



Frenemies

John Adams and Thomas Jefferson began as close allies during the American Revolution, united in their dream of independence. But as the new nation formed, politics divided them. Adams, a Federalist, believed in a strong central government, while Jefferson, a Democratic-Republican, wanted more power for the states. Their rivalry grew bitter — they even ran against each other for president, and Jefferson defeated Adams in 1800. For years, the two men didn't speak. Yet, as time passed, they both began to see that their differences had helped shape the nation they loved. Encouraged by a mutual friend, they began writing letters to each other again — 158 in total — filled with reflection, humor, and respect. By the end of their lives, they had rebuilt a deep friendship. Remarkably, both men died on July 4, 1826, the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence they helped create.

Writing Prompt:

Adams and Jefferson proved that even the strongest disagreements don't have to end a friendship. Have you ever had a "frenemy" — someone you cared about but didn't always get along with? Write about a time when you and someone else had conflict but later found common ground.

- What caused the disagreement, and what helped you move past it?
- How can learning from rivals or opposites make us better people?