

Mount Rushmore: *A Stone Salute to the Presidents*

The Mount Rushmore National Park is a national park in South Dakota that features giant sculptures of four presidents. The sculptures are carved into the side of a granite mountain. The sculptures are of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln.



The idea for the sculpture began in 1923 as a way to encourage tourism to South Dakota. The sculptor selected to design and create it was Gutzon Borglum, who had created another mountain sculpture in Georgia.

The U.S. Congress approved the project in 1925. Borglum began working on the sculpture with 400 workers in 1927. They used dynamite to blast away portions of the granite rock. By the time the project ended, over 400,000 tons of rock had been removed.

The carvings of each president are about 60 feet high. George Washington's face was completed first in 1934. Thomas Jefferson had been planned to go on Washington's right, but the rock on that side was not right for carving. Borglum had that part removed and put Jefferson on Washington's left. The face of Jefferson was completed in 1936. In 1937 Abraham Lincoln's face was complete, followed by Theodore Roosevelt's face in 1939.

Gutzon Borglum died in 1941, and his son Lincoln Borglum took over the project. The original idea was to have the president's featured from head to waist. However the project ran out of money and the carving project stopped in 1941.

Today Mount Rushmore is South Dakota's most popular attraction for tourists. Over two million people visit the park each year to look upon the colossal statues of the presidents.

Short Answer

Write the correct answer in the blank.

1. When did Congress approve the project? _____
2. Which president's face had to be changed because the rock was not suitable? _____
3. Which president was finished last? _____
4. About how tall are the president's heads? _____
5. Who was the sculptor who began Mount Rushmore? _____

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