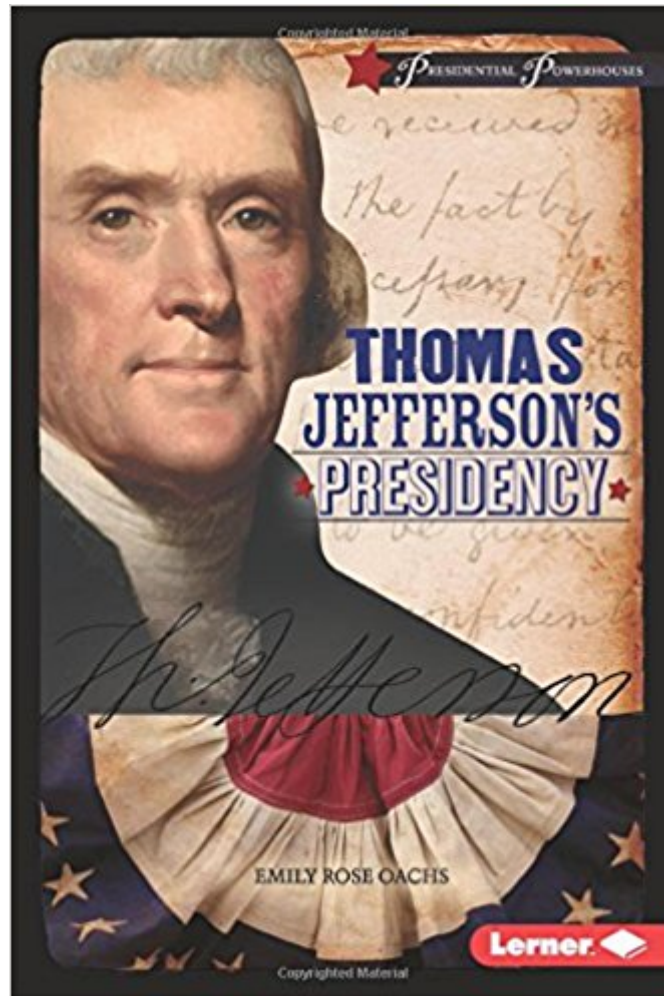




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Thomas Jefferson's Presidency (Presidential Powerhouses)



Synopsis

Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States, was a man of contradictions. Jefferson penned the most stirring claim of the Declaration of Independence: "all men are created equal." Yet during his lifetime, Jefferson owned hundreds of enslaved African Americans. An adamant believer in limited government, Jefferson nevertheless acted without constitutional power to buy land from France the Louisiana Purchase that doubled the size of the United States. Jefferson died on the Fourth of July, 1826, exactly fifty years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Despite his contradictions, Jefferson's words continue to express the noble ideals of Americans freedom from tyranny and equality for all.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Succinct, informative, and compelling, this series is a must-have for most libraries." --School Library Journal, Series Made Simple

Emily Rose Oachs graduated with a degree in communication studies. She now works as a freelance writer and editor and has authored more than thirty nonfiction books for children and young adults. She lives in Los Angeles.

Most high-achieving individuals are studious, but young Thomas Jefferson gave the word studious a new meaning. When Jefferson was a seventeen-year-old he studied fifteen hours a day,

practiced his violin for three, and slept and took meals during the other six. Needless to say, it only took him two years to get through college and by the time he was twenty five in 1768, he was serving in Virginia's legislature. It was during this period in his life that he began building Monticello, which means "little mountain," a place most young people are familiar with. Marriage soon followed and Jefferson married Martha Wayles Skelton, who came from a wealthy, prominent family of planters. When a man married in Jefferson's time, a married woman's property belonged to her husband. Along with her land, he came by an additional 135 slaves. Jefferson was not only land-rich, but he also had one of the colony's largest holdings of slaves. In spite of this fact, Jefferson had strong feelings against slavery. He also felt quite strongly that it was illegal for King George III of Great Britain to control colonial politics. Jefferson was recognized for his writing on the issue and was elected to the Second Continental Congress. He had a good education, ultimately becoming a lawyer, had married, was a large landholder, and was quickly rising up the political ladder. The perfect fit for Jefferson in the Continental Congress was an assignment to a committee to write a document declaring the colonies' independence from Great Britain. Of course this document ultimately ended up becoming our Declaration of Independence, but few know about the omissions and changes. Jefferson's antislavery language [was edited] out of the document. It was an unusual stance given the fact that Jefferson was such a large slaveholder. Not long after helping write the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson drafted the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom. Ironically he also wrote a bill to outlaw slave trade, one that was unfortunately tabled. Jefferson's political career was voluntarily permanently set aside, or so he thought, but a tragic event was to set his career back in motion. Tragedy struck when Martha Jefferson died four months after a difficult childbirth. Depression set in, but within a short period of time he threw himself back into politics. He began by serving as a Virginian delegate to the Confederation Congress in Philadelphia, remaining there until 1784. Not one to back down, there was much more in store for this brilliant, determined man. In this book you'll learn about his stint as our first secretary of state, his path to the presidency, the political divide between political parties, his accomplishments, his vice presidency under John Adams, the Louisiana purchase, and you'll learn much more about this presidential powerhouse. This is a very comprehensive overview of Thomas Jefferson's presidency that young readers will be fascinated by. The layout of the book pops with period reproduction paintings, ephemera, and numerous informative sidebars. For example, in one

we learn about Jefferson's purported relationship with his slave Sally Hemings. Many young people are familiar with some of the better-known presidents, but little about the powerhouses such as Jefferson. The importance of his presidency becomes clear as Emily Rose Oachs details what went on during his tenure. We also learn much about things that went wrong, something young people also need to think about. The book is a very well-written one, clearly and concisely outlining Thomas Jefferson's incredible drive, his personal and political career, important figures surrounding his life, and much, much more. Jefferson's life and times could certainly be examined by the reader, setting the stage for further research. The latter part of the book recaps Jefferson's final years, his lasting legacy to our country and the world. In the back of the book is an index, a glossary, a Timeline (1743 to 1826), expansive Source Notes, a Selected Bibliography, and additional recommended book and website resources to explore. Reading Grade Level: 8 Interest Grade Level: 6 to 12

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