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Jefferson Fact:

Jefferson believed in religious freedom. In Virginia at the time, the government used tax money to help support the Anglican Church. Jefferson thought this was wrong, as people attended churches other than the Anglican Church. He persuaded lawmakers to pass the “Statute of Religious Freedom” which stopped the government from supporting any church with tax money, and in that way, separate the church and state. This gave all religions an equal opportunity and all people the right to worship and support the church of their choice.

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Jefferson Fact:

Jefferson served as governor of Virginia for two one-year terms in 1779 and 1780. He then left public office but was again chosen to serve, this time as a delegate to the Continental Congress from Virginia in 1783. His wife had died the prior year, and he accepted the position to try to take his mind off his grief. While there, he served on many committees and developed a decimal system of currency. He also worked with colonies to encourage them to give up land west of the Appalachian Mountains. This land became the first territory, called the Northwest Territory, of the new country.

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Jefferson Fact:

Jefferson traveled to France and returned home in 1789, planning just to visit and then return to France. He found a letter from President Washington waiting for him, asking him to serve as the first Secretary of State. He reluctantly agreed and soon found he had major differences with Alexander Hamilton, the Secretary of the Treasury. Hamilton believed in a strong federal government, and Jefferson believed in a government where the states had more power. The feuding continued between them and resulted in the first political parties in the country.

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Jefferson Fact:

In 1796, Thomas Jefferson ran for President of the United States, but he lost to John Adams. By the laws of the time, since Jefferson came in second, he became Vice President. Jefferson led an attack against the Alien and Sedition Acts that had made it against the law for anyone to criticize the president or Congress. He ran for president again in 1800 with Aaron Burr as running mate. Since the electors did not indicate which person was to receive the vote for president and vice president, Jefferson and Burr both received the same number of votes. The decision went to the House of Representatives, and Jefferson won the presidency.