

## **The Election of 1800**

Jefferson was vice-president to Adams, who was elected in 1796 and ran for re-election in 1800. Many voters were fed up with Federalist policies in 1800 (especially after the passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts) and so voted for Jefferson and Burr. Trouble was, both candidates ended up with the same number of electoral votes.

Read Article II, Section I of the Constitution below.

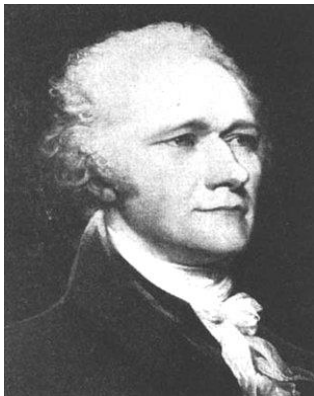
### **Article II, Section I**

*The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President...if there is an...equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately choose by Ballot one of them for President...*

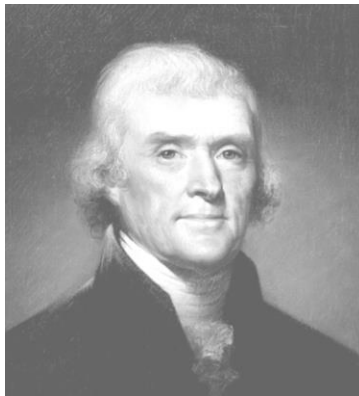
According to the Constitution, what happens when there is a tie in the electoral vote?

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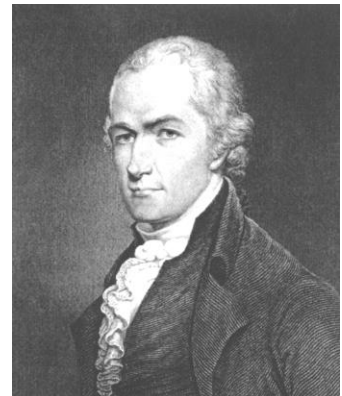
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*Alexander Hamilton*



*Thomas Jefferson*



*Aaron Burr*

So, because there was a tie in the electoral vote, the election of the president would go to the House of Representatives. Remember that Hamilton and Jefferson were bitter enemies. They disagreed savagely on the role of government in people's lives. But, there was also no love between Hamilton and Burr. For whatever reason, the two men detested each other personally, a hatred that went far beyond the political disagreements that Hamilton and Jefferson had. And so when Hamilton saw that Burr had a chance of becoming President, Hamilton worked behind the scenes to ensure that Burr was not the new president. The House of Representatives eventually, chose Jefferson as the new president. Burr became vice-president.

**Source #1: Letter from Alexander Hamilton to Harrison Gray Otis, December 23, 1800**

“My opinion is, after mature reflection, that if Jefferson and Burr come with equal votes to the House of Representatives, the former ought to be preferred by the Federalists. Mr. Jefferson is respectably known in Europe—Mr. Burr little and that little not favorably for a President of the United States—Mr. Jefferson is a man of easy fortune—Mr. Burr, as I believe, is bankrupt beyond redemption. Mr. Jefferson is a man of fair character for integrity—Very different ideas are entertained of Mr. Burr... Mr. Jefferson, though too revolutionary in his ideas, is yet a lover of liberty and will be eager of something like orderly Government—Mr. Burr loves nothing but himself—thinks of nothing but his own enhancement— and will be content with nothing short of permanent power in his own hands... In a choice of Evils let them take the least—Jefferson is in every view less dangerous than Burr...

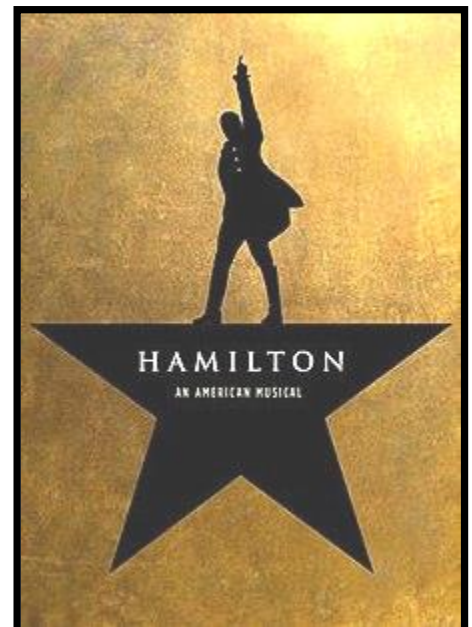
1. List three specific objections Alexander Hamilton had for Aaron Burr assuming the presidency:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Song: “The Election of 1800”**

After listening to and reading the lyrics of the song “The Election of 1800”, answer the questions below:

1. Write one way that the song is similar to Hamilton’s letter.
2. Explain one way that the song is different to Hamilton’s letter.



## Election of 1800 Lyrics - Hamilton By Lin-Manuel Miranda

[Intro: Thomas Jefferson, (Ensemble)] The Election of 1800! Can we get back to politics? Please? ..... Poor Alexander Hamilton, he is missing in action So now I'm facing Aaron Burr with his own faction

[James Madison] He's very attractive in the North, New Yorkers like his chances

[Jefferson] He's not very forthcoming on any particular stances

[Madison] Ask him a question, it glances off, he obfuscates, he dances [Jefferson] And they say I'm a Francophile, at least they know I know where France is

[Madison] Thomas, that's the problem; see, they see Burr as a less extreme you You need to change course, a key endorsement might redeem you

[Jefferson] Who did you have in mind?

[Madison] Don't laugh

[Jefferson] Who is it?

[Madison] You used to work on the same staff.

[Jefferson] Whaaaat?

[Hook 1: Thomas Jefferson and James Madison] [Madison] It might be nice, it might be nice To get Hamilton on your side  
[Jefferson and Madison] It might be nice, it might be nice To get Hamilton on your side

[Break: Aaron Burr and (Ensemble)] Talk less! (Burr!) Smile more! (Burr!) Don't let them know what you're against or what you're for! (Burr!) Shake hands with him! (Burr!) Charm her! (Burr!) It's 1800; ladies, tell your husbands, vote for Burr!

[Verse 2: Various Ensemble] I don't like Adams! Well, he's gonna lose, that's just defeatist. And Jefferson? In love with France! Yeah, he's so elitist! I like that Aaron Burr! I can't believe we're here with him! He seems approachable? Like you could grab a beer with him

[Bridge 1: (Alexander Hamilton) & Ensemble] Dear Mr. Hamilton Your fellow Federalists would like to know how you'll be voting (It's quiet uptown...) Dear Mr. Hamilton John Adams doesn't stand a chance, so who you are you promoting? (It's quiet uptown...) Jefferson or Burr? Jefferson or Burr? We know, it's lose/lose Jefferson or Burr? Jefferson or Burr? But if you had to choose... Dear Mr. Hamilton John Adams doesn't stand a chance, so who you are you promoting? But if you had to choose!

[Verse 3: Alexander Hamilton & Aaron Burr] [Hamilton] Well, if isn't Aaron Burr, sir.

[Burr] Alexander!

[Hamilton] You've created quite a stir, sir.

[Burr] I'm going door to door!

[Hamilton] You're openly campaigning?

[Burr] Sure!

[Hamilton] That's new.

[Burr] Honestly, it's kind of draining

[Hamilton] Burr?

[Burr] Sir?

[Hamilton] Is there anything you wouldn't do?

[Burr] No, I'm chasing what I want, and you know what?

[Hamilton] What?

[Burr] I learned that from you

[Bridge 2: James Madison, Thomas Jefferson and (Ensemble)] (If you had to choose, if you had to choose...)

[Madison] ...It's a tie (If you had to choose, if you had to choose...)

[Jefferson] It's up to the delegates (If you had to choose, if you had to choose...)

[Jefferson and Madison] It's up to Hamilton! (If you had to choose, if you had to choose...) (Jefferson or Burr? Jefferson or Burr?) (Choose, choose, choose!)

[Verse 4: Alexander Hamilton and (Ensemble)] Yo (Oh!) The people are asking to hear my voice (Oh!) But the country is facing a difficult choice (Oh!) And you were to ask me who I'd promote... (Oh!) ...Jefferson has my vote (Oh!) I have never agreed with Jefferson once... (Oh!) We have fought on like 75 different fronts (Oh!) But when all said and all is done... Jefferson has beliefs; Burr has none

[Madison] And... you won in a landslide

[Burr] Congrats on a race well won I did give you a fight.

[Jefferson] Uh-huh...

[Burr] I look forward to our partnership. [Jefferson] Our partnership?

[Burr] As your vice president!

[Jefferson] [laughs] Yeah, right! [Outro: Thomas Jefferson and James Madison] [Jefferson] You hear this guy? Man openly campaigns against me, talking 'bout "I look forward to our partnership!" [Madison] It is crazy that the guy who comes in second gets to be vice president [Jefferson] OOOH! Y'know what, we can change that! Y'know why? [Madison] Why? [Jefferson] 'Cause I'm the president! Burr... When you see Hamilton, thank him for the endorsement. [Hook 2: Thomas Jefferson, Aaron Burr, James Madison and (Ensemble)] (Ooooh!) [Jefferson and Madison] Well, I'll be ....! Well, I'll be ...!  
[Madison] Hamilton's on your side

The Election of 1800, in which John Adams (a Federalist) lost the U.S. presidential election to Thomas Jefferson (a Democratic-Republican) was the first time in human history that ballots replaced bullets in transitioning from one leader to another. Use the chart to answer the questions below.

<b>Results: Election of 1800</b>			
Presidential Candidate	Political Party	Electoral Vote	House Vote
Thomas Jefferson	Democratic-Republican	73	62.5%
Aaron Burr	Democratic-Republican	73	25.0%
John Adams	Federalist	65	0.0%

1. In the Election of 1800, which candidate received the most electoral votes? \_\_\_\_\_

Use the chart and the excerpt below to answer question 2.

From Article II of the Constitution of the United States: *The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President...if there is an...equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately choose by Ballot one of them for President...*

2. According to the Constitution, what happens when there is a tie with the electoral vote?

3. According to the election results above, who became president in 1800? \_\_\_\_\_

4. There are many countries erupting in violence when a new leader is set to take power. *Why was the U.S. Presidential election of 1800 so historic?*