Directions  Analyze key elements of the painting to answer the questions below and on the following page.

General George Washington Resigning His Commission, oil on canvas by John Trumbull, U.S. Capitol.

1. Describe Washington’s posture.

Describe the posture of the others in the room.

2. How did the artist use light, color, and line to create a focal point?

What is the focal point of the painting?
3. Describe the gestures indicated by Washington’s hands and feet.

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What is he doing with each hand? What is he holding in his right hand, and what is he doing with it? What is the artist highlighting about Washington?

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4. Look at the faces of the other people in the room. At what is their attention directed?

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How many people are looking elsewhere?

_________________________________________________________________________

What does this communicate about their attitudes about Washington and what is occurring?

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5. Describe Washington’s facial expression.

_________________________________________________________________________

Where are his eyes directed?

_________________________________________________________________________

What might Trumbull have been indicating about Washington in depicting his facial expression in this way?

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6. An empty chair is behind Washington. A regal-looking cloak is resting on it. What reference is Trumbull making about what Washington is doing in this painting?

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What statement does this make about Washington, power, and self-restraint?

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