

Toasts

In the 18th and 19th centuries, toasts were part of social gatherings big and small. Toasts were used for many things: to thank people, make big announcements (like engagements), declare political loyalties, or mark special events. Sometimes toasting would go on for hours as people took turns raising their glass.



What you will need:

- Frequent Phrases & Toast Examples (below and page 2)
- Pencil and Paper
- For toasting, a glass of your choice of drink

Write your Toast!

1. Decide when you will share your toast.
2. Read the Toast Examples for inspiration.
3. Use words from the Frequent Phrase Sheet to give your toast an 18th-century flair.
4. Take 10-15 minutes to write a toast. It may be to mark the event or celebrate a family member or friend, near or far, that the occasion reminds you of.
5. Read your toast and raise a glass!

Toast Examples

“The President of the U.S—May his abilities and patriotism continue to deserve the confidence of his Fellow Citizens.”

Toast to George Washington, written in an article describing a party held in Washington’s honor, published in the Alexandria Gazette.

“The spirit of ‘76—may it never be erased from the American mind by foreign influence”

Toast given at George Washington’s Birthday Ball, published in the Alexandria Advertiser, February 13, 1798.

“The advancement of Science & the diffusion of information, the best aliment to true Liberty”

Toast given at a public dinner attended by James Madison, published in the Alexandria Gazette, May 10, 1809.

“The memory of George Mason, the unbending patriot, author of the first declaration of rights made by Virginia, 6th May, 1776”

Toast given to the Marquise de Lafayette, published in the Alexandria Gazette and Advertiser, October 19, 1824.

Frequent Phrases

Use this vocabulary sheet to examine frequent 18th-century phrases. Try to use some of these phrases in your toast.

- **Want/Wanting** – a lack of something
 - Example: “I have want of new clothes in my closet.”
- **Own** – to understand that something is a true statement
 - Example: “I own that I have enough money to buy lunch.”
- **Keep** – to stay in your room, or stay in your house
 - Example: “This snow makes me want to keep to my house.”
- **Esteem** – to have a lot of value, to give value to something
 - “He is an esteemed basketball player.”
- **Amiable** – friendly and pleasant, describing someone who does good deeds
 - “She is an amiable person who gives to charity.”
- **Answer** – to make a wish come true or to serve someone or something
 - “The dog answers to his owner.”
- **Efficacious** – when something is very effective, when something works every time
 - “This shampoo has proven efficacious at cleaning your hair.”
- **Felicity** – being very happy
 - “The winner of the gold medal had a lot of felicity.”
- **Fame** – reputation
 - “He had a bad fame.”
- **History** – any type of story, fiction or nonfiction
 - “The boy told a really fascinating history to try and get out of trouble.”
- **License** – freedom from rules, liberty
 - “He thought he had a license to misbehave because he has just turned 18.”

