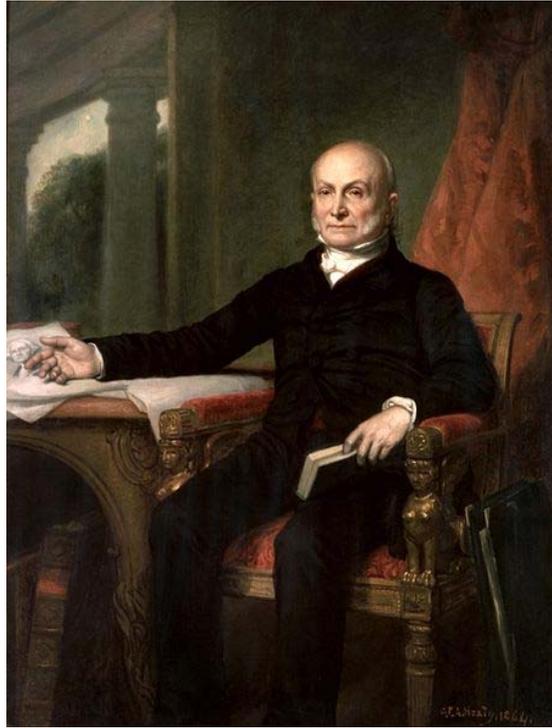


## U.S. Presidents – John Quincy Adams



John Quincy Adams was the sixth president of the United States. He was the first president to be the son of a previous president. The second, George W. Bush, was elected in 2001. In many respects, Adams was like his father, John Adams. He wasn't afraid to take a stand on issues even if they were unpopular. Adams's outspokenness cost him popularity. Like his father, he only served one term as president. He was later elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Adams spent much of his childhood in Europe while his father served as an **ambassador**<sup>1</sup> to several countries. Young Adams got a unique education in politics and diplomacy overseas. But he longed for his homeland. He returned to America and got a law degree from Harvard University. He then entered the

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<sup>1</sup> **ambassador** – the top person sent by a government to represent it to another country

political arena. He served in the United States Senate and was **appointed**<sup>2</sup> Secretary of State by President James Monroe. Adams helped develop the Monroe Doctrine. He also helped end the War of 1812.

One of John Quincy Adams' biggest achievements was his defense of a group of African slaves. The slaves had been illegally captured in western Africa. In 1839, Spanish slave traders brought them to Cuba on a slave ship called *La Amistad*. They were brutally chained by their hands and necks to the ship's wall. One of the slaves, Joseph Cinque, broke free. He used a nail to break his chains. Cinque then freed the other slaves and led a **rebellion**<sup>3</sup> against the ship's crew. The ship's captain, the cook, and two Africans were killed. The slaves were later arrested in the United States for the killings.

John Quincy Adams was one of the first congressmen to oppose slavery. He strongly defended Cinque and the African rebels in front of the U.S. Supreme Court. He argued that every human being had the right to be free. The rebels were found not guilty and returned to their homes in Africa. Several years later, President Abraham Lincoln would use some of Adams' arguments to make his own case against slavery in the Emancipation Proclamation. Adams died on Feb. 23, 1848. Adams is buried near his childhood home in Quincy, Massachusetts.

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<sup>2</sup> **appointed** – named to an office or position

<sup>3</sup> **rebellion** – fight or struggle against the people in charge of something

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What argument did John Quincy Adams provide in favor of the slaves on *La Amistad*?

- a. Every person has a right to be free.
- b. They were brought to the north, where slavery was illegal.
- c. The owner of the ship did not pay taxes.
- d. Adams hated the ship owner.

2. What do John Quincy Adams and George W. Bush have in common?

- a. They both helped develop the Monroe Doctrine.
- b. They both received law degrees from Harvard University.
- c. They were both Presidents and the sons of former Presidents.
- d. They were both raised in Europe while their fathers were ambassadors.

3. Based on the passage, one can conclude that

- a. John Quincy Adams advised Lincoln on his anti-slavery policies.
- b. John Quincy Adams was a better lawyer than he was a President.
- c. John Quincy Adams resented being compared to his father throughout his presidency.
- d. John Quincy Adams was unafraid to support unpopular ideas.

4. Read the following sentences: “Young Adams got a unique education in politics and diplomacy overseas. But he longed for his homeland. He returned to America and got a law degree from Harvard University.”

The phrase **longed for** most nearly means

- a. lived
- b. disliked
- c. missed
- d. avoided

5. Another good title for this passage would be

- a. The Presidency of John Quincy Adams.
- b. John Quincy Adams’ Fight Against Slavery.
- c. John Quincy Adams’ Political Life.
- d. *La Amistad*.

6. Where did John Quincy Adams grow up and why?

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7. Why do you think Adams' defense of the slaves on *La Amistad* is considered one of his greatest achievements?

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8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

John Quincy Adams believed slavery was wrong, \_\_\_\_\_ he defended the slaves on *La Amistad*.

- a. so
- b. although
- c. after
- d. including

9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

Before becoming a Senator, John Quincy Adams earned a law degree at Harvard University.

Who? John Quincy Adams

(did) What? \_\_\_\_\_

Where? \_\_\_\_\_

10. **Vocabulary Word:** ambassador: the top person sent by a government to represent it in another country.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_