**Directions**: This is a modified, abridged version of Washington’s Farewell Address. **First, read the questions on the back. Then, read the paragraphs.** As you read, **think about the big picture of what Washington is trying to convey in each part**. **Write that idea in a margin.** **Circle, then at the bottom of the page, write down words that need defining. Finally, answer the questions on the reverse in complete sentences.**

**For Your Information: Many wanted George Washington to continue as president for a 3rd term but he was ready to leave. He was tired and wanted to set the precedent that power should not be grasped in this nation. He made a speech leaving advice to the country that is still surprisingly relevant today. Selections from the speech are below.**

**Washington’s Farewell Address (modified)**

**On Unity**



It is of infinite importance that you unify as one nation, indivisible, cherishing a patriotic attachment that is immovable. Preserve your nation, make her your top priority, watch for her preservation with a jealous anxiety. Jump to defend her, even at the first suspicion of foul play. Whether by birth, or by choice, you have to be Americans before all else. The very name American must arouse patriotism more than any other name or group. You are all, for the most part, similar in religion and culture, and you have the same goals.

**On Morality**

Now, religion and morality are vital here, and it’s silly to say that patriotism could ever be more important than these. Politicians, as well as common man, need to be pious and respectful. An entire book could not list all the ways that being a good politician is tied to being moral and religious. Be cautious to believe the notion that we can be moral without religion. Whatever may be conceded philosophically, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

**On Politicians**

It is important that politicians, entrusted with their office, respect freedom by confining themselves to their respective office, never encroaching upon the constitutional sphere of another department. There’s this tendency to let all the power shift into one office, which inevitably creates tyranny (just look at human nature and how much we love power). Don’t welcome change, just for the sake of change, without knowing full well what that change actually means.

**On Foreign Alliances**

It’ll help a lot if you can avoid permanent rivalries and permanent alliances. Constantly being enemies with a particular country makes you reactive, and can even lead you to war when you really don’t need to, it makes you a slave to them, anxious for any kind of feedback, good or ill. A nation under these influences may impel its government to war based on passion which good reason would reject. Likewise, a passionate alliance with another nation produces all kinds of problems. Sympathy for a favorite nation creates an illusion of common interests which may not actually exist and invite into one the enemies of the other.



**On Education**

Promote knowledge and institutions of its distribution (schools) as a high priority because the government will only be as smart as the average person.



I’m going back to Mount Vernon – Good Luck!

**Questions To Get You Thinking**

**Use complete sentences to answer the following questions.**

1. Washington said we “**have to be Americans before all else**” in order to preserve this nation. Do you agree with him? Explain.
2. Washington said we **can’t have “national morality” without “religious principles.”** Do you agree with him? Explain your answer.
3. **President Obama** argued that **people should vote for him because he’d bring “hope and change.”** Why **might Washington have had a problem with that reason**? Be sure to back your answer up with a reference in his address.

4. According to Washington**, why shouldn’t we have permanent alliances and rivalries with foreign countries?** Cite your evidence with a phrase from the address.

5. **Washington said** that government can only be as smart as its people so **education is very important**. Do you agree with him? Explain.

6. **In America today**, few people are patriotic, less people attend church than ever, we constantly ask for change, we have multiple permanent alliances (NATO, etc.) and education is frequently undervalued. Do you think that the country would be better today if we had followed more of Washington’s advice? Explain.