



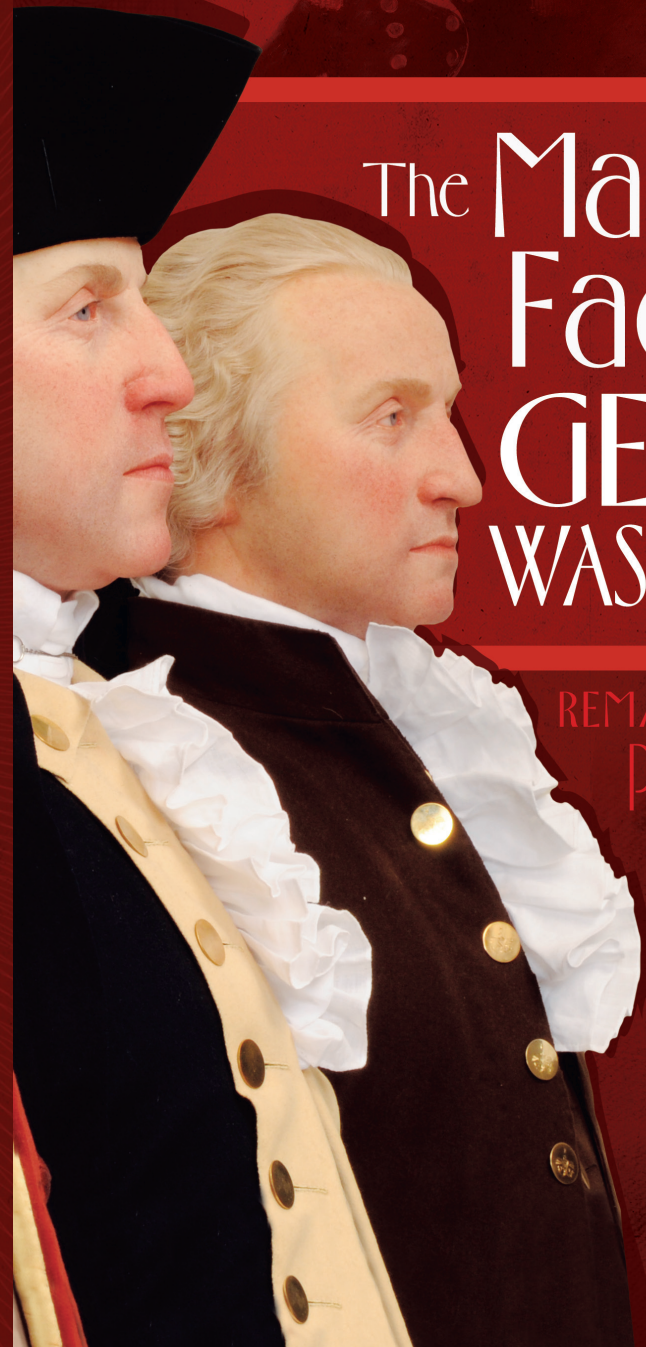
**CARLA KILLOUGH  
MCCLAFFERTY**

writes books that make historical people and events come to life. Basing her research on primary source documents, she chronicles true

stories that are accurate, understandable, and relevant to today's readers. Her work has earned awards and honors from many groups, including the American Library Association. Ms. McClafferty lives in North Little Rock, Arkansas.

# The Many Faces of GEORGE WASHINGTON

REMAKING A  
PRESIDENTIAL ICON



Carla Killough McClafferty

To invite Carla Killough McClafferty to speak at your school, workshop, or conference, contact the author through her website: [www.carlamcclafferty.com](http://www.carlamcclafferty.com).

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“No picture accurately resembled him in the minute traits of his person . . . there was an expression of his face that no painter had succeeded in taking.”

— *The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction*, 1827.

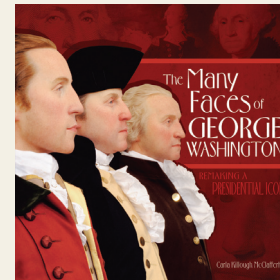
George Washington's face has been painted, printed, and engraved more than a billion times since his birth in 1732. And yet even in his lifetime, no picture seemed to capture the likeness of the man who is now the most iconic of all our presidents. Worse still, people today often see this founding father as the “old and grumpy” Washington on the dollar bill.

In 2005 a team of historians, scientists, and artisans at Mount Vernon set out to change the image of our first president. They studied paintings and sculptures, pored over Washington's letters to his tailors, noted other people's comments about his appearance, and even closely examined the many sets of dentures that had been created for Washington. Researchers tapped into skills as diverse as eighteenth-century leatherworking and cutting-edge computer programming to assemble truer likenesses. Their painstaking research and exacting processes helped create three full-body representations of Washington as he was at key moments in his life. And all along the way, the team gained new insight into a man who was anything but “old and grumpy.” Join award-winning author Carla Killough McClafferty as she unveils the figures of the three Georges and rediscovers the man who became the face of a new nation.

## Topics for Discussion:

1. Look at the image of George Washington on the one dollar bill and write down a description of the man you see depicted there. After you read the book, look back at your description. Did your impressions of George Washington change? Why or why not?
2. Why did Mount Vernon want to create the three life-sized figures of George Washington? Why did they choose the ages of 19, 45, and 57?
3. What piece of art was considered to be the best likeness of Washington by his family? Why?
4. Find out more about the statue of Washington in the Virginia State Capitol. What is the symbolism of some of the objects on the statue?
5. Describe the technology and the process used to create the three statues of George Washington. What challenges did the artists and scientists face? How did they overcome these challenges?
6. How did the death of his father change George Washington's life?
7. What did George Washington study with his private tutors? How was Washington's education different than your education today? How was it similar?
8. Washington copied *Rules of Civility* when he was a teen. Find a list of all of these rules and chart how many of these rules still apply, and which ones are outdated. Make a list of *Rules of Civility* for today's teens.
9. What did George Washington REALLY do with a hatchet? Are there other stories or legends about George Washington that are not true?

10. What sort of things did George Washington write about in his journal? How did his journal help others and lead to new opportunities? Try creating your own journal entry and share it with others.
11. What is Fort Mifflin? Why did Washington build it and what happened there that made his name well-known on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean? What happened to it after the battle? Who later bought this property?
12. How did Washington's dental health influence the creation of the figures? How do Washington's dentures differ from modern dentures?
13. What factors were considered when the artists considered the coloring of George Washington? How did they choose the hair color? The eye color?
14. What sort of research did the tailor do while creating the statues? How about the craftsman who made the shoes and boots?
15. From the letter George Washington wrote to his wife Martha on June 18, 1775, how do you think he felt about her?
16. How did the people in New York react when they heard the Declaration of Independence read aloud? What does the Declaration of Independence mean to you today?
17. Describe some of the qualities that George Washington possessed as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army that helped him gain the respect of his soldiers. What other qualities or traits made George Washington a good leader?
18. What innovations did Washington do with his farms? How have those innovations impacted farming today?
19. Why was the constitution necessary? Who was the first person to sign the Constitution?
20. After reading *The Many Faces of George Washington: Remaking a Presidential Icon*, what did you learn about George Washington that surprised you?



### The Many Faces of George Washington Remaking a Presidential Icon

Carla Killough McClafferty  
*A Junior Library Guild Selection*

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