## Lecture 4. First great Americans.

**Plan:**

1. **First discoverers of America: Christopher Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci.**
2. **Presidents: George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, George Bush and modern times Presidents.**

Read the following proper nouns correctly.

Christopher Columbus ['kristǝfə kə'lambǝs] - Христофор Колумб

Santa Maria ['sæntə mə'raiǝ] - Святая мария

Bahama Islands [bo'ha:mǝ 'ailǝndz] - Багамские острова

East Indies [ist 'Indiz] - OCT-Индия

San Salvador [sæn'sælvǝdǝ:] - Сан Сальвадор

Amerigo Vespucci [əmə'rigou vɛspˈuːtʃi] - Америго Веспучи

Venezuela [,venǝ'zwi:lǝ] - Beнeсузла

Brazil [brǝ'zıl] - бразилия

**1. First discoverers of America**

Christopher Columbus (1451-1506)

Christopher Columbus, as well as some learned men of his time, had decided that the eastern coast of Asia could be reached by sailing westwards across the Atlantic. In those far-away lands men thought they should find honor, wealth and fame.

Such an enterprise would require the equipment of vessels at much expense. Colum bus had neither money nor influence. Isabella, Queen of Spain, helped Columbus in carrying out his plans. Before sunrise, August 3, 1492, his little fleet including three small vessels, the Santa Maria, headed by Columbus, the Nina and the Pinta with one hundred and twenty men and provisions for a year sailed out of the port Palos.

At last, after a voyage of ten weeks, land was discovered on October 12, 1492. Columbus had discovered one of the Bahama Islands, which he called San Salvador. He didn't find the cities of Asia as he had expected, but he had no doubt that he was in the East Indies, and therefore called the red-skinned natives Indians.

Having known of Columbus's discovery, people expected to get all kinds of wealth in the New World. But they found no silks, no precious stones, no gold. They reproached Columbus, and the Court of Spain censured him. His last days were spent in disappointment and neglect. Heart-broken Columbus died ignorant of the greatness of his own discovery.

Amerigo Vespucci (1454-1512)

Amerigo Vespucci, an Italian navigator from Florence, explored the coast of South America in 1497. He skirted the coast of Venezuela and made several voyages to Brazil. Vespucci explored its coasts as far as the mouth of the La Plata River. On returning home he wrote interesting description of what he had seen (see ch. 1 of this book).

His impressions of the American continent were published in 1504, and this was the first printed account of the mainland of the New World. In his book Amerigo Vespucci proved that the land discovered by Columbus was not India but the new continent, which constituted the fourth part of the world, in addition to Europe, Asia and Africa. The New World was decided to name after him - America, the land of Amerigo. At first the name America was applied to Brazil, later to South America, and still later to the whole of the New World.

Check your comprehension.

1. How could Columbus, to his point of view, reach India?

2. Why did Columbus call the native people Indians?

3. What part of the American continent did Amerigo Vespucci explore?

**2.Presidents: George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, George Bush and modern times Presidents.**

George Washington(1732-1799)

The first President of the United States of America is affectionately honored as "the father of his country". Two centuries ago, George Washington, presented his Farewell Address to the American people. In it he expressed his concerns for, and advice to the young country. He suggested rules by which America as a nation among nations should conduct her affairs.

George Washington was born on Feb. 22, 1732 in Westmoreland County, Virginia. George's father died when the boy was 11 years old. He had very little formal schooling, but taught himself to be an expert woodsman, surveyor (a person who determines the boundaries and area of tracts of land), and mapmaker. Washington grew to be over 6 feet tall, this was very rare in colonial times.

At the age of 20 Washington was appointed adjutant in the Virginia militia. For the next three years, he fought in the wars against the French and Indians, and after many heroic battles he became a colonel and the leader of Virginia's militia.

In order to pay for the expensive French and Indian War, the British taxed the Colonists (the Stamp Tax), angering them. In Boston, the Colonists revolted, throwing precious tea into Boston Harbour (the Boston Tea Party). The tension was increasing. In 1775, Washington was chosen as the Commander in Chief of the Colonial Army. In 1776, the Colonists declared their independence from the British. General Washington led and encouraged his inexperienced patriot troops who were poorly trained, barely paid and badly equipped against the British forces for eight years until the colonies won their independence. Due to the brilliant planning of George Washington, the British were defeated in 1781 after many bloody battles. The Americans were now independent of the British.

1787, Washington presided over the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, during which the U.S. Constitution was written.

Washington was unanimously elected the first President of the United States of America in 1789 and again in 1792. He refused a third Presidential term, saying in his farewell speech that a longer rule would give one man too much power. During Washington's presidency, the Bill of Rights, guaranteeing the rights of the American people, was adopted in 1791.

After his death, the nation's capital was moved from Philadelphia to a location on the border of Virginia and Maryland near Washington's home, and was named Washington, District of Columbia in his honor.

Check your comprehension.

1. When was George Washington born?

2. How did he get education?

3. How many times was Washington elected President?

4. Why did he refuse to be elected for the third term?

ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1809-1862)

Of all the presidents in the history of the United States, Abraham Lincoln is probably the one that Americans remember the best and with the deepest affection. Abraham Lincoln is the most famous example of the "American dream": he rose from the lowest to the highest position. He was born in 1809 in a small farm in Kentucky, and spent the first seven years of his life there. Though Abe was young he was big and strong. At eight years of age an axe was put into his hands and he worked with the rest of his family at clearing the land of the trees.

In his entire life Abraham was only able to go to school for a total of one year. This lack of education only made him hungry for more knowledge. His mother influenced him in his quest for learning. Although she was completely uneducated and couldn't read and write, she encouraged her children to study by themselves.

In 1830 Abraham left his father's farm and went to Springfield, Illinois. There he became a clerk in a store and worked hard to improve his education. His power of speech helped him enter a new arena, that of politics and law. In 1834 Abraham was elected into the House of Representatives and began studying to become a lawyer.

Slavery was then becoming a burning question in American politics. Many people in the Northern states wanted to abolish it. Lincoln joined the Republicans, a new political party that was opposed to slavery. The Republicans nominated him for the U.S. Senate in 1858.

The Southern states opposed the abolition because the prosperity of the South was based on cotton-growing, and only Negroes worked there. The Southerners threatened that if the North didn't stop its fight against slavery, the Southern states would leave the Union. They wanted to form an independent "Confederacy".

In 1860 Lincoln was elected President of the U.S.A. In 1861 seven states left the Union and formed the confederacy. A. Lincoln was strongly against slavery and even more strongly against the break-up of the Union. But the North and South divided and in 1862 the Civil War began. At first the Southerners, headed by General Robert Lee, won some victories. But Lincoln never lost courage or faith in the righteousness of his cause. The bloody Battle of Gettysburg in Pennsylvania was the largest battle ever fought on American soil. Soon the South surrendered and the Civil War ended on April 9, 1865. In five days, on April 14 President Lincoln was shot by an unsuccessful actor who supported Confederacy. People admire A. Lincoln because he tried to preserve the nation. He is a symbol of American democracy.

Check your comprehension.

1. What is Abraham Lincoln noted for?

2. What kind of education did he get?

3. When was Lincoln elected president of the U.S.A.?

4. How long did the Civil War last?

FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT (1882-1945)

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was born in Hyde Park, N. Y., on Jan. 30, 1882. A Harvard graduate, he attended Columbia Law School and was admitted to the New York bar. In 1910, he was elected to the New York State Senate as a Democrat. Reelected in 1912, he was appointed assistant secretary of the navy the next year. In 1920, his radiant personality and his war service resulted in his nomination for vice president. Later he returned to law practice in New York. In Aug. 1921, Roosevelt was stricken with infantile paralysis while on vacation at Campobello, New Brunswick. After a long and gallant fight, he recovered partial use of his legs. In 1924 and 1928, he led the fight at the Democratic national conventions for the nomination of Governor Alfred E. Smith of New York. In 1928 Roosevelt himself was elected governor of New York, he was reelected in 1930.

In 1932, Roosevelt received the Democratic nomination for president and immediately launched a campaign that brought new spirit to a weary and discouraged nation. He won. His first term was characterized by an unfolding of the New Deal program, with greater benefits for labor, the farmers, and the unemployed. At an early stage, Roosevelt became aware of the menace to world peace posed by totalitarian fascism, and from 1937 on he tried to focus public attention on the trend of events in Europe and Asia. As a result, he was widely denounced as a warmonger. He was reelected in 1936 and the gathering international crisis prompted him to run for an unprecedented third term in 1940. And again he defeated his opponent.

Roosevelt's program to bring maximum aid to Britain and, after June 1941, to Russia was opposed, until the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor restored national unity. During the war, Roosevelt shelved the New Deal in the interests of conciliating the business community, both in order to get full production during the war and to prepare the way for a united acceptance of the peace settlements after the war. A series of conferences with Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin laid down the basis for the postwar world. In 1944 he was elected President to a fourth term.

On April 12, 1945, Roosevelt died of a cerebral hemorrhage at Warm Springs, Georgia, shortly after his return from the Yalta Conference. His wife, Eleanor Roosevelt, was a woman of great ability who made significant contributions to her husband's policies.

Check your comprehension.

1. When was Franklin Roosevelt born?

2. What education did he get?

3. What political party did he represent?

JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY (1917-1963)

John Fitzgerald Kennedy was born in Brookline, Massachusetts, on May 29, 1917. His father, Joseph P. Kennedy, was ambassador to Great Britain from 1937 to 1940.

Kennedy graduated from Harvard University in 1940 and joined the navy the next year. He became skipper of a boat that was sunk in the Pacific by a Japanese destroyer. Although given up for lost, he swam to a safe island, towing an injured enlisted man. After recovering from a war aggravated spinal injury, Kennedy entered politics in 1946 and was elected to Congress.

Kennedy was married on Sept. 12, 1953, to Jacqueline Lee Bouvier, by whom he had three children: Caroline, John Fitzgerald, Junior (died in a 1999 plane crash), and Patrick Bouvier (died in infancy).

In 1957 Kennedy won the Pulitzer Prize for a book he had written earlier, "Profiles in Courage". After strenuous primary battles, Kennedy won the Democratic presidential nomination on the first ballot at the 1960 Los Angeles convention and became the first Roman Catholic president.

Kennedy brought to the White House the dynamic idea of a "New Frontier" approach in dealing with problems at home, abroad, and in the dimensions of space. Out of his leadership in his first few months in office came the 10-year Alliance for Progress to aid Latin America, the Peace Corps, and accelerated programs that brought the first Americans into orbit in the race in space.

Failure of the U.S. -supported Cuban invasion in April 1961 led to the establishment of the Communist-backed Castro regime, only 90 miles from United States soil. When it became known that Soviet offensive missiles were being installed in Cuba in 1962, Kennedy ordered a naval "quarantine" of the island and moved troops into position to eliminate this threat to U.S. security. The world seemed on the brink of a nuclear war until Soviet premier Khrushchev ordered the removal of the missiles. A sudden "thaw," in the cold war came with the agreement with the Soviet Union on a limited test-ban treaty signed in Moscow on Aug. 6, 1963.

In his domestic policies, Kennedy's proposals for medical care for the aged and aid to education were defeated, but on minimum wage, trade legislation, and other measures he won important victories. As his third year in office drew to a close, he also recommended a tax cut to support the economy. Both measures were pending in Congress when Kennedy, looking forward to a second term, journeyed to Texas for a series of speeches.

While riding in an automobile procession in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, he was shot to death by an assassin firing from an upper floor of a building. The alleged assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, was killed two days later in the Dallas city jail by Jack Ruby, owner of a strip-tease club. At 46 years of age, Kennedy became the fourth president to be assassinated and the eighth to die in office.

Check your comprehension.

1. Where was John Kennedy born?

2. What education did he J. Kennedy get?

3. When was he elected President?

GEORGE BUSH (born in 1946)

George W. Bush is the 43rd President of the United States. He was sworn into office on January 20, 2001, reelected on November 2, 2004, and sworn in for a second term on January 20, 2005. Prior to his Presidency, President Bush served for 6 years as the 46t Governor of the State of Texas. As a compassionate conservative he pursued public policy based on the principles of limited government, personal responsibility, strong families, and local control.

President Bush was born on July 6, 1946, in New Haven, Connecticut, and grew up in Midland and Houston, Texas. He received a bachelor's degree in history from Yale University in 1968, and then served as an F-102 fighter pilot in the Texas Air National Guard. President Bush received a Master of Business Administration from Harvard Business School in 1975. Following graduation, he moved back to Midland and began a career in the energy business. On November 8, 1994, President Bush was elected Governor of Texas.

Since becoming President of the United States in 2001, President Bush has worked with the Congress to create an owner ship society and build a future of security, prosperity, and opportunity for all Americans. He signed into law tax relief that helps workers keep more of their hard-earned money, as well as the most comprehensive education reforms in a generation. The reforms provide a new era of accountability, flexibility, local control, and more choices for parents, affirming our Nation's fundamental belief in the promise of every child. President Bush has also worked to improve healthcare and modernize Medicare, providing the first-ever prescription drug benefit for seniors; increase homeownership, especially among minorities; conserve our environment; and increase military strength, pay, and benefits.

On the morning of September 11, 2001, terrorists attacked the Nation. Since then, President Bush has taken unprecedented steps to protect their homeland and create a world free from terror. The President is confident that by helping build free and prosperous societies, the Nation and its friends and allies will succeed in making America more secure and the world more peaceful.

President Bush is married to Laura Welch Bush, a former teacher and librarian, and they have twin daughters, Barbara and Jenna. The Bush family also includes two dogs, Barney and Miss Beazley, and a cat, Willie.

Check your comprehension.

1. When and where was George Bush born?

2. What education did future President get?

3. When was G. Bush elected President?

Barack Obama

Barack Hussein Obama II, born August 4, 1961, Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S., 44th president of the United States (2009–17) and the first African American to hold the office.

When Barack Obama was elected president in 2008, he became the first African American to hold the office. The framers of the Constitution always hoped that our leadership would not be limited to Americans of wealth or family connections. Subject to the prejudices of their time—many of them owned slaves—most would not have foreseen an African American president.

Obama left office on January 20, 2017 with a 60% approval rating. He currently resides in Washington DC. Since then, his presidency has been positively assessed by historians and the general public. He also had a high global approval rating, and the reputation of the United States changed dramatically during his presidency.

**Donald John Trump**

Donald John Trump is an American politician, media personality, and businessman who served as the 45th president of the United States from 2017 to 2021.

Donald John Trump was born in Queens, New York, on June 14, 1946. His father, Fred Trump, was a highly successful real estate developer. The elder Trump was of German heritage, and his wife, Mary McLeod, of Scottish background. Their son Donald was the second youngest of five children. He was educated at the New York Military Academy and the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania. Even before he graduated he was drawn to real estate and construction, and as a young man he took over his father’s firm, renaming it the Trump Organization.

Trump ordered a travel ban on citizens from several Muslim-majority countries, diverted military funding towards building a wall on the U.S.–Mexico border, and implemented a policy of family separations for apprehended migrants. He signed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, which cut taxes for individuals and businesses and rescinded the individual health insurance mandate penalty of the Affordable Care Act. He appointed 54 federal appellate judges and three United States Supreme Court justices.

Trump lost the 2020 United States presidential election to Joe Biden.

**Joe Biden**

Joe Biden was born November 20, 1942 in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

On January 20, 2021, Joe Biden took the oath on the Bible and took office as the 46th head of state, becoming at 78 years old the oldest U.S. president in the history of the country and the first U.S. president from Delaware.

The oath was taken by Chief Justice John Roberts. After that, Biden delivered a 20-minute speech dedicated to the unification of the country.

In his first two days as president, Biden signed 17 executive orders, more than most past presidents did in their first 100 days. By the third day of his presidency, Joe Biden canceled a number of Donald Trump's decrees: he stopped the withdrawal from the WHO and the Paris climate agreement, the construction of a wall on the border with Mexico, allowed citizens from a number of Muslim and African countries to enter the United States, and canceled the construction of the Keystone XL oil pipeline at the request of environmentalists , the newly elected president also made it mandatory to wear medical masks in state institutions and when crossing states. On August 31, 2021, he withdrew American troops from Afghanistan.