

presidents of the *United States of America*

"I helped the
Allies win World
War II and served
as the 34th
President of the
United States."



Dwight D. Eisenhower



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Become a Presidential Historian by Solving This Puzzle

In this book, you'll learn all sorts of facts about Dwight D. Eisenhower's amazing life and accomplishments. But there's still one last thing we need to know about him.

President Eisenhower had a dog as a pet. We need your help to find out what her name was. Your task is to help us uncover the answer! Hidden in the text are bolded letters. Read this book carefully to find them, and fill the letters into the blanks below in the order they appear.

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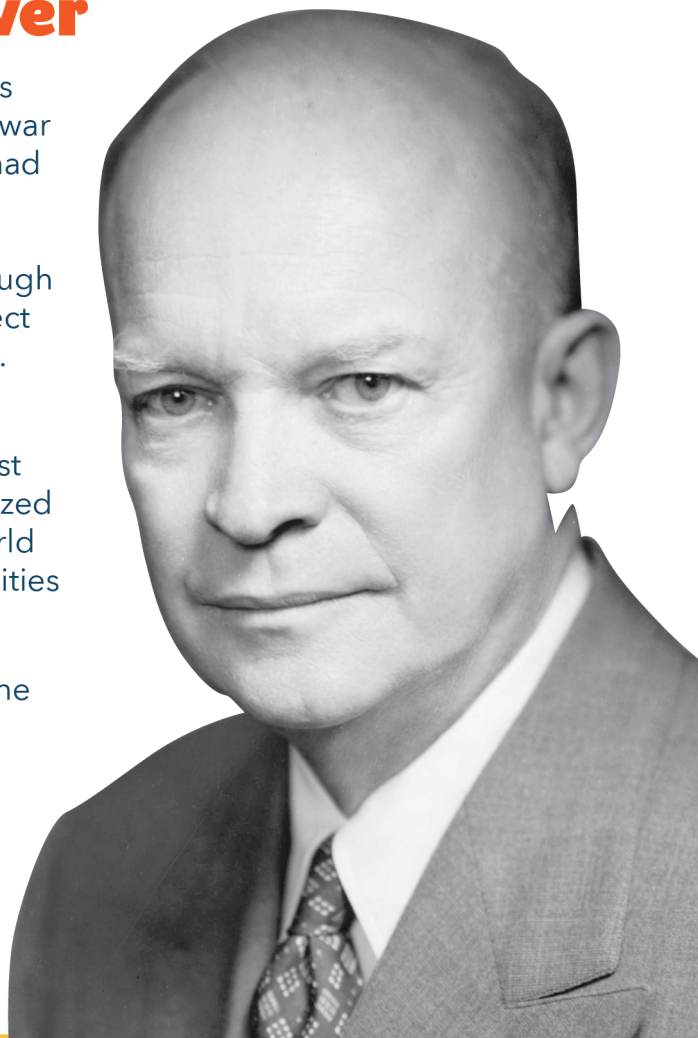
Once you've solved this puzzle, you'll be a true PragerU Kids presidential historian!

Meet Dwight D. Eisenhower

The **Cold War** was a scary time. America had a dangerous enemy—**communism**—and there was always the fear that war could break out at any moment. Even worse, both sides had fearsome **nuclear weapons** that could destroy all of humanity. In the 1950s, the American people wanted someone with experience and wisdom to lead them through this terrifying period. Thankfully, they had someone perfect for the job: the heroic general of **World War II**, Dwight D. Eisenhower.

During that war, Eisenhower led America to victory against the **fascist** government of **Nazi Germany**. He had organized Operation Overlord—the largest seaborne invasion in world history. He had demonstrated great leadership skills—abilities that Americans wanted in a president.

While Eisenhower rose to fame in wartime, as president, he worked hard to keep America at peace. He masterfully managed several crises during his time in the White House. He helped to keep the Cold War from breaking out into a hot war, and he helped ensure that America remained the technological leader of the world. Many Americans celebrate his presidency as a time of peace and prosperity.



Young Ike

Dwight David Eisenhower was born on October 14, 1890, in Denison, Texas. He was the third of David and Ida Eisenhower's seven children—all boys. **H**is parents initially named him David Dwight Eisenhower, but when this caused confusion (his father was also named David), they began calling him by his middle name, Dwight. They also gave him the nickname "Little Ike."

Ike's father, David, was a mechanic, and their family had little money. Young Ike, however, was an active boy: when he wasn't doing chores, he was hunting, fishing, and playing football.

After graduating high school in 1909, Ike was admitted to the **United States Military Academy** at West Point, New York. He was an average student and, upon graduation, was commissioned a Second Lieutenant.



Interesting Facts

- He is the last general (as of 2023) to serve as president.
- He was a member of the Republican Party.
- He signed a law in 1956 officially declaring "In God We Trust" as the nation's motto.
- He was the first president to preside over all 50 states (with the addition of Alaska and Hawaii to the Union in 1959).
- He was the first president to travel by jet aircraft.
- He was the first president to appear on colored television.
- He was the first president to win an Emmy Award.
- In his youth, he loved playing football and baseball. He was also a master poker player. In his later years, he relaxed by playing golf.
- He has been honored on the one-dollar coin and with a national memorial in Washington, D.C.

Upper: Young Ike and his brothers
Lower: Young Ike with his high school football team

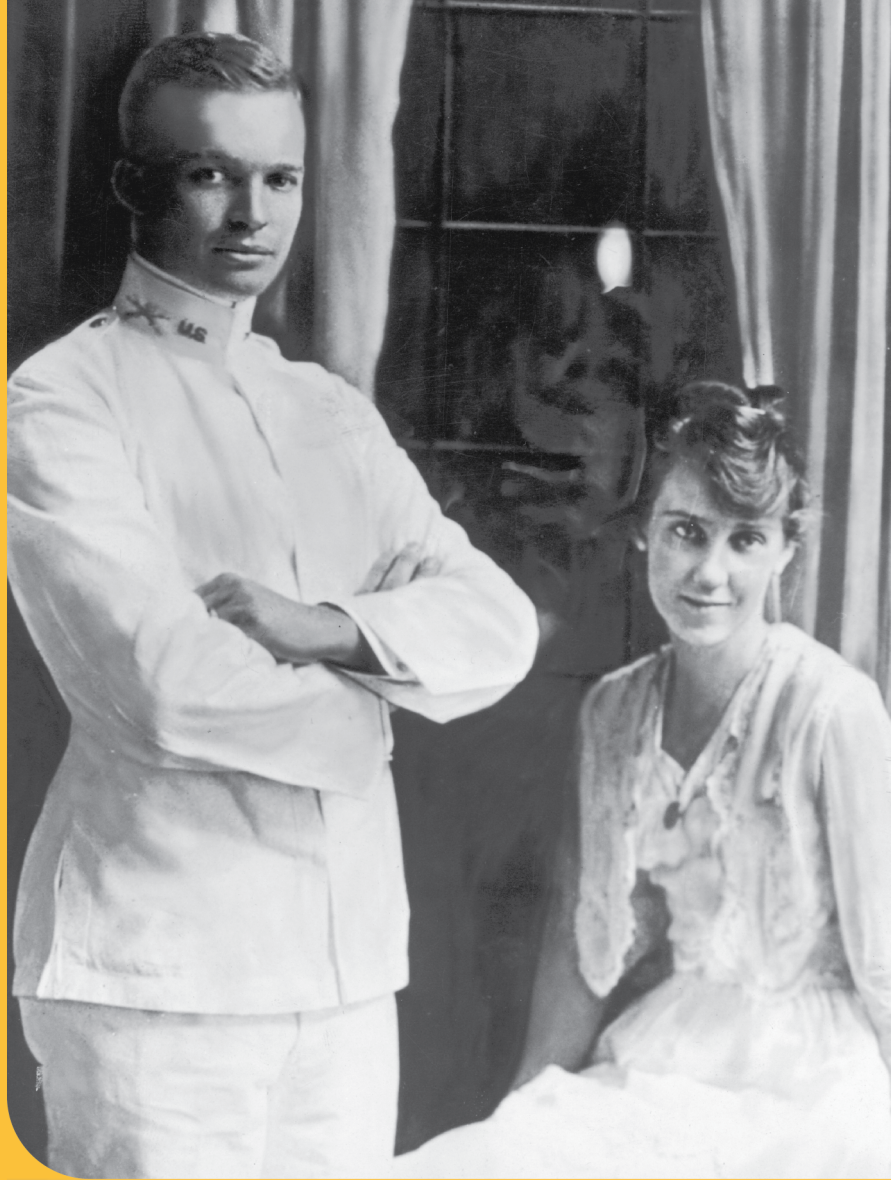
Early Career

Life in the military took Eisenhower from station to station across the country. While at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas, he met a young woman named Mamie Doud. They fell in love and married in 1916. He and Mamie eventually had two sons, Doud and John. Tragically, Doud died of scarlet fever in 1921 at the age of three.

When America entered World War I in 1917, Eisenhower wanted to be close to the action in Europe like many of his fellow soldiers. He was disappointed, however, when he was assigned to stay in the United States training tank crews.

After the war, Eisenhower worked as an aide to several top Army leaders: Fox Conner, John J. Pershing, Douglas MacArthur, and George C. Marshall. He also studied at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Unlike at West Point, Eisenhower did very well and even graduated first in his class in 1926 out of 245 officers. During this time, Eisenhower mastered military history and strategy by reading classic works, such as Carl von Clausewitz's *On War*. This knowledge would serve him and the country well in the future.

While serving under General MacArthur in the 1930s, Eisenhower was stationed in the Philippines, where he helped train the Filipino army. By this time, he had attained the rank of colonel.



Quote

"The proudest human that walks the earth is a free American citizen."
- May 1948

World War II

After World War II broke out in Europe in 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt began preparing America for the possibility of entering the war. Eisenhower did his part by leading training exercises in Louisiana. He impressed Army leaders with his talent for planning and strategy and was promoted to brigadier general.

After America entered the war in 1941, Eisenhower worked for Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall as a war planner. He won General Marshall's trust and was given several important assignments, such as planning the invasions of North Africa, Sicily, and Italy.

Eisenhower's successes caught the eye of President Roosevelt. The President promoted him as Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces in Europe. He even chose Eisenhower for the most important assignment of them all: Operation Overlord, also known as D-Day.



D-Day

Since 1939, the Nazi government, under German dictator Adolf Hitler, had taken over much of Europe, destroying cities and murdering millions of people. The Soviet Union, led by communist dictator Joseph Stalin, was stuck doing most of the fighting against the Nazis. Stalin knew, however, that the Nazis couldn't be defeated unless the Americans joined in. By 1944, the United States was ready to take the Nazis head-on.

Eisenhower, now a four-star general, organized the critical invasion, which would take place on the beaches of Normandy, France. He knew how big this responsibility was and cared deeply about the men he was sending to battle. Just before the invasion, named **D-Day**, he spoke to the soldiers and said, "You are about to embark upon the Great Crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you."

On June 6, 1944, the largest invasion in human history commenced, combining land, air, and sea forces from America, Britain, and Canada. One hundred fifty-six thousand troops—supported by almost 7,000 vessels and 11,000 aircraft—began an all-out assault on Hitler's forces in France.

The invasion was very complicated and had to be carefully planned by Eisenhower. He had even faked a potential invasion of another region in France, Pas-de-Calais, to throw the Nazis off. Eisenhower had a speech prepared in case the invasion failed, in which he would take full responsibility.

Thankfully, he never had to give that speech. Despite the fierce German onslaught, the Allies triumphed, and Hitler's grip on Europe began to crumble. By the time the Nazis surrendered in May 1945, General Eisenhower was a **five-star general** and an international hero.



Quote

"History does
not long
entrust the
care of freedom
to the weak or
the timid."

- January 1953

The 1952 Presidential Election

After the war, Eisenhower wrote his memoir, *Crusade in Europe*. His heroics from World War II made him an instant presidential candidate.

As a military man, Eisenhower had not identified with any political party, but in early 1952, he announced that he was a Republican. At the time, many Republicans wanted America to be less involved with world affairs and focus on itself. These people were often called **isolationists**. Unfortunately, the communists, led by America's former ally, the Soviet Union, were aggressively expanding around the world and taking away freedom from their populations, imprisoning, and even killing, millions of people. Eisenhower believed that America, with all of its strength, couldn't be isolationist—it had an important role to play in keeping the peace and stopping the Soviets. He ran for president for this reason.

The Republicans nominated him for president and the young senator from California, Richard Nixon, for vice president. The Eisenhower campaign ran with the catchy slogan, "I Like Ike." That fall, they defeated the Democratic ticket of Adlai Stevenson and John Sparkman in a landslide, 442 electoral votes to 89.



President



Dwight Eisenhower took office in the midst of the Cold War—a conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union (and its ally, communist China). It was a terrifying time, especially since both sides had nuclear weapons which could destroy all of humanity. During Eisenhower's presidency, America and the communists had several dangerous confrontations in places like Taiwan, Hungary, and the Middle East that easily could have led to nuclear war. The leader of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev, was an unpredictable man who loved to bully other countries.

Eisenhower refused to be intimidated and often responded with strength. During several of these confrontations, he threatened to stop the communists with military action, which forced the enemy to back down. He also negotiated to end the **Korean War**, which paved the way for a decade of peace and prosperity in the United States.

Eisenhower also presided over the rise of the civil rights movement in the United States. In 1954, the Supreme Court declared that racial

segregation was unconstitutional. When many Southerners tried to maintain segregation, Eisenhower sent the military in to enforce the Court's decision.

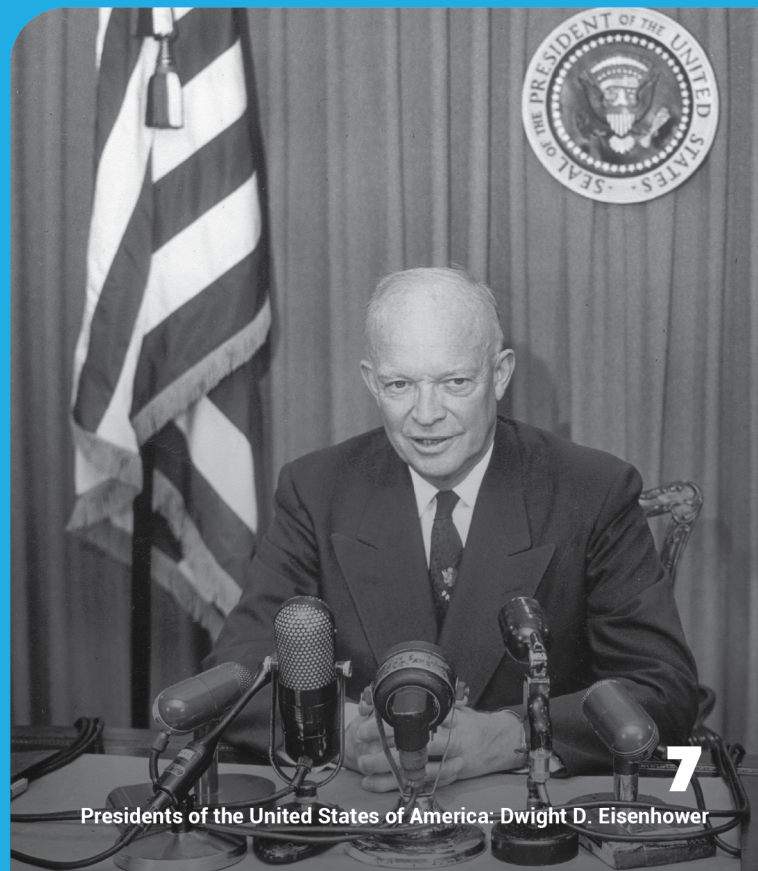
The American people loved Eisenhower and re-elected him to the presidency by a wide margin in 1956.

Eisenhower also signed several laws to modernize the country and prepare it for the complexities of the future. He established the **Interstate Highway System**, which led to the building of about 46,000 miles of highway. He also created the **Advanced Research Projects Agency** (ARPA) and the **National Aeronautics and Space Administration** (NASA). Although some criticized him because they felt these projects were too expensive, he believed they would ensure America's leadership in technology and space exploration.

Even though the Cold War was a dangerous situation, Eisenhower successfully led America through eight years of peace. He left the presidency an admired and popular figure.

Quote

"A people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both."
- January 1953



Presidents of the United States of America: Dwight D. Eisenhower

Farewell Address

Just before leaving office, on January 17, 1961, Eisenhower delivered his farewell address to the American people—the most famous presidential farewell message since George Washington’s in 1796. In it, he insisted that the country needed a strong defense: “Our [military] arms must be mighty... so that no potential aggressor may be tempted to risk his own destruction.” However, he warned Americans to make sure that the nation didn’t become too militaristic, or else it would become less free. He reminded them to keep an eye on the “**military-industrial complex**... so that security and liberty may prosper together.” To this day, Americans still debate how much power should be given to the military while also preserving the nation’s liberty.

Retirement

Eisenhower and his wife Mamie retired to a farm in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. By then, he was 70 years old—the oldest outgoing president. By contrast, his successor, John F. Kennedy, at age 43, was the youngest president ever elected.

Eisenhower remained active in retirement, writing books and giving advice to subsequent presidents, including Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. In 1968, he had the pleasure of seeing his former Vice President, Richard Nixon, elected President. By then, his health was failing, having suffered through several heart attacks. He died of heart failure on March 28, 1969, in Washington, D.C. at the age of 78.

Writing Activity

Quote

"Faith is the mightiest force that man has at his command. It impels human beings to greatness in thought and word and deed."
- August 1954

Legacy

Eisenhower was one of the most popular presidents in American history. Many professors and media commentators, however, claimed that he was lazy and ill-equipped to be the nation's chief executive. The more historians studied him over the years, however, the more they realized that his critics were wrong. Everyone who worked with Eisenhower knew he was a highly intelligent and capable leader. How else was he able to successfully organize history's greatest invasion? In addition, Eisenhower laid the foundation for America to eventually win the Cold War. Thanks to his foresight, planning, and preparations, the United States had the technology to compete with the Soviet Union for the next several decades.

After Eisenhower left office, the nation went through very difficult times under his successors Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon. Throughout the 1960s and 70s, the American people suffered through the Vietnam War and the Watergate Scandal. When they looked back at Eisenhower, they had a greater appreciation of how he kept the country peaceful and prosperous. Now, Americans, and even many professors, consider Eisenhower to be one of the nation's most effective presidents.



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Answers

NAME OF EISENHOWER'S DOG:
HEIDI

Glossary

Cold War: The conflict between America, which was free, and the Soviet Union, which was a communist dictatorship, that lasted from the 1940s to the 1980s.

Communism: A political and economic system where all property and resources are owned and controlled by the government. The result of this system is often dictatorship and government control of every aspect of people's lives.

Nuclear Weapon: A weapon that uses a nuclear reaction to create a massive explosion, which can destroy a large area, such as a city. When it was developed in the 1940s, it was the most powerful weapon ever created.

World War II: A war that involved many of the world's countries from 1939 to 1945. During the war, the Allied powers, led by the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union, defeated the Axis powers, led by Nazi Germany, Italy, and Japan. It is considered the most devastating war in history.

Fascist: A dangerous and oppressive type of government where one person has all the power and makes all the decisions. It promotes extreme loyalty to the homeland and often believes one ethnic group is better than others. Individual rights and freedoms are not respected, and people are not allowed to criticize the leader or government.

Nazi Germany: The German state from 1933 to 1945 when it was ruled by Adolf Hitler. Nazi Germany was a totalitarian dictatorship that aggressively invaded its neighbors, provoking World War II. It also committed evil acts of genocide—most famously killing millions of Jews in the Holocaust.

United States Military Academy: The U.S. Army's top military academy, which provides undergraduate education and training to commissioned Army officers. It is known as West Point and is located in New York State. Dwight Eisenhower graduated from West Point in 1915.

D-Day: The codeword for the Allied invasion of Normandy, France on June 6, 1944. It was the largest seaborne invasion in history and was organized by General Dwight D. Eisenhower. The success of the invasion led to the liberation of France and, ultimately,

the defeat of Nazi Germany.

Five-Star General (Admiral): The highest military rank in the United States. Dwight D. Eisenhower was one of nine Americans (as of 2023) to have attained the rank of five-star general.

Isolationist: Someone who believes their country should avoid getting involved in the affairs of other nations and focus on its own issues and interests, preferring to keep their country separated from international conflicts and interactions.

Korean War: A military conflict from 1950 until 1953 that began when communists in North Korea, supported by China and the Soviet Union, tried to impose a dictatorship over the entire country. The United States sent about 6.8 million soldiers to support the South Koreans, preventing the communists from taking over the entire Korean Peninsula.

Interstate Highway System: The network of highways built across the United States to make travel safer and more efficient. President Eisenhower signed the system into law in 1956, which led to the building of 46,000 miles of highway. Eisenhower also believed that the highways would allow for a stronger national defense.

Advanced Research Projects Agency: The U.S. government agency (now known as the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA) that develops new technologies for the military. DARPA has been responsible for developing weather satellites, GPS, drones, stealth technology, the personal computer, and the Internet.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration: The U.S. government agency, known as NASA, responsible for space exploration. It has achieved spectacular successes with its manned space program, especially during the Apollo moon missions and the Space Shuttle.

Military-Industrial Complex: The relationship between the U.S. military, the defense industry, and politicians. While most Americans believe in the need for a strong military, many fear that this relationship often leads to costly programs that help companies and politicians without improving the nation's defense.

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