

The New Ten: Redesigning Our Nation's Currency

To the Teacher

Students can read the content below to explore the history of currency and the redesign of the next series of notes, starting with the \$10 note. Decisions about who will be featured on the redesigned \$10 note will be announced by the end of the year, but these resources will be useful for students even after announcements have been made, since the process of redesigning currency is ongoing. Inspired by the new \$10 note, students can continue to explore the history of American women and their role in shaping our past and can learn about the process of U.S. currency design throughout U.S. history.

Note: This content is provided by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.



Introduction

United States coin and currency have long been a way to honor our past and express our values, including the images of great leaders and landmarks they depict. In 2013, the United States Department of the Treasury selected the \$10 note for redesign based on a number of factors. The next generation of currency, starting with the new \$10 note, will include various elements of design that celebrate democracy. In keeping with that theme, Treasury Secretary Jack Lew has decided that our paper currency should feature a woman who was a champion for our inclusive democracy. The Department of the Treasury, with the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, expects to unveil the new \$10 note in 2020, the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote.

In addition to featuring a woman, the new \$10 note will include a tactile feature that increases accessibility for the visually impaired.

Get Involved!

The Treasury Department is asking the public to use **#TheNew10** to express what democracy means to them and to spread the word about the new design. Who would you like to see on the \$10 note? How can we best honor our inclusive democracy? [Tell us.](#)

Why Do We Redesign Currency?

There are two main components of currency redesign: Technical and Aesthetic. (Students, if you are not familiar with the term Aesthetic, you can search for the definition in a dictionary or another reference source.)

1) The primary technical goals in the redesign of U.S. currency are to:

- Ensure that U.S. currency employs unique and technologically advanced features to deter counterfeiting
- Facilitate the public's use
- Provide access and usability
- Maintain public confidence

2) The aesthetic goals in the redesign are to:

- Institutionalize our American history by depicting people, monuments, symbols and concepts that reflect the past and reinforce a theme for that particular era of history.

Example of a redesigned note:

Redesigned \$5 Note - 2008

A redesigned \$5 note was issued on March 13, 2008. The redesigned \$5 note retains two of the most important security features first introduced in the 1990s: the watermark and embedded security thread.



What Is A Currency Theme?

- A series of concepts which capture the core values of the United States during a specific time period are reflected in U.S. currency notes.
- The last theme for currency symbols included symbols of freedom. Other examples include commerce, peace, energy, democracy, war, harvest, liberty and knowledge.



Example of currency themes:

- The \$10 note features the Statue of Liberty's torch.
- The Statue's official name represents the important symbol "Liberty Enlightening the World."

Rios Op-Ed: *Huffington Post*
Putting a Woman on Our Currency is Much Bigger than the \$10 Bill - 8/26/2015
by Rosie Rios, Treasurer of the United States

Today is Women's Equality Day and begins the five-year countdown to the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage. 2020 is also the year that the United States Department of the Treasury will unveil the redesigned \$10 bill, and it will be the first time in over a century that a woman will be featured on U.S. currency.

The Treasury Department's exciting announcement that U.S. paper currency will soon feature the image of a historical American female was a long time coming. In exercising his responsibility to select currency features, Secretary Lew is asking the American people to share ideas of what woman they believe best represents our inclusive democracy. And while putting a woman on currency may sound simple, there are many aspects of redesigning the next family of notes we must take into consideration. In addition to considering whose portrait should be featured, we're also exploring ways to incorporate the theme of democracy and what types of security measures we need to take to ensure that the note works in commerce and is safeguarded from counterfeiting.

Since Secretary Lew announced this initiative in June, I have traveled across the country and met with thousands of Americans to hear their feedback first-hand and learn what democracy means to them. Democracy, the theme for the next family of notes to be redesigned, sends a powerful message both at home and abroad. Today, Americans have many more ways to express ourselves and make a difference, especially with the power of social media. So it is especially fitting that since Secretary Lew's announcement, the American people have responded through Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, emails and handwritten letters to tell us what they think about currency redesign -- all combined, there have been more than 1.5 million interactions so far.

What I love hearing most is when people ask: what else can we do to honor the great contributions that women have made to the history of this country? That is exactly the type of dialogue we wanted to stimulate from this announcement. The conversations about who the next generation of currency should honor have been an opportunity to highlight a number of women, both recognizable names and some that might be lesser known that have made an impact on the history of this country. Our goal was to have this be the start of that conversation and putting a notable American woman on our currency is just one way we can pay tribute.

While the Treasury Department has discretion over currency design, we should all feel compelled to think about the historic nature of this change to our currency and the countless contributions women have made to our democracy, and in our own lives. Currency is just the beginning. Let's continue this important conversation at home, in our schools and by using #TheNew10 or visiting our [website](#) to share your thoughts and ideas.

Let's celebrate women today on Women's Equality Day, and every day.

The New Ten: Redesigning Our Nation's Currency FAQs

Who is Involved?

The Secretary of the Treasury makes the final decision on currency design as established by the Second Legal Tender Act of July 11, 1862 and 12 U.S.C. 418.

Historically, the Secretary has relied on the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) to provide advice on themes, symbols and concepts to be used on currency. However, for the newly redesigned \$10 note and the next family of notes, the Secretary and his team will incorporate input from the public into the design process.

Which woman will the Secretary choose to feature on our paper currency?

Democracy is the theme for the next redesigned series of notes and the Secretary will select a woman recognized by the public who was a champion for democracy in the United States. The person should be iconic and have made a significant contribution to – or impact on – protecting the freedoms on which our nation was founded. By law, only a portrait of a deceased person may be included on banknotes.

Treasury Secretary Jack Lew and various officials are conducting roundtables, town halls and other meetings to collect input and are reviewing the comments coming in to this [splash page](#) and the social media tagged #TheNew10. Treasury staff is reviewing the input received and is providing information to Secretary Lew over the course of the discussion.

While the final decision on all design features belongs to Secretary Lew, he will receive regular updates on the public feedback as he considers new design aspects for the \$10 note and the next family of notes.

When was the last time a denomination portrait changed?

The last changes in Federal Reserve notes occurred between 1914 and 1928 when four portrait changes occurred: \$10: Andrew Jackson to Alexander Hamilton; \$20: Grover Cleveland to Andrew Jackson; \$500: John Marshall to William McKinley; and \$1000: Alexander Hamilton to Grover Cleveland.

When will the Treasury Department unveil the new design?

After considering the public's input on the qualities that best represent our value of democracy, the Secretary will announce the changes to the \$10 note. However, the design process is very involved and detailed and the final redesigned note will not be complete for several years.

When will the new redesigned \$10 note enter circulation?

The Treasury Department anticipates the new redesigned \$10 note to enter circulation after 2020. The Treasury Department expects to unveil the new \$10 note in 2020, the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th amendment, which gave women the right to vote.

Did you know? Women on Past Currencies

Martha Washington

Martha Washington's portrait was used on the face of the series 1886 and 1891 \$1 silver certificates and on the back of the series 1896 \$1 silver certificate. Records indicate that it was engraved in 1875 by Charles Kennedy Burt.



Pocahontas

This vignette "Baptism of Pocahontas" appeared on the back of the \$20 National Bank Notes for the Original Series and the 1875 Series. It was engraved by Charles Kennedy Burt for the American Bank Note Company. The Original Series and 1875 Series of National Bank Notes were issued from 1863 to 1882. The vignette is based on a painting of the same name by John G. Chapman. More about the painting can be found on the Architect of the Capitol [website](#).



Activities:

1. Why The New 10? Students can read the blog on page 18 by United States Treasurer Rosie Rios to learn why a woman will be featured on the new \$10 note. Discuss with the larger class or group. Who do you think should be featured?
2. #TheNew10. Lend your voice to the conversation about the new \$10 note. Visit [this site](#) to share which woman you think should be featured on the new bill.

3. Research! Students can research an interesting woman from the American past and write an Op-Ed or short essay about why the woman of their choice should appear on the new \$10 note. Students can search the hashtag #TheNew10 to see some of the women who have been recommended so far to spark ideas.

4. Follow the Story. Treasury Secretary Jack Lew and his office will keep the public updated on the process of redesigning the \$10 note and other currency. Follow the story [here](#).