

Name _____

George Washington's Complex Views on Slavery

Short Answer Key

1. George Washington's views on slavery evolved from owning enslaved individuals to expressing discomfort with the institution and taking steps toward emancipation in his will.
2. George Washington's will revealed his desire for the eventual freedom of his enslaved people, directing that they be freed upon the death of his wife, Martha Washington.
3. George Washington faced practical challenges in addressing slavery because it was deeply entrenched in the economic and social fabric of the southern colonies, making it difficult for even prominent figures to take immediate action.
4. In 1786, George Washington expressed a desire for "some plan adopted, by the Legislature, by which slavery in this Country may be abolished."
5. The societal norms and economic factors of the 18th century influenced George Washington's stance on slavery as they made it challenging to take immediate action against the institution, despite his discomfort with it.

