

## Choose Your Weapon Fun Facts Cards

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For reference:

- A cuttöe is a short, broad sabre or slashing sword, with a straight or slightly curved blade. It was used for hunting and in war.
- A small sword or epee is a sword that is light and designed for thrusting. It later evolved into a dueling sword in the 19th century.

Teaching with Objects: Choose Your Weapon Set

### Silver Lion-Headed Cuttöe

- British cuttöes normally have an ivory or ebony grip, while bone was an inferior material. Washington purchased from a colonial maker, because he was boycotting British goods.
- Normally, cuttöe blades are 24-27" long. However, because Washington was quite tall (6'2") this blade is 30".
- It is thought that Washington used this sword at the beginning of the American Revolution.
- Washington gave the sword to his younger brother, Colonel John Augustine. It was passed down to his heirs, until 1859 when John Augustine III traded this sword for his cousin, Colonel Lewis W. Washington's, 1767 Epee.

### The Bailey Silver & Ivory Hilted Cuttöe

- The sword maker, John Bailey, was one of the most famous metalworkers in his time.
- Often called Washington's "battle sword." He commissioned it in the middle of the Revolutionary War.
- Ivory grips stained green with acid and copper oxide was very fashionable at the time.
- It is the last sword to be chosen by Washington's five nephews. Captain Samuel Washington chose it and his son gave it to Congress in 1843. It was then transferred to the Smithsonian in 1922.

### The Model 1767 French Officer's Epee

- Epees were carried by French infantry officers.
- The Marquis de Lafayette, who was like a son to Washington and fought in the Revolutionary War, gave dozens of these swords to the American officers in his command.
- The Marquis probably commissioned this sword specifically to make it longer to accommodate for Washington's tall height.
- This sword was chosen by Bushrod Washington, who went fourth. During the Civil War, this sword was hidden in a pigeon house, where it was damaged by rust.

## The 1767 Silver Hilted Small Sword

- This sword was in Washington's 1772 portrait by Charles Peale to commemorate his time in the French and Indian War, despite the sword being purchased after the war.
- It appears in many of Peale's paintings, making it one of Washington's favorites.
- According to family tradition, Washington wore this sword when he resigned his commission as Commander of the Continental Army in 1783 and during his inauguration as President in 1789.
- This sword was chosen by Major George Lewis, who went second according to Washington's Will.

## The Steel Hilted Small Sword

- Washington commissioned this sword around the time he was elected President. For the time it was extraordinarily modern.
- This sword was worn by Washington regularly at formal occasions or during official business.
- William Augustine Washington had the first pick of his uncle's swords. However, he was not able to attend so his cousin, Bushrod, chose this sword for him as it was "the most finished and costly sword."
- This sword was stolen from the Washington family by the abolitionist John Brown in an attempted slave revolt in 1859.
- The sword was later purchased by the State of New York and put in the Capitol building. In 1911, the building caught on fire and damaged the sword almost beyond repair.