

# Dolley Saves President Washington | Lesson Plan

How is Dolley Madison an important part of American history?

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Students will understand the historical significance of First Lady Dolley Madison and her courageous act of saving George Washington's portrait during the War of 1812.

## Learning Objectives:

- Identify the main characters and setting in *Otto's Tales: Dolley Saves President Washington*.
- Recognize the sequence of events in the story.
- Learn about Dolley Madison and her courageous act of saving George Washington's portrait during the War of 1812.
- Explain the concept of bravery and discuss its importance.
- Identify key vocabulary related to *Otto's Tales: Dolley Saves President Washington*.

## Key Vocabulary:

- **Dolley Madison:** The wife of James Madison, the fourth President of the United States.
- **Documents:** Important papers and records of the government.
- **Portrait:** A painting, photograph, or other artistic representation of a person.
- **Spyglass:** A type of telescope, typically a small handheld one, used for magnifying distant objects.
- **Responsibility:** The willingness to fulfill one's duties and obligations with diligence and reliability.

**Educational Standards:** CCRA.R.1, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2, CCRA.L.6, CCRA.R.7

**Academic Subject Areas:** Life Lessons, American Values, Women of History

## What You'll Need

- Video: *Otto's Tales: Dolley Saves President Washington* (Click [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Otto's Tales: Dolley Saves President Washington* (Click [Here](#))

## Lesson Plan (45 mins.)

Warm-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Begin by asking students if they know who George Washington is and why he is important.
2. Introduce Dolley Madison and explain her role as the First Lady during the War of 1812.
3. Show a picture of the famous portrait of George Washington that Dolley saved to help students understand the historical context.
4. Use their responses to introduce the video *Otto's Tales: Dolley Saves President Washington*.



Watch and Complete: (25 mins.)

1. Show the video *Otto's Tales: Dolley Saves President Washington* for the students.
2. Pause at opportune moments in the video to ask questions and check for understanding of key vocabulary words and their meaning.
  - Encourage students to identify the main characters and the setting.
  - Ask students what they think bravery means and why it is important.
  - Connect Dolley Madison's story to the concept of bravery, emphasizing her courage in the face of danger.
  - How do you think Dolley Madison was able to stay calm and focused during a very difficult moment? Is there a time when you did the same?
  - Help the students make connections to times when they were brave. Have them come up with ways they can be brave in the future.
3. Allow students to complete the coloring page.
4. Students can then either dictate or write 1-2 sentences about how Dolley Madison demonstrated bravery and why her actions were important. (These can be collected as a formative assessment.)

Wrap-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Allow a few minutes for several students to share their thinking. Ask students to reflect on what they learned about Dolley Madison and bravery.
2. Ask students to retell the story in their own words to assess comprehension and encourage storytelling skills. Use guiding questions to assess recall and understanding of the story's themes, such as staying calm and brave even in difficult situations.

**Don't have time for the complete lesson? Quick Activity (15-20 mins.)**

After watching the video, distribute the coloring page and allow students to discuss their favorite character or part of the story.