

Jefferson's Canons of Conduct

The following rules of conduct were written by Thomas Jefferson in 1811 as instructions to his granddaughter, Cornelia, when she was twelve.

- 1 Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.
- 2 Never trouble another with what you can do yourself.
- 3 Never spend your money before you have it.
- 4 Never buy a thing you do not want, because it is cheap, it will be dear to you.
- 5 Take care of your cents: Dollars will take care of themselves!
- 6 Pride costs us more than hunger, thirst, and cold.
- 7 We never repent of having eat too little.
- 8 Nothing is troublesome that one does willingly.
- 9 How much pain have cost us the evils which have never happened.
- 10 Take things always by their smooth handle.
- 11 Think as you please, and so let others, and you will have no disputes.
- 12 When annoyed count 10, before you speak, if very angry, 100.

Jefferson's rough draft of the *Declaration of Independence* on page 4 courtesy of the Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

Jefferson's drawing on page 5: South Elevation of the Rotunda, 1819 (N-328), Thomas Jefferson Papers, Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library.

SUGGESTED FOLLOW-UP LESSONS

Write a Diary

Choose to be Thomas Jefferson, one of his children or grandchildren, or one of his slaves. Write a diary for one day/week/month of your life at Monticello.

Write a Report

Research and write a report on something you heard about or saw at Monticello. Suggested topics: The *Declaration of Independence*, The Lewis and Clark Expedition, The Life of Thomas Jefferson, The Louisiana Purchase, Architecture (esp. neo-classical), Plantation Life.

Be an Architect

Thomas Jefferson is considered one of America's first architects. He learned about architecture from reading books and from his travels in Europe when he was minister to France. Design your own building for use today. Look in books and magazines for ideas. You can even make a "collage building" by cutting parts from different pictures and gluing them together onto one piece of paper. After you have designed your building, write a brief description of how it will be used and who will live or work in it.

Be an Inventor

Thomas Jefferson was a great mechanical adaptor. He often took other inventions and modified them to suit his own purposes. Take an object that you saw on your visit to Monticello and adapt it for today's uses. Draw a picture of your modified object and write a one-page explanation of how it is used and why it is needed.

Write a Letter

Write a letter to Thomas Jefferson and ask him three questions you did not or could not learn the answers to during your visit.

Be an Artist

Study 18th and early 19th century arts and crafts skills that Jefferson's daughters Martha and Mary, grandchildren, and other young ladies would have been taught. Suggestions: drawing and sketching, theorem painting, stenciling, painting, embroidery.

Give a Play

Write and perform a class play about Thomas Jefferson or life at Monticello.

TEACHING AIDS

Teacher Resource Packets are available from the Monticello Education Department for use as pre-visit preparation. Packets include background materials, facsimiles of primary documents, and suggested lesson plans. For a list of topics and prices please contact the Education Department, PO Box 316, Charlottesville, VA 22902, Phone 434 984-9853.

Over 125 publications as well as many educational products can be purchased through the Monticello Museum Shops. For more information, call or write: The Monticello Museum Shops, PO Box 316, Charlottesville, VA 22902, Phone 434 984-9840.

For those of you connected to the Internet, our world wide web site holds a wealth of information. <http://www.monticello.org>