

Mount Rushmore National Memorial

Pre-Reading

I. Vocabulary words from this article:

carve

expansion

dynamite

hammer

commission

preservation

dramatic

figure

sculptor

recognize

II. Pre-Reading Questions

Have you heard of Mount Rushmore in South Dakota?

Who are the Presidents carved on Mount Rushmore?

How long do you think it would take to carve a monument like this? Mount Rushmore National Memorial

STORY:

MOUNT RUSHMORE : A Local Legacy

Carving started on the amazing Mount Rushmore National Memorial in 1927. It continued for 14 years, with the help of more than 350 people. The faces of four presidents are carved into the mountainside: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt. At first, there was a suggestion to carve famous western figures, people like Buffalo Bill, Lewis & Clark, and Sacagawea. But a

special group, a "commission," instead chose these presidents because they best represented the "foundation, expansion and preservation" of the United States.

A sculptor named Gutzon Borglum was asked to design Mount Rushmore. He chose the dramatic setting for this sculpture in the Black Hills of South Dakota. He decided that the best way to remove large pieces of rock from the mountain was to use dynamite. He and his workers became skilled at carving Mount Rushmore using carefully placed dynamite. In fact, more than 90 percent of the mountain was carved by dynamite! The rest was finished using air hammers. The faces of the presidents were finished one by one, Washington in 1930, Jefferson in 1936, Lincoln in 1937 and Roosevelt in 1939.

Today, Mount Rushmore is one of the most recognized monuments in the United States, with more than 2.7 million visitors each year.