

Teacher Project Pack for Younger Students

The Star Spangled Banner: The Story & the Song

Overview

The flag is one of our nation's most important symbols and is the central character of our national anthem. This project introduces students to the key historical events that led to the creation of this important song, helping them to learn the lyrics to *The Star Spangled Banner* and expand their overall understanding of our nation's history.

To complete this project, students will . . .

- learn about key historical events that led to the creation of our national anthem through a primary-source multimedia presentation.
- learn about different types of primary sources and reflect on their value.
- learn the lyrics to *The Star Spangled Banner* with the assistance of a primary-source multimedia presentation.
- reinforce their understanding of the flag and the song's lyrics by coloring illustrations of U.S. flags and the song lyrics.

Objectives

Upon completing this project, students will be able to . . .

- describe key historical events that led to the creation of our national anthem.
- sing the words to *The Star Spangled Banner*.
- demonstrate their understanding of the song's lyrics and what these words and the flag mean to them individually.

Standards

This project meets the following Illinois learning standards and goals for grades 1-3 in Language Arts, Social Science, and Fine Arts.

- 1A.** Apply word analysis and vocabulary skills to comprehend selections.
- 1B.** Apply reading strategies to improve understanding and fluency.
- 2A.** Understand how literary elements and techniques are used to convey meaning.
- 14E.** Understand United States foreign policy as it relates to other nations and international issues.
- 14F.** Understand the development of United States political ideas and traditions.
- 25A.** Understand the sensory elements, organizational principles, and expressive qualities of the arts.
- 25B.** Understand the similarities, distinctions, and connections in and among the arts.
- 26A.** Understand processes, traditional tools, and modern technologies used in the arts.
- 26B.** Apply skills and knowledge necessary to create and perform in one or more of the arts.
- 27A.** Analyze how the arts function in history, society and everyday life.
- 27B.** Understand how the arts shape and reflect history, society and everyday life.

Guidelines

Prepare materials for implementation: You will need Microsoft PowerPoint® or the free [PowerPoint reader](#); the appropriate free version of Microsoft [Windows Media Player](#)®; *The Star Spangled Banner: The Story of Our National Anthem* (multimedia and PowerPoint files) and *The Star Spangled Banner: The Lyrics* (multimedia file); the MP3 audio files of *The Star Spangled Banner* Chalmers and Case recordings; copies of *The Star Spangled Banner* illustrated song lyrics sheet; and copies of the flag illustrations.

Allow for sufficient time to implement: Students will need three 40-minute class sessions to complete the main project components; plan appropriately for any extension activities you wish to complete.

Be flexible with implementation: Keep in mind that some students may need extra time to complete the activities scheduled for each of the three sessions. Consider implementing various extension activities to reinforce student learning.

Directions

Session 1: Introduction to Our National Anthem

1. Explain to students that this project will help them to learn about some important historical events that led to the creation of *The Star Spangled Banner* and to learn to sing the national anthem. Additionally, inform students that they will demonstrate their understanding of the song's lyrics and what these words and the flag mean to them individually through a fun arts-based activity.

2. Ask students to share stories of hearing the national anthem (e.g., at the start of sporting events). Tell them that *The Star Spangled Banner* has been recorded by many bands and sung by many people over the years. Then tell students that the Library of Congress has several recordings of our national anthem on its website, a few more than 100 years old! Then play either the [Chalmers baritone and chorus recording](#) (1914) or the [Case soprano and chorus recording](#) (1917).
3. Lead a class discussion about *The Star Spangled Banner* to encourage students to share what they know about our national anthem. Ideas to spark the discussion might include the following:
 - a. You just heard *The Star Spangled Banner*. This song is the national anthem of the United States of America. What do you think a national anthem is?
 - b. (Pull down/out a U.S. map.) Our national anthem is about events that took place in the city of Baltimore, which is located in the state of Maryland. Let's find Baltimore, Maryland on the map.
 - c. Baltimore is a port city. (Show image of [port detail](#)¹.) A port is a place on the water where ships sail in and out. (Show image of [fort detail](#)².) This is Fort McHenry. What is a fort?
 - d. A famous battle took place at Fort McHenry a long time ago. A man watched the battle and wrote a poem about what he saw. What is a poem?
 - e. This man's poem became the words for our national anthem. His name was Francis Scott _____. Do you know his last name? Can you guess? Here's a hint: you use this to unlock a door!

¹ E. Sachse, & Co., publisher "E. Sachse, & Co.'s bird's eye view of the city of Baltimore, 1869." 1870. Panoramic Maps 1847-1929 collection, Library of Congress. [g3844b pm002540] <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3844b.pm002540>.

² Ibid.

4. Hand out the illustrated song lyrics sheet. Explain that the illustrations can help them to remember the lyrics to our national anthem.
5. Play the anthem again and direct students to use the illustrated song lyrics sheet to help them follow along with the song. Encourage students to take the illustrated lyrics sheet home and practice singing the song with their parents. Be sure to remind them to bring the illustrated lyrics sheet back to class the next day.

Session 2: The Story of Our National Anthem

1. Show students *The Star Spangled Banner: The Story of Our National Anthem Story* [multimedia presentation](#) (.wmv file).
2. Tell students that this movie contains various primary sources. Explain that primary sources provide information about people and events from the past and include documents, such as letters and books; photos and illustrations, such as drawings and paintings; and even music, including song recordings, sheet music that provides information on how to play songs, and song sheets that provide the words to songs.
3. Now show *The Star Spangled Banner: The Story of Our National Anthem Story* [PowerPoint presentation](#) (.ppt file) and ask students to comment on what they find interesting about the various primary sources in the presentation. **NOTE:** This presentation does not contain narration nor timings, so you will need to hit Enter/Return to advance through the slides.
4. Show *The Star Spangled Banner: The Lyrics* [multimedia presentation](#) several times, encouraging students to sing along with you as they view it.

Session 3: Star Spangled Banners

1. Facilitate a class discussion in which students relate what they have learned about the story of *The Star Spangled Banner*.
2. Play either the [Chalmers](#) or [Case](#) recording of *The Star Spangled Banner* or another recording of your choice.
3. Show *The Star Spangled Banner: The Lyrics* [multimedia presentation](#) a few times, encouraging students to sing along with you as they view it.
4. Group the students in pairs. Give each pair a flag illustration from 1812 and one from 2005. Ask them to discuss the differences between the two flags for a few minutes, then to share their findings in a class discussion.
5. Direct students to color the illustrations with appropriate colors.
6. Now have each student color his/her copy of the illustrated song lyrics sheet. (Be sure to have extra copies on hand for those students who may have forgotten to bring it back to class). Hang student flag illustrations around the room. Encourage students to take home their colored illustrated song lyric sheets and to continue practicing singing the song.

Assessment

Review the suggested project rubric.

Extension Activities

Measure Out the Fort McHenry Flag

1. Go outside, or to a very large space such as the school gymnasium, and measure out the dimensions of the Fort McHenry flag (30 feet wide and 42 feet long), marking each corner.
2. Have students stand around the perimeter so that they get a sense of how big the flag really is.
3. If possible, have someone take a picture of the students from a vantage above, then post the picture on the classroom wall.

Make the Fort McHenry Flag

Make a quarter-size 1812 Fort McHenry flag out of construction paper.

(Beware, this activity requires A LOT of paper.)

1. Measure and cut out eight red and seven white stripes that are .5 foot wide and 10.5 feet long, taping or stapling them together.
2. Measure and cut out a blue square, 4 feet by 4 feet. Place the square on top of the stripes, securing it in the top left corner. Measure and cut out 15 white stars, each .5 foot from point to point, and tape or staple them to the blue square in the top left hand corner.
3. If possible, take a picture of the students with the flag and place on the classroom wall.

Make a Flag Collage

1. As a class or individually, make a list of places where the American flag is flown.
2. Have students take photographs or draw pictures of various places that the flag flies in your community.
3. Use the photos or drawings to make a flag collage.
4. Hang the flag collage in a school hallway or present it to the school board, the town mayor, or the local American Legion. The presentation ceremony could feature students singing the national anthem.