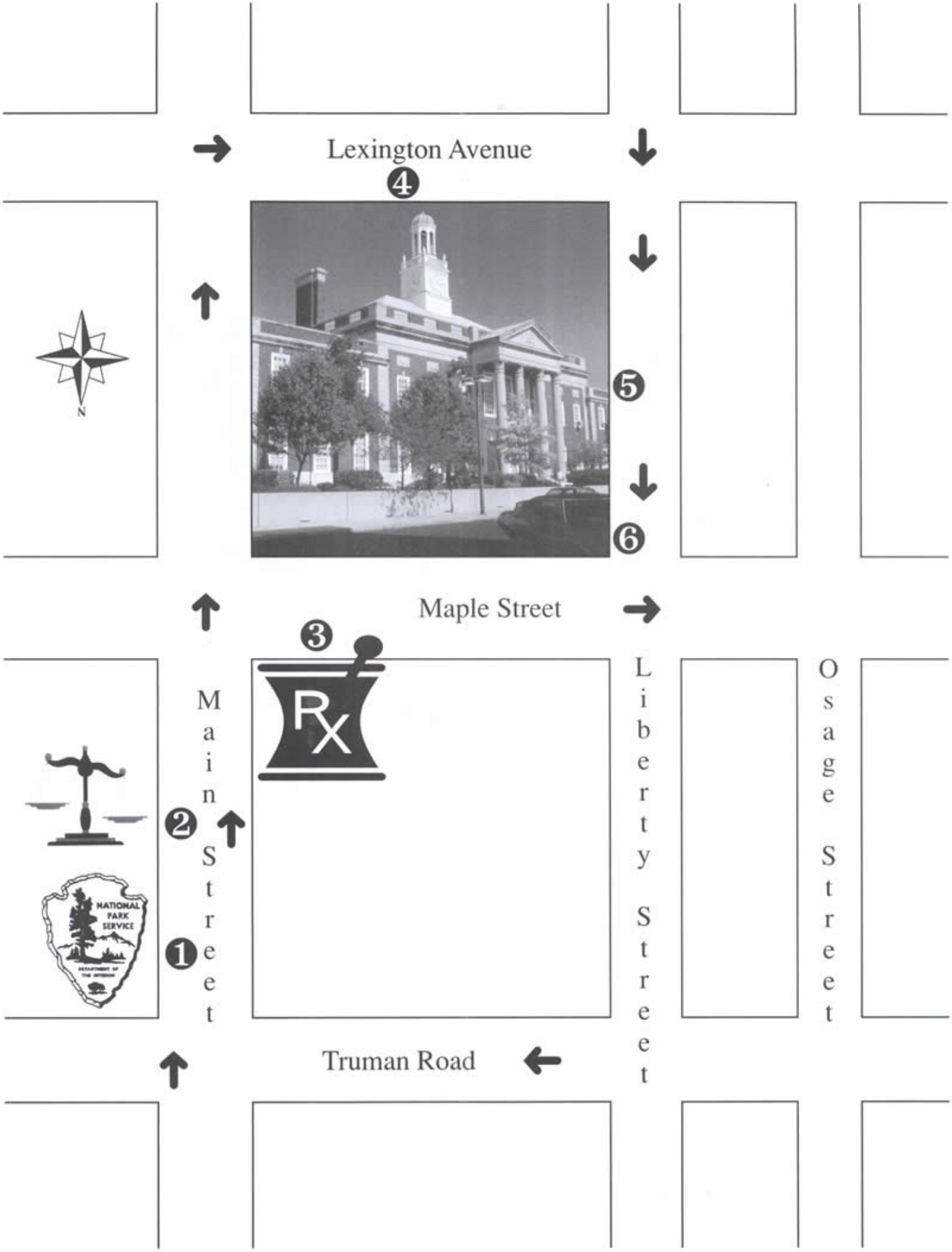
Harry Truman as a Boy

Senator Harry S Truman

Harry S Truman married
Elizabeth V. Wallace,
June 28, 1919

Harry S Truman being sworn in as president

Harry S Truman
National Historic Site
Junior Ranger Program


Lexington Avenue
4
5
6
N
Maple Street
3
Rx
Main Street
2
1
Liberty Street
Osage Street
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Truman Road

Lexington Avenue

The Job of National Park Rangers is to preserve and protect our nation's treasures. One way we do that is by telling visitors about the importance of our parks. You can help the Park Rangers at the Truman home by becoming a Junior Ranger. As a Truman site Junior Ranger you will learn about our nation's thirty-third president, Harry S Truman, and his life here in Independence. This program involves a fifty minute walk through Truman's home town of Independence. To become a Junior Ranger you must first take the Junior Ranger pledge, then complete 6 of the activities in this program (put a check mark by each activity you complete). After your walk return this packet to the ranger at the ticket center. If you need help, ask your parents or one of the Park Rangers.

Junior Ranger Pledge:

As a Junior Ranger, I promise to:

1) leave all animals, plants and historic objects undisturbed here and at all national parks I visit.
2) explore other national parks.
3) Have fun and stay safe while earning my Junior Ranger Badge.

Signature _____

Spring Street

Maple Street

Pleasant Street

7

9

N. Delaware

8

Truman Road

Stop 1: Visitor Center

Harry S Truman was born in 1884 in Lamar, Missouri. From there Harry and his family moved to his grandfather's farm near Grandview, Missouri. Harry's mother wanted her children to get a good education, so when Harry was six years old his family moved to Independence. This move allowed Harry to go to a better school than those in Grandview at the time. Harry's family first moved to a house on Crysler street, then in 1895 Harry's family moved into a new house at the corner of Waldo and River streets. It was there Harry started to make some of his first and life long friends

Activity 1)

1. Watch the twelve-minute slide show in the visitor center. _____
   (After watching place a check mark in the space provided.)

From here go to the second stop, the 1859 Jail next door.

Stop 2: Harry Truman's Friends

After Harry and his family moved to the new house on Waldo, Harry quickly started to make new friends. Harry was not always allowed to play the games the other children played because he wore glasses and he did not want to break them. Since Harry was known as a person that played fair he was often asked to play the role of umpire, during baseball games.

Truman Home Visitor Center

One of Harry's best friends, Charlie Ross, spent a few years living in the jail that you see here. Charlie did not live in the jail because he did something wrong. Charlie lived here because his father was the county marshal and the marshal and his family lived above the jail. Harry and Charlie were not only friends, they were also classmates. Harry and Charlie had one major thing in common: a love of reading. They loved to read so much it is said they made a bet to see who could read all of the books in the Independence public library first. During their senior year the two of them worked together on the school yearbook. Since Charlie was a better student than Harry, he was in charge of the yearbook and Harry was his assistant. Later when Harry became president he asked his friend Charlie to come work for him as his press secretary. The Press Secretary is a very important part of the president's staff, because it is the job of the Press Secretary to keep the President in touch with the public through the news media. This was a position that Charlie Ross had earned as a successful reporter and as a dedicated friend to Harry.

Activity 2)

Answer the following questions:

1. What do you and your friends like to do together?

2. What do you and your friends have in common?

There was more than school and play in Harry's young life, there was also work. From here go to the corner or Main Maple Streets to the old fashioned drugstore.

Stop 3: Harry's First Job

When Harry was 14 he got his first job here at Clinton's Drug Store. Harry's job was to clean the store every morning before school and on weekends. For his hard work Harry earned three dollars a week. At the end of his first week on the job Mr. Clinton gave Harry three silver dollars. Harry took part of the money and bought a gift for his mother and he then tried to give the rest to his father. Harry's father would not accept the money. It was Harry's and he had earned it. This incident taught Harry that hard work gets rewarded.

Clinton's Drugstore

Harry did not work at the drug store long. His parents felt that education was important and they were afraid that the drug store job would interfere too much with Harry's schoolwork. This made Harry realize that education was important.

Activity 3) Fill in the missing words below and solve the puzzle by putting each letter over the corresponding number in the space below.

1. Harry earned three dollars a _ _ _ _.
   5 8
2. Harry's job was to _ _ _ _ _ the store.
   2
3. Harry had to quit so he could focus on _ _ _ _ _ _.
   1 6
4. Today you can buy ice _ _ _ _ _ at Clinton's
   3
5. Harry's parents taught him that a good _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ was important.
   4
6. Harry was paid in _ _ _ _ _ _ dollars.
   7

Answer: Harry learned the value of _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _at Clinton's.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Harry's parents not only taught him about the importance of education they also taught him about the importance of politics. From here cross the street and go to the statue of President Truman.

Stop 4: Harry is Introduced to Politics

Harry's father believed politics was one of the most important things in life. Harry's father was so serious about politics he was even known to get into a few fistfights when he could not win a political argument with words alone. Harry was first introduced to the world of politics when he was in the second grade. That year was a presidential election year and Harry's father wanted the democratic candidate, Grover Cleveland, to win. During the campaign Harry was given a cap that said "Grover Cleveland and Adlai Stevenson." It was a hat Harry wore with pride. When Cleveland was elected Harry's father climbed to the roof of his house and raised the American flag. Later that night, Harry's father rode in a torch light parade that went right by this corner, to celebrate the victory. Harry had learned so much about politics from his father that by the time he was twelve he was having political debates with his Uncle Harrison. Later, when Harry was sixteen, his father got him a job as a page at the Democratic convention held in Kansas City in 1900. Little did Harry know that he would later run for political office himself.

John Truman
Harry Truman's Father

Activity 4)

Read each brief description in the left-hand column and find its answer in the right-hand column. Write the letter in the space provided.

___1. Harry wore this kind of hat to school when he was in the second grade.	A. Democratic
___2. What politicians need to win an election.	B. President
___3. Where the political parties decide who will run for president.	C. Campaign
___4. Harry's father taught him that this was important.	D. Convention
___5. Harry and his father belonged to this political party.	E. Votes
___6. What Harry's father raised over his house in 1892.	F. Politics
___7. Harry Truman and Grover Cleveland both served as this.	G. Flag

Without the influence of his father Truman would not have become the great politician that he was. From here go around the corner to the front of the courthouse. If the courthouse is open go inside and see if you can find Truman's courtroom.

Stop 5: Truman's Early Political Career

Mr. Truman's political career started here in Independence in 1922. In that year Mr. Truman was elected to the position of judge in Jackson County. At that time a judge in Jackson County was what we now call a county commissioner. As a Judge, Truman's job was to insure that county roads, schools, and hospitals were built. These construction projects involved millions of dollars. Some of the Judges who were around before Harry were known to take some of that money for themselves. Truman's parents had always taught him to be honest and Mr. Truman refused to follow in the illegal footsteps of the earlier Judges. Mr. Truman's honesty quickly gained him the respect of the people of Jackson County. As a result the people of Missouri elected Truman to the US Senate in 1934.

Mr. Truman quickly made friends in the Senate due to his honesty. He also used his love of history, that his mother gave him, to become a successful Senator. As a senator Truman set up a committee to look into illegal activity in military construction. When Truman set up this committee he used a similar committee that had been set up during the Civil War as a model. With history as a guide, the "Truman Committee" saved the government millions of dollars. As a senator, Mr. Truman also relied on his love of reading. Whenever a bill was introduced in the Senate, Truman would go to the Library of Congress and read all that he could about the bill in order to have all of the facts before making a decision. Truman was becoming a successful politician. The honesty, that Truman displayed as a judge and senator along with his love of reading and willingness to work hard were traits that he got from his parents.

Jackson County Courthouse

Activity 5)

Answer the following questions:

1. What do Judges in Jackson County do today?

2. How long did Harry serve as a Senator?

3. What was the name of the committee that Harry set up as Senator?

Harry's parents were not the only influence on him. Harry also tried to be like his hero's. From here go to the west end of the courthouse to the statue of a man on horseback.

Stop 6: Harry's Heroes

Harry, like most people, had heroes, but his heroes were not great athletes or movie stars, instead they were people who made history. When Harry was ten years old his mother gave him a set of books entitled *Great Men and Famous Women*. This set of books was a collection of stories about famous people in history. In this set of books Harry discovered most of his heroes as well as his love of history. Harry would study these famous people in order to learn from them.

Harry's biggest hero was the fiery, head strong Andrew Jackson, for whom Jackson County is named. Jackson was Harry's hero for a number of reasons. First, Jackson had been a successful military leader, something young Harry Truman wanted to be. Jackson was also a Democrat who served as president from 1828 to 1836. Harry admired Jackson so much when Harry became a Jackson County judge he decided to build a statue of Jackson in front of both county courthouses. One of those statues still stands today in Kansas City. The other statue is the one you see in front of you. This statue was donated by President Truman to the city in order to honor his hero.

Activity 6)

1. Use the clues below to unscramble the words next to them. Each scrambled word is the name of one of Harry's heroes.

sntinhoagW George _____ Revolutionary leader and first US President.

icLnlon Abraham _____ President during the civil war.

csnkaJo Andrew _____ Military leader, president from 1828 to 1836

orteRb _____ E. Lee Southern general during the civil war.

rknlaiFn Ben _____ Revolutionary leader who flew a kite in the rain.

2. Answer these questions:
1. Who is your hero?

2. What do all of Harry's hero's have in common?

3. Who is your favorite historical figure?

Harry's mother was not the only one who introduced him to his historical heroes, Harry's history teacher also taught him the value of history. From here turn left on Maple and go two blocks to the corner of Maple and Pleasant.

Stop 7: Harry's Teachers

The school that you see sits on the site of Harry's high school. The original school burned in a fire in 1939. Truman once said of teachers "they were the salt of the earth. They gave us our high ideals, and they hardly ever received more than forty dollars a month for it." Harry truly respected his teachers and he could not remember ever having a bad one. Of course, he did have a few favorites. One of them was his history teacher, Miss Phelps. When Harry was in school his history lessons consisted of single paragraphs that summed up the great events in history. This was not enough for Harry so on his own he would study historic events more intensely as well as the lives of the people that made history. This involved a lot of reading, which Harry loved to do anyway.

Truman's High School Library & Reading Room

President Truman owed his love of reading to two people, his mother who taught him that it was important and to Miss Tillie Brown. Miss Brown was Harry's English teacher. She taught Harry how to enjoy reading and this made him want to read even more. As much as Harry loved school there were subjects that he had trouble with. The first of these was spelling. Harry, even as an adult, was a bad speller. Two other subjects that Harry had problems with were Latin and math.

Activity 7)
Answer the following questions:
1. What is your favorite school subject?

2. Which school subject do you have the most difficulty with?

Harry would study these subjects two days a week with his cousins, Nellie and Ethel Noland as well as his childhood sweetheart, Bess Wallace. From here go down Maple and turn Right on Delaware street, stop in front of the yellow and green house.

Stop 8: The Nolands

The yellow and green house that you see here was home to two of Harry's best friends, his cousins Ethel and Nellie Noland. Mr. Truman once said that as a boy he was always afraid of girls that were his age or older. The exception to that rule were the Noland girls. Harry spent a lot of time here playing with his cousins. Truman said that he would go to parties with his cousin Ethel and "learn how to be polite from her". His cousin Nellie was a whiz at languages and would help Harry with his Latin. Harry was not the only one at these after school Latin classes. A young girl by the name of Bess Wallace would also be there to get help with her Latin.

Harry knew everything about his cousins, and they knew everything about him, including the fact that he had a crush on Bess. Ethel Noland later said "there never was but one girl in the world for Harry Truman, from the first time he ever saw her at the Presbyterian kindergarten." Bess was that girl. With this knowledge in mind Harry's cousins decided to ask him to return a borrowed cake plate to the Wallace house one day in 1910. Nine years earlier Harry and his family had moved out of Independence. Thus when Harry was asked to return the cake plate he jumped at the chance to renew his relationship with the girl of his dreams. After returning the cake plate Harry and Bess started to date and nine years later they married.

Bess Wallace

Activity 8)

Answer the following questions:

1. Do you have a favorite cousin, if so why do you like them?

2. What have you learned from your family members?

From here go across the street to the Summer White House.

Stop 9: President Truman

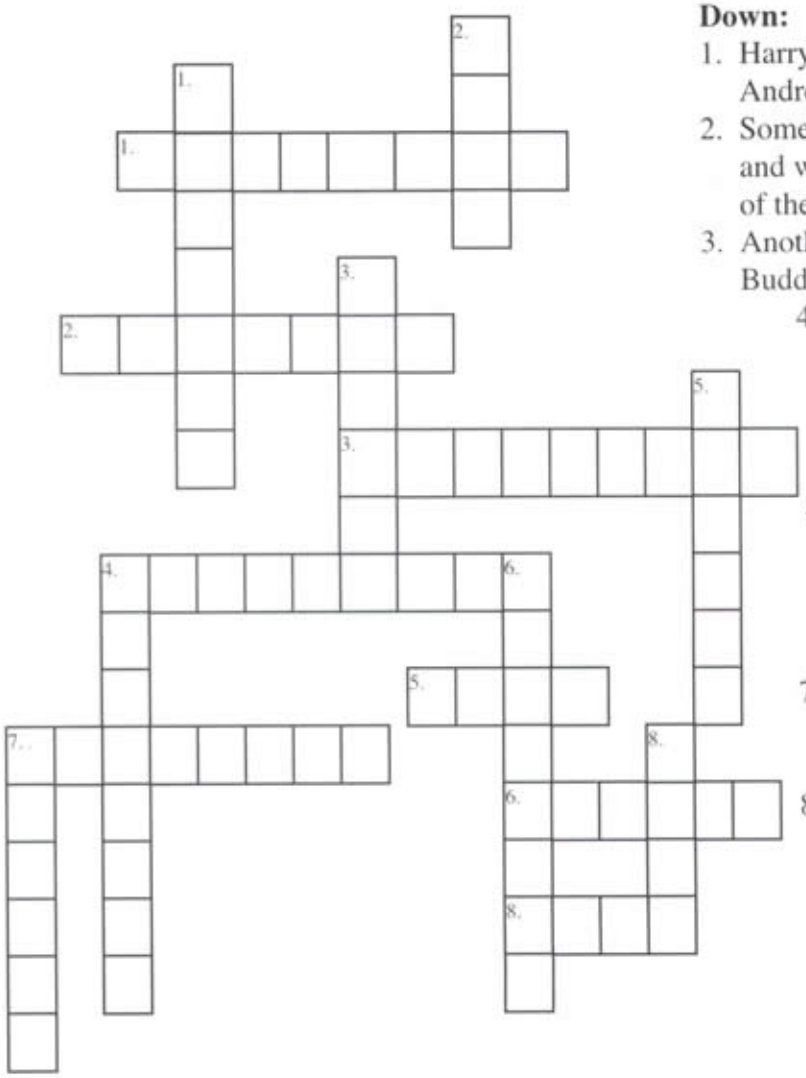
In 1944 Harry S Truman was elected vice president of the United States. On April 12, 1945 President Franklin Roosevelt died, as a result Vice President Truman became the President. After Truman became president his home here in Independence, the white house in front of you, became known as the Summer White House. It was to this house that President Truman would retreat to escape the pressures of being President, and to relax with his family.

During the eight years that he was President Harry S Truman faced a number of great challenges. Many of the decisions that he made changed the course of world history. In order to make the right decisions Truman relied on the things that he had learned from his parents, friends, teachers and history.

After Truman left the presidency in 1953 he returned to this house to retire with his wife Bess. Harry came back to Independence because it was his home. Independence is where Harry grew up, it was where his friends were. It was Truman's childhood here in Independence and the people around him that made him into the man he became. Truman's honesty, ability to work hard and his love of history helped him to become a great President, a President that many of his own heroes would have been proud of.

Activity 9)

Complete the crossword puzzle and answer the questions below



Down:

1. Harry's greatest hero was Andrew _____.
2. Someone that you respect and want to be like is one of these.
3. Another word of Pal or Buddy.
4. Truman's father introduced Harry to this when he was in the second grade.
5. The last name of Harry's cousins.
6. Harry called his _____ " the salt of the earth"
7. Your parents and brothers and sister are your _____?
8. Truman's wife's first name.

Across:

1. Harry learned the value of this while working at Clinton's drugstore. (2 words)
2. This is the subject that Truman read the most.
3. The Trumans moved to Independence so Harry could get a good _____.
4. Truman was our nations thirty-third _____.
5. Truman loved to do this.
6. People who always tell the truth are this.
7. Harry was asked to umpire Baseball games because of his sense of this. (2 words)
8. Harry's best friend was Charlie _____.

Answer these final questions

1. How have your family and friends changed you?

2. Do you think they have given you the strength to succeed?

Congratulations

You have successfully completed the Harry S Truman National Historic Site junior ranger program. Take this program back to the visitor center where the ranger will fill out this certificate and give you your own official junior ranger badge.

Certificate

Awarded to

_____

for successful completion of
Harry S Truman National Historic Site
Junior Ranger Program

_____ National Park Ranger

_____ Date