



# PRESIDENTIAL PETS & KIDS

adapted by Frank Bean

## Set Your Purpose

The White House is a stately place, but it has been home to many pets and children.

Read this article to learn more!

**T**he White House is usually a serious place. Leaders of other countries bring important business to the President. Senators give and receive advice. **Formal** tour guides lead visitors through rooms and hallways.

However, some presidential pets have turned the White House into a wild and crazy place! President George W. Bush's dogs, Barney and Miss Beazly, and his cat, India, are fairly ordinary pets. But President Rutherford B. Hayes had a goat and a canary among his 15 animals. Martin Van Buren owned tigers. James Buchanan kept elephants and eagles.

Children have also made the President's home a lively place. Tad Lincoln once drove goats through the East Room while his mother was giving a tour. Another time, he forced visitors to shop at a **refreshment** stand he had set up. One Thanksgiving, he convinced his dad to save the life of the turkey they were planning to **devour**.

President Theodore Roosevelt loved animals, and so did his six children. They moved into the White House in 1901. Soon they were joined by 11 kinds of animals, including a badger, a bear, raccoons, and a rat. The Roosevelt kids were also known for bicycling, skating, walking on stilts, and playing hide-and-seek in the White House halls and closets.

**Compared** to Theodore Roosevelt's White House, the first presidential home was quiet! George Washington had only five dogs. John Quincy Adams was more **daring**; he had an alligator. Calvin Coolidge had the most unusual pet of all: a two-headed rattlesnake. The two-headed snake could keep an eye on the other White House pets. One head could watch President Coolidge's antelope, while the other could spy on his pet emu.

## Think About It

During the time of which president would you have wanted to visit the White House? Why?

## Check Your Understanding

Fill in the letter with the best answer for each question.

- Choose the best summary of the selection.
  - Senators meet with the President.
  - The White House has been a home for some wild pets and children.
  - Children live up the White House.
  - Lincoln's White House was noisy.
- Which statement best summarizes the description of Theodore Roosevelt's White House?
  - It was full of animals and wild kids.
  - It was a formal place where senators met.
  - It had no animals.
  - It was quiet.
- Which detail supports the idea that children have made the White House a lively place?
  - Martin Van Buren owned tigers.
  - Theodore Roosevelt had six children.
  - Calvin Coolidge had a very unusual pet.
  - Lincoln's son once drove goats through the East Room.
- Which sentence is an opinion?
  - George Washington had dogs for pets.
  - The strangest pet was a two-headed snake.
  - Theodore Roosevelt had six children.
  - Tad Lincoln once saved a turkey.
- In which book might you find this selection?
  - Families in the White House
  - George Washington: First President
  - Unusual Pets
  - Bringing Up Polite Children

## Vocabulary

Find each vocabulary word in the selection. The words and sentences around it will help you figure out its meaning.

Fill in the letter with the best definition of the underlined word.

- Formal tour guides lead visitors through rooms and hallways.
 

(A) proper and official	(C) silly and funny
(B) old and well-paid	(D) informal and casual
- Tad Lincoln didn't want to devour the turkey.
 

(A) sell	(C) eat
(B) play with	(D) make angry
- Tad Lincoln once set up a refreshment stand for White House visitors.
  - place for putting hats
  - food or drink
  - place for playing games
  - plants and flowers
- Compared to Roosevelt's White House, Washington's home was quiet!
 

(A) according to	(C) because of
(B) judged against	(D) instead of
- Adams was daring. He had an alligator!
 

(A) forgetful	(C) adventurous
(B) careful	(D) quiet

# Word Work

**Antonyms** are words that have opposite meanings. For example, *lively* and *dull* are antonyms.

Read each sentence. Fill in the letter of the antonym of the word in dark type.

1. Tour guides try to keep visitors **happy**.

- (A) helpful            (C) sad  
(B) busy                (D) awake

2. A two-headed snake is an **interesting** pet.

- (A) fun                 (C) beautiful  
(B) boring            (D) silly

3. Theodore Roosevelt had **many** pets.

- (A) wild                (C) large  
(B) several            (D) few

4. Young Tad Lincoln **hated** eating turkey.

- (A) loved              (C) forgot  
(B) disliked           (D) mentioned

5. The first presidential home was **quiet**.

- (A) noisy              (C) dull  
(B) funny              (D) small

A **noun** names a person, place, or thing. A **plural noun** names more than one person, place, or thing. To make the plural of most nouns, add **-s**. Add **-es** if the noun ends with *s*, *ss*, *x*, *sh*, *ch*, or *tch*.

**pet** → **pets**      **leash** → **leashes**

If a noun ends in *y*, we usually change the *y* to *i* and add **-es**.

**bunny** → **bunnies**

Read each sentence. Write the correct plural form of the word in dark type.

6. **country** The leaders of other \_\_\_\_\_ went to the White House.

7. **fox** Maybe our next president will have several \_\_\_\_\_!

8. **tiger** It would be strange to see \_\_\_\_\_ in the White House.

9. **guide** The White House tour \_\_\_\_\_ have a great job.

10. **business** The heads of several \_\_\_\_\_ visited the president.

## Write Now

Read this list that describes the different animals that have lived in the President's home. If your father or mother were elected president, what pet would you like to bring to the White House?

- Plan to write a letter to your parents telling them what pet you would like to bring to the White House. First, make a list of all the animals you would like to add to the "Presidential Zoo." Then choose one pet that you would like best.
- Write your letter. Explain to your parents why you would like that special pet.

### Some of the Animals That Have Lived in the White House

cats	dogs
goat	canary
tigers	elephants
eagles	alligator
rattlesnake	antelope
emu	