument with a friend?"
 - B. "They met in 1775 when they both served in the First Continental Congress."
 - C. "A strong bond grew between them as they worked on the Declaration of Independence."
 - D. "After the end of the Revolutionary War they were both sent to France, to serve their country by making trade treaties."

¹ a meeting of representatives to form twelve of the thirteen colonies

² the war for America's independence from Britain

³ a formal agreement between countries

⁴ respect and admiration for a person

⁵ of very good quality

[6] In the presidential election of 1796 Adams and Jefferson opposed each other. Adams won. Jefferson became vice president. But Jefferson wanted Adams to know that he didn't mind placing second in the election, and he told him, "I have no ambition⁶ to govern men."

[7] Only two years later, however, their friendship was strained when Adams imprisoned editors and publishers who spoke out against the government. Citizens' First Amendment rights⁷ were being violated, Jefferson stated. He called Adams a traitor to the Revolution.

Adams, Jefferson, and the Second Continental Congress

[8] Jefferson defeated Adams in the next election. Jefferson told Dr. Benjamin Rush, a friend of both Jefferson and Adams, about a conversation he had had with Adams before the result of the election was known.

[9] Adams had said, "Well, I understand that you are to beat me in this contest, and I will only say that I will be as faithful a subject⁸ as any you will have."

[10] Jefferson had replied, "Mr. Adams, this is no personal contest between you and me. Two systems of government divide our fellow citizens into two parties. With one of these you concur,⁹ and I with the other." And Adams had agreed.

[11] It seemed that the two men had put away hostilities.¹⁰ But before Jefferson took office, Adams quickly used a new law to appoint several judges. Then, hurt by his defeat in the election, he went home to Massachusetts, missing Jefferson's inauguration.¹¹

⁶ **Ambition (noun)** a strong desire to do something or to achieve something

⁷ The First Amendment guarantees freedom of assembly, press, religion, and speech.

⁸ a citizen or member of a state, other than its leader

⁹ **Concur (verb)** to agree

¹⁰ **Hostile (adjective)** having or showing unfriendly feelings

¹¹ the ceremony that marks the start of someone's time in office

Paragraph 7

2. What word best describes Adams' and Jefferson's friendship?

- A. Unstable
- B. Calm

Paragraph 7

3. Which detail from the text best supports your answer to question 2?

- A. "Jefferson's letters expressed his 'sincere esteem and respect' for Adams"
- B. "...Adams's wife, Abigail, wrote to her sister that Jefferson was 'one of the choice ones of the earth'"
- C. "But Jefferson wanted Adams to know that he didn't mind placing second in the election..."
- D. "Only two years later, however, their friendship was strained when Adams imprisoned editors and publishers who spoke out against the government."

[12] Immediately President Jefferson pardoned¹² everyone jailed by Adams. And since he felt that Adams's appointment of judges was a personal attack, Jefferson had the new law repealed.¹³ This meant that Adams's son, John Quincy Adams, lost his post. Both Adams and his wife Abigail blamed Jefferson.

[13] Jefferson and Adams wrote several more letters, but they were filled with hurt. To halt more harsh words, they stopped writing.

[14] Dr. Rush called the rift¹⁴ between Jefferson and Adams "a national misfortune." After all, the two men were symbols of American independence.

[15] Then in October 1809 Dr. Rush claimed to have had a dream: Jefferson and Adams would renew their friendship, and be "sunk into the grave nearly at the same time." He encouraged both men to begin writing to each other again. Finally, on New Year's Day in 1812, Adams wrote a note to Jefferson and sent him two volumes published by his son. Jefferson responded in a letter dated January 21.

[16] From then on, for fourteen years, the two old friends wrote back and forth, discussing natural science, history, architecture, religion, art, and agriculture.

[17] As Dr. Rush said he had dreamed, Jefferson and Adams died within hours of each other. That was on July 4, 1826, fifty years to the day after approval of the Declaration of Independence.

[18] Upon renewing their friendship, Jefferson had written to Adams, "We were fellow laborers in the same cause... Still we did not expect to be without rubs and difficulties; and we had them."

Paragraph 17

4. What word best describes Dr. Rush's opinion of the disagreement between Adams and Jefferson?

- A. Comforting
- B. Expected
- C. Regretful
- D. Unlucky

Paragraph 17

5. Which detail from the text best supports your answer to question 4?

- A. "Jefferson told Dr. Benjamin Rush, a friend of both Jefferson and Adams, about a conversation he had had with Adams..." (Paragraph 8)
- B. "Dr. Rush called the rift between Jefferson and Adams 'a national misfortune.'" (Paragraph 14)
- C. "Then in October 1809 Dr. Rush claimed to have had a dream: Jefferson and Adams would renew their friendship..." (Paragraph 15)
- D. "As Dr. Rush said he had dreamed, Jefferson and Adams died within hours of each other." (Paragraph 17)

¹² to excuse someone from a crime they committed and its legal consequences

¹³ to cancel or take back a law

¹⁴ **Rift** (*noun*) a break in friendly relations

[19] Many friends have problems. But theirs were surely greater than ours. For when Jefferson and Adams did not agree, the whole country lined up behind the one or the other. Even so, their respect for each other brought them back together.

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PART 5: Assessment

Directions: Answer the questions.

1. Which detail from the text best describes how Jefferson and Adams' friendship was unusual?

- A. "When Adams was then sent to London, the two men wrote to each other." (Paragraph 3)
- B. "But in 1789 the two friends disagreed over the revolution in France." (Paragraph 4)
- C. "From then on, for fourteen years, the two old friends wrote back and forth, discussing natural science, history, architecture, religion, art, and agriculture." (Paragraph 16)
- D. "For when Jefferson and Adams did not agree, the whole country lined up behind the one or the other." (Paragraph 19)

2. What makes a good friend? Were Jefferson and Adams good friends to each other? Explain your answer, using at least two pieces of evidence from the text.
