



A Parade for George Washington by David A. Adler, illustrated by John O'Brien

HC: 9780823442522 • Ages 4–8

About the Book

Crowds cheering, trumpets sounding, and cannons firing! Follow along as George Washington journeys from Virginia to his inauguration in New York City.

After the Revolutionary War, the newly formed U.S. Congress chose the first president. Every vote was for Washington.

So began Washington's week-long trip from his home in Virginia to New York City, where he would be inaugurated. At every stop on George Washington's route, people were determined to celebrate their very first president. In Baltimore citizens rode along with Washington for seven miles, in Philadelphia people chanted "Long live George Washington," and in Elizabethtown, NJ, Washington was met with a parade of boats so spectacular that he would write in his diary: "the decorations of the ships, the roar of cannon . . . filled my mind with sensations."

Discussion Questions

- How does the title of the book and the cover art reveal the subject of the book? Discuss the possible reasons people are parading for George Washington. Study the title page. Why is Washington waving his hat? Who are the people he is saluting?
- George Washington was commander of the Continental Army during the American Revolution. What is a *commander*? What was the *Continental Army*? Why was the war called the American Revolution? Take a look at the first double-page spread. Debate whether this event takes place before or after the war.
- Describe Mount Vernon, Washington's home in Virginia. What is an *aerial view*? Explain how the illustrator uses an aerial view to show the size of Mount Vernon. Take hints from the illustration, and discuss how the people of Mount Vernon feel about Washington? What is significant about the small picture of Mount Vernon under "Important Dates in George Washington's Life" at the end of the book?



- George Washington was unanimously elected the first President of the United States of America. What does *unanimous* mean? Who elected him? How did this election signify Washington’s role in the birth of this nation? Discuss how his election was different from the way we elect leaders today?
- Discuss the celebrations that occur along Washington’s route from Mount Vernon to New York City. How do the celebrations differ? What do they have in common? At what point on the parade route is it obvious that Washington has great respect for soldiers? Point out Washington’s boat in New York harbor. How many United States flags do you see? What might the other flags represent? How does Washington react to all the celebrations and parades?
- *Symbolism* is when an object stands for something else. Discuss the symbolism of the thirteen oarsmen on the flatboat that Washington rides from New Jersey to New York City. In Philadelphia, light shines through the windows of the house where Washington stays. What might the light symbolize?
- Note the small maps used in the illustrations throughout the book. How does this help the reader follow Washington’s parade route? How many states does Washington travel between Mount Vernon and New York City? When Washington is taking the oath of office, the illustrator reveals only the heads of the people in the crowd. This, of course, puts emphasis on George Washington. Debate whether this might also symbolize how people “looked up” to Washington.
- Explain how the illustrations reflect the time period of the book. Describe the use of panels to provide close-up views of what is happening along the parade route. How did the people dress? How did they live? What types of transportation were available to them?
- Discuss different types of parades. How were parades in Washington’s time different from parades in the twenty-first century? How does the purpose of parades remain the same? How do we celebrate George Washington today?

Guide prepared by Pat Scales, retired school librarian and independent consultant, Greenville, South Carolina.

About the Creators

David A. Adler, author of *A Parade for George Washington*, is the author of more than two hundred picture books, biographies, and mysteries for children, including the Cam Jansen series and his Picture Book Biography of . . . series. His many celebrated history books include *Heroes of the Revolution*, *A Picture Book of Alexander Hamilton*, *Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad*, and *A Picture Book of Benjamin Franklin*.

John O’Brien, illustrator of *A Parade for George Washington*, has illustrated more than one hundred picture books, including *Washington D.C. from A–Z*, which was named an ILA Teacher’s Choice Title. He has also done illustrations and cartoons for such publications as the *New Yorker*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Times*, and *Highlights for Kids* magazine. John lives in New Jersey.

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