

CREI Chart—Jefferson and Washington: Pursuit of Happiness

Claim: Even though Thomas Jefferson and George Washington suffered a horrible and public misunderstanding, their mutual admiration and common interests would have led them to an eventual reconciliation.

Reason	Specific Evidence	Inference/Interpretation
Farming	<p>“I inclose you some wheat which the President assures me from many years experience to be the very best kind he has ever seen. ... The President is so excellent a farmer that I place full confidence in his recommendation.” <u>Jefferson to Thomas Mann Randolph Jr.; November 12, 1790</u></p>	<p>Jefferson and Washington both thought of themselves as farmers first. This quote shows the admiration Jefferson had of Washington as a farmer. Since many of their correspondences are regarding the topic, the two men could have reconnected through Virginian farming discussions.</p>
Devotion to America’s Cause of Liberty	<p>“The Honorable the Continental Congress... declare[s] the United Colonies of North America, free and independent STATES: The several brigades are to be drawn up... at six O’clock, when the declaration of Congress, shewing the grounds & reasons of this measure, is to be read with an audible voice” <u>Washington's General Orders; July 9, 1776</u></p>	<p>Obviously, Jefferson is the author of the words that Washington wanted his troops to hear. Both men were passionate in their pursuit of liberty for the United States. This desire for a successful and true American nation would have reconnected the men as the country continued on her journey to greatness, through Jefferson’s presidency and beyond.</p>
Mutual Friends (Ex. Lafayette)	<p>“The favourable terms in which you speak of Mr Jefferson gives me great pleasure: he is a man of whom I early imbibed the highest opinion—I am as much pleased therefore to meet confirmations of my discernment in these matters, as I am mortified when I find myself mistaken.” <u>Washington to Lafayette; May 10, 1786</u></p>	<p>This shows that Washington had some doubts about Jefferson’s character, but also shows he wanted to believe in the better opinion of him. Being a man of great importance and friendship in both their lives, Lafayette could have been the key reestablishing the friendship. Peer mediation at its finest!</p>
Reason	Specific Evidence	Inference/Interpretation

<p>Pets</p>	<p>As the Monticello and Mount Vernon websites prove: Jefferson and Washington both had many pet birds throughout their homes, and a particular fondness of mockingbirds.</p>	<p>Both men wanted to please and impress the other people in their lives. Among other pets, Jefferson and Washington both owned birds. Even a small similarity like this could have sparked a correspondence that would have reopened the doors of friendship. A discussion about a basic unimportant, non-political matter like their pets could have made all the difference.</p>
<p>The Adams Reconciliation</p>	<p>In 1811, when one of Jefferson's neighbors visited Adams in Massachusetts, he returned to Virginia with the report that he had heard Adams say, "I always loved Jefferson, and still love him." In response to these words, Jefferson wrote Dr. Rush: "This is enough for me. I only needed this knowledge to revive towards him all of the affections of the most cordial moments of our lives." He asked Rush to persuade Adams to renew their correspondence. A letter from Adams was forthcoming, and they continued to write until their deaths. Monticello Website</p>	<p>The Adams-Jefferson reconciliation helps to prove that a resolution with Washington was imminent. Legacy was important to all of these men, and Jefferson would not have wanted to go to his grave with the Washington rift unsettled. It was not easy for either man to forgive and forget. But after the reignited friendship with Adams, it is likely that Jefferson would have reached out to Washington. Based on other evidence, it is believable that Washington would have eventually been able to accept the friendship.</p>
<p>Monticello & Mount Vernon</p>	<p>The homes of Jefferson and Washington were superior Mansions and plantations in Virginia. The similarities in their designs and dependency on slaves would have given them much to discuss: Facts about Monticello Facts about Mount Vernon</p>	<p>Jefferson and Washington desired symmetry in their mansions, and wanted to impress their guests. As the primary architect of their homes, they would have had a lot to discuss as Jefferson reconstructed Monticello. The common interest in architecture, interior design and luxurious style, lead to two different mansions will similar ideas. The conversations about their homes would have been a piece of the puzzle in solving their friendship.</p>