



# **A Is for American: Letters and Other Characters in the Newly United States**

*Jill Lepore*

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# A Is for American: Letters and Other Characters in the Newly United States

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What ties Americans to one another? What unifies a nation of citizens with different racial, religious and ethnic backgrounds? These were the dilemmas faced by Americans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as they sought ways to bind the newly United States together.

In **A is for American**, award-winning historian Jill Lepore portrays seven men who turned to language to help shape a new nation's character and boundaries. From Noah Webster's attempts to standardize American spelling, to Alexander Graham Bell's use of "Visible Speech" to help teach the deaf to talk, to Sequoyah's development of a Cherokee syllabary as a means of preserving his people's independence, these stories form a compelling portrait of a developing nation's struggles. Lepore brilliantly explores the personalities, work, and influence of these figures, seven men driven by radically different aims and temperaments. Through these superbly told stories, she chronicles the challenges faced by a young country trying to unify its diverse people.

*From the Trade Paperback edition.*

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