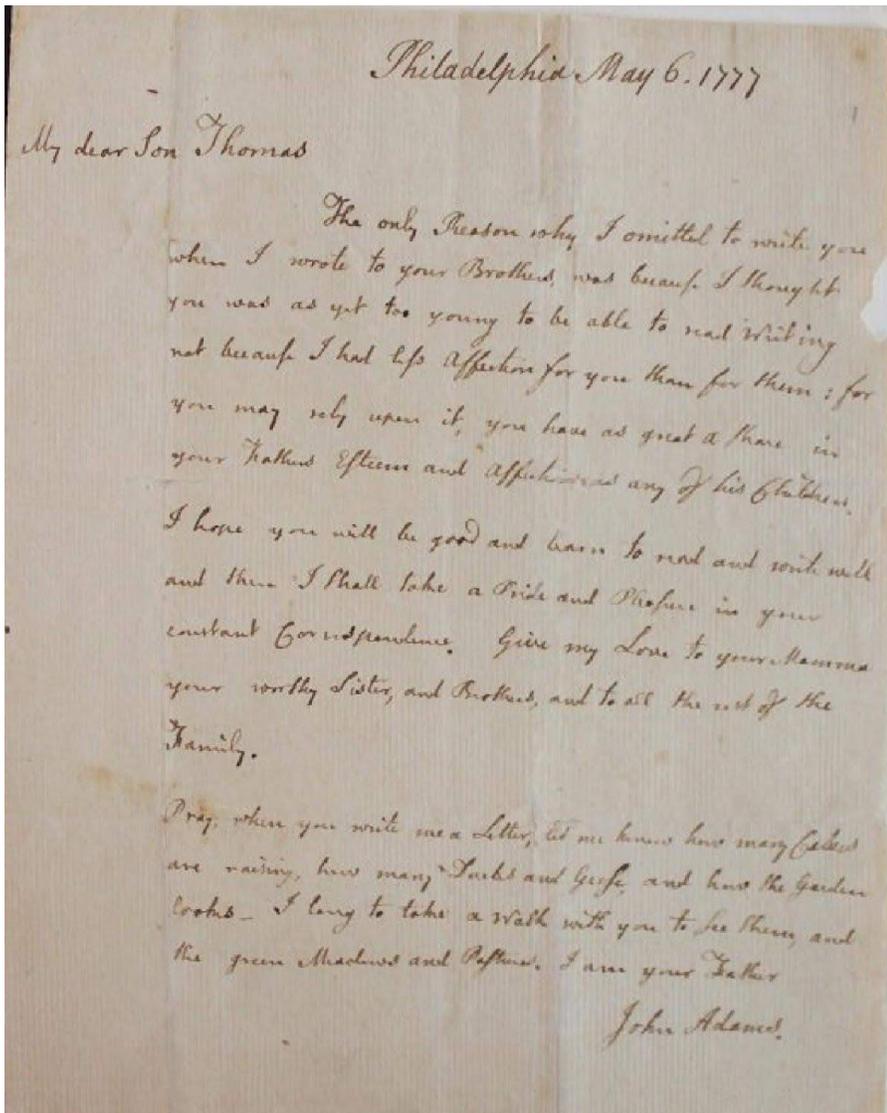


THE ROSENBAACH

My Historical Broadway Show, Lesson Two

Level: Grades 7-12

In the last lesson, you looked at a letter by George Washington as research for your Broadway show based on a historical character. Today we'll look at a letter written by John Adams to his five year old son Thomas on May 6, 1777 during the second year of the Revolutionary War. John Adams was in Philadelphia and his son was at home in Massachusetts. Read the letter closely, paying careful attention to the sections which are underlined.



May 6, 1777

Letter from John Adams to his son Thomas Adams

My dear Son Thomas

The only Reason why I omitted to write you when I wrote to your Brothers, was because I thought you was as yet too young to be able to read Writing, not because I had less Affection for you than for them: for you may rely upon it, you have as great a share in your Fathers Esteem and Affection as any of his Children.

I hope you will be good and learn to read and write well, and then I shall take a Pride and Pleasure in your constant Correspondence. Give my Love to your Mamma, your worthy Sister, and Brothers, and to all the rest of the Family.

Pray, when you write me a Letter, let me know how many Calves are raising, how many Ducks and Geese, and how the Garden looks. I long to take a Walk with you to see them, and the green Meadows and Pastures. I am your Father,

John Adams

What is John Adams trying to say in the first sentence? It seems that he is responding to a concern that his son Thomas expressed. What was Thomas upset about?

This is the second year of the Revolutionary War. Why doesn't John Adams mention anything about the war in his letter? Why is talking about ducks?

Monmouth May 19th 1780.

Dear Lund,

Your Letter of the 10th came to hand last night. - I have not yet had leisure to look into the Papers relative to Mercers business, & what I shall, is more than I am, at this moment, able to say, as few scenes are beginning to unfold themselves, which will by no means lessen my present trouble, or attention - You ask how I am to be rewarded for all this? - There is one, that nothing can deprive me of, & that is, the consciousness of having done my duty with the strictest rectitude, and most scrupulous exactness - and the certain knowledge, that if we should ultimately fail in the present contest, it is not owing to the want of exertion in me, or the application of every means that Congress and the United States, or the States, individually have put into my hands. -

dece. to whom we are infinitely more indebted than we are to our own wisdom or our own exertions. has always displayed its power & goodness, when clouds and thick darkness seemed ready to overwhelm us - The hour is now come when we stand much in need of another manifestation of its bounty, however little we deserve it - In my zeal, I may be more particular at present, I shall only add that with much truth & sincerity I am

Y^r aff^d friend

M^r Washington
desires to be re-
membered to you
& you

E. W. Washburn

May 19th, 1780

Letter from George Washington to his cousin Lund Washington

Morris-Town May 19th, 1780

Dear Lund,

Your letter of the 10th came to hand last night.—I have not yet had leisure to look into the Papers relative to mercers business; & when I shall, is more that I am, at this moment, able to say, as new scenes are beginning to unfold themselves, which will by no means lessen my present troubles, or attention—You ask how I am to be rewarded for all this?—There is one reward that nothing can deprive me of, & that is, the consciousness of having done my duty with the strictest rectitude, and most scrupulous exactness—and the certain knowledge, that if we should—ultimately--fail in the present contest, it is not owing to the want of exertion in me or the application of every means that Congress and the United States, or the States individually, have put into my hands,--

[Provi]dence—to whom we are infinitely more indebted than we are to our own wisdom—or our own exertions—has always displayed its power & goodness, when clouds and thick darkness seemed ready to overwhelm us—The hour is now come when we stand much in need of another manifestation of its bounty however little we deserve it—In my next I maybe more particular a present I shall only add that with much truth and sincerity I am

Yr. Affe. Friend

G. Washington

Mrs. Washington desires to be remembered to you & yours

Read the letter paying special attention to the underlined sections and then answer the following questions.

1. George's cousin Lund sent him some papers related to Mercer's business. George says he hasn't had time to look at them yet. Why hasn't he had the time?
2. Lund asked George what he thought his reward was going to be for leading the country during wartime. What is George's answer?