John Quincy Adams

- Born: July 11, 1767, in Braintree, Massachusetts
- Died: February 23, 1848
- Family: Married to Louisa Catherine Johnson Adams; had four children
- Good to know:
  - Was the first son of a president (John Adams) to become president himself
  - After serving one term as president, was elected to the House of Representatives (just like his father)
  - Served as Massachusetts senator, US secretary of state, and a diplomat in many European countries
  - Enjoyed summertime swims in the Potomac River
  - As president, wanted to build national highways, canals, weather stations, and a national university
- Nickname: Old Man Eloquent

Did you know?
- In 1841, John Quincy Adams publicly showed his opposition to slavery by successfully defending the Amistad slaves before the US Supreme Court. This group of black Africans was captured by white Spaniards. However, on their way to Cuba the slaves revolted and took possession of the ship they were on, La Amistad.

Andrew Jackson

- Born: March 15, 1767, exact location unknown
- Died: June 8, 1845
- Family: Married to Rachel Donelson Robards Jackson
- Good to know:
  - Fiercely protective of his personal honor; killed a man in a duel when he thought the man had said something bad about Jackson's wife.
  - The first man elected from Tennessee to the US House of Representatives; served briefly in the US Senate
  - One of the founders of the city of Memphis
  - Served as the provisional governor of Florida after Spain ceded the territory to the United States
  - Won a greater percentage of the popular vote than any president elected before him
- Nicknames: Old Hickory, King Andrew I

Did you know?
- In the War of 1812, Jackson rallied troops to defeat the British at the Battle of New Orleans. He became a national hero.
Martin Van Buren

- Did you know? Martin Van Buren was the first US president not of British or Irish descent (his parents were Dutch), the first president born a United States citizen, and the first president from New York State.

- Name: The Little Magician
- Born: December 5, 1782, in Kinderhook, New York
- Died: July 24, 1862
- Family: Married to Hannah Hoes Van Buren; had four children
- Good to know: Elected to the US Senate from New York in 1821. Appointed secretary of state by President Andrew Jackson, who considered Van Buren someone he could trust. Elected vice president when Jackson was reelected in 1832. Opposed the expansion of slavery; blocked the annexation of Texas because it would increase slave-holding territory and might bring war with Mexico. Grew up speaking Dutch.
- Nickname: The Little Magician

William Henry Harrison

- Did you know? Harrison's wife, Anna, did not accompany him to Washington, DC, because she was too ill to travel. The Harrisons' daughter-in-law served as White House hostess.

- Name: Tippecanoe
- Born: February 9, 1773, at Berkeley Plantation, Charles City County, Virginia
- Died: April 4, 1841
- Family: Married to Anna Symmes Harrison; had ten children
- Good to know: In 1801, became the first governor of the Indiana Territory. Famously defeated Native American Chieftain Tecumseh at the Battle of the Thames to end threats to settlers. Served as both a congressman and US senator from Ohio. His father was a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Caught a cold during his inauguration. It developed into pneumonia. Harrison died a month later.
- Nickname: Tippecanoe
John Tyler

10th US President • 1841-1845

Born: November 2, 1795, in Pineville, North Carolina
Died: June 15, 1849
Family: Sarah Childress Polk

Good to know:
- One of the youngest people elected to serve in the US House of Representatives; served seven consecutive terms
- Became speaker of the House; was only absent from his position once
- Elected governor of Tennessee in 1839
- Oversaw the annexation of Texas; settled a dispute with England to acquire the Oregon Territory; and acquired land forming present-day Arizona, New Mexico, California, Nevada, Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming as a result of war with Mexico
- First president not to seek reelection

Nicknames:
- Napoleon of the Stump
- Young Hickory

Did you know?
- Some historians consider Polk to be the most successful US president (second only to George Washington) because he completed so many of the things he said he would do.

James K. Polk

11th US President • 1845-1849

Born: March 29, 1790, at Greenway Estate, Charles City County, Virginia
Died: January 18, 1862
Family: Letitia Christian Tyler (died during presidency); had eight children. Married Julia Gardiner Tyler; had seven children

Good to know:
- Served in the House of Representatives, 1816–1821
- Fought in Congress for a strict interpretation of the US Constitution on all matters
- Served as governor of Tennessee (1825–1827); then returned to Washington, DC, as a US senator
- First vice president to become president due to the death of his predecessor
- First president to face an impeachment resolution from Congress

Nickname:
- His Accidency

Did you know?
- Historians consider John Tyler to be the person who established the vice president’s right to assume the presidency upon the death of a sitting president.
Zachary Taylor

12th US President • 1849–1850

Born: November 2, 1784, near Duke's Island, Virginia
Died: July 9, 1850
Family: Margaret Mackall Smith Taylor; had six children
Good to know:
- The son of a Revolutionary War officer
- Raised on the Kentucky frontier and was appointed to the US Army as a first lieutenant in 1808
- Successfully defended Fort Harrison in the War of 1812
- Led 4,000 US troops into Mexico in 1846 and then eventually defeated Mexican General Santa Anna’s 20,000 troops with an army of 5,000
- Served as governor of Louisiana from 1814 to 1818
- Died of illness after a ceremony at the Washington Monument

Nickname: Old Rough and Ready

Did you know?
- Though he himself owned more than 100 slaves, Zachary Taylor did not put up with southern slave states’ talk of secession in the decade before the Civil War. He said secession would be an act of rebellion, and he would personally lead a Union army into the South to preserve the Union.

Millard Fillmore

13th US President • 1850–1853

Born: January 7, 1800, in Locke, New York
Died: March 8, 1874
Family: Abigail Powers Fillmore (died less than a month after her husband left office); had two children.
Good to know:
- Studied and practiced law for ten years before joining Congress
- Became the first chancellor of the University of Buffalo (New York)
- The second vice president to become president upon the death of his predecessor (Zachary Taylor)
- Oversaw the Compromise of 1850 between pro-slavery and anti-slavery states
- Was offered an honorary degree by Oxford University in England. Turned it down, saying he had done nothing to deserve it

Nickname: The American Louis Philippe

Did you know?
- President Fillmore sent US Navy Commodore Matthew C. Perry on his fleet’s voyage to the Far East. This voyage opened US trade with Japan.
Franklin Pierce

Did you know?

Since he was not married, Buchanan’s niece, Harriet Lane, directed social affairs at the White House, where a near-constant schedule of receptions and parties took place. During a party for the prince of Wales, Buchanan had to sleep in a hallway to provide rooms for all the guests.

Born: November 23, 1804, in Hillsboro, New Hampshire
Died: October 8, 1869
Family: Jane Means Appleton Pierce; had three children
Good to know:

• Elected to the US House of Representatives, 1833
• Served two terms in Congress before becoming a US senator at age 32—the youngest at the time
• Opened the Nebraska and Kansas territories to settlement, allowing settlers to determine whether the areas would permit slavery
• Oversaw establishment of trade with Japan
• Completed the Gadsden Purchase, which established the US boundary with Mexico
 nickname: Young Hickory of the Granite Hills

James Buchanan

Did you know?

Buchanan’s niece, Harriet Lane, directed social affairs at the White House, where a near-constant schedule of receptions and parties took place. During a party for the prince of Wales, Buchanan had to sleep in a hallway to provide rooms for all the guests.

Born: April 23, 1791, in Stony Batter, near Mercersburg, Pennsylvania
Died: June 1, 1868
Family: Never married
Good to know:

• Elected five times to the US House of Representatives
• Served as minister to Russia, a US senator, secretary of state, and minister to Great Britain
• Was selected to represent the Democratic Party in the 1856 election because he had been out of the country during much of the previous few years when pro-slavery and anti-slavery forces in Congress were bitterly divided
• Refused to declare war on South Carolina when Confederate guns opened fire on a Union vessel trying to resupply Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. Buchanan wanted to give President-Elect Abraham Lincoln a chance to maintain peace.
• Nickname: Old Buck

14th US President • 1853–1857

15th US President • 1857–1861