

FAMOUS AMERICANS

Who are some famous Americans we should know?

Here is a list of some Americans who have worked to build our country.

William Bradford, b. 1590, England - In 1620, he led the Pilgrims to Plymouth Colony for religious freedom. As governor, he made peace with the Wampanoag Indians who lived where the Pilgrims settled in Massachusetts.

Benjamin Franklin, b. 1706, Boston, MA - writer who published *Poor Richard's Almanac* in which he gave advice, such as "Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." He invented the lightning rod, bifocals, the battery, the odometer, and the Franklin stove. He started the first public library and was a leading figure in the American Revolution and the Declaration of Independence.



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Benjamin Banneker, b. 1731, Maryland - son of free slaves, he taught himself math and astronomy. He helped survey the land for Washington, DC. He is known as America's first black scientist.

Noah Webster - was a teacher who wanted American children to learn from books written by Americans, not from England. So he wrote the first American spelling book, grammar book, and reader in 1773. Later he wrote the first American dictionary.

Thomas Jefferson, b. 1743, Virginia - a surveyor and a lawyer, he wrote most of the *Declaration of Independence*. He designed many buildings including Monticello, his home. He had many slaves but he thought slavery was cruel. In 1801, Jefferson became the third president of the United States.



Sojourner Truth
When she was a young girl, she was sold to a Dutch farmer in New York. She became a Quaker and a Christian. She was a powerful orator and a leading abolitionist.

Frederick Douglass
He became a leading abolitionist and a powerful orator. He was a writer and a speaker. He suffered from asthma and was often ill.

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Harriet Tubman, b. 1820, Maryland - She escaped slavery on the Underground Railroad, a secret way of helping slaves run away from the South. She became a "conductor" to help other slaves to freedom.





Susan B. Anthony, b. 1820, Massachusetts - a teacher who believed women should have the same rights as men, she was arrested for voting in the election of 1872. Worked to change the U.S. Constitution to include women as voting citizens. In 1920, the 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote.

Abraham Lincoln, elected 1860, the Gettysburg Address, freed the slaves

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Samuel Morse - In 1837, he invented the **telegraph**, a way to send and receive signals through a wire using a code of dots and dashes, which he called **Morse Code**.

Alexander Graham Bell, b. Scotland, 1847 - Moved to Boston in 1871 to teach deaf students and experiment with sounds. In 1876 he invented the first telephone.

Thomas Alva Edison, b. 1847, Ohio - He was known as the fastest telegraph operator because he was always making improvements. He invented an improved telegraph. In 1876 he opened a laboratory for making inventions in

Menlo Park, NJ. He was known as the **Wizard of Menlo Park**. In 1879 he invented electric light bulbs to replace gas lamps. Later, his electric generators made electric lights available to the public. He also invented an improved telephone, an improved typewriter, and a record player. Edison was quoted as saying "Genius is 1% inspiration, 99% perspiration."

Amelia Earhart, b. 1897, Kansas - In 1928 she was the first woman to fly as a passenger on a plane across the Atlantic. In 1932 she was the first woman to fly an airplane by herself across the Atlantic.



Cesar Chavez, b. 1927, Arizona - a migrant worker, he taught other migrants how to read and write. He formed a union to help farm workers get fair pay and be

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He became wealthy and donated millions of dollars to schools.

Robert Frost, b. 1874, California - He was a teacher who won four Pulitzer Prizes for his poetry. He read his poem "The Gift Outright" at the 1960 inauguration of President John F. Kennedy.

Helen Keller, b. 1880, Alabama - became blind and deaf at age 2. Taught to read by Anne Sullivan, she went on to college which was unusual for a deaf person and a woman at that time. Wrote *The Story of My Life* and gave many speeches about helping people with disabilities.



Thurgood Marshall, b. 1908, Maryland - African American lawyer who brought many cases of segregation before the **Supreme Court**. Later became the first black Supreme Court judge.

Rosa Parks, b. 1913 - lived in Montgomery, Alabama where segregation was the law. In 1955, she refused to give her seat on the bus to a white man so she was arrested. She was fined \$10 and sentenced to 30 days in jail.

Eleanor Roosevelt, b. 1882, New York - First lady of the United States from 1905 to 1961. She was a human rights activist where



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Martin Luther King, Jr. b. 1929, Atlanta, GA - He was a minister who believed in peaceful methods to change unfair laws. He helped start the Civil Rights Movement. In 1963 he gave a famous speech saying "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.

Neil Armstrong, b. 1930 - In 1969, he was the first astronaut to walk on the moon.