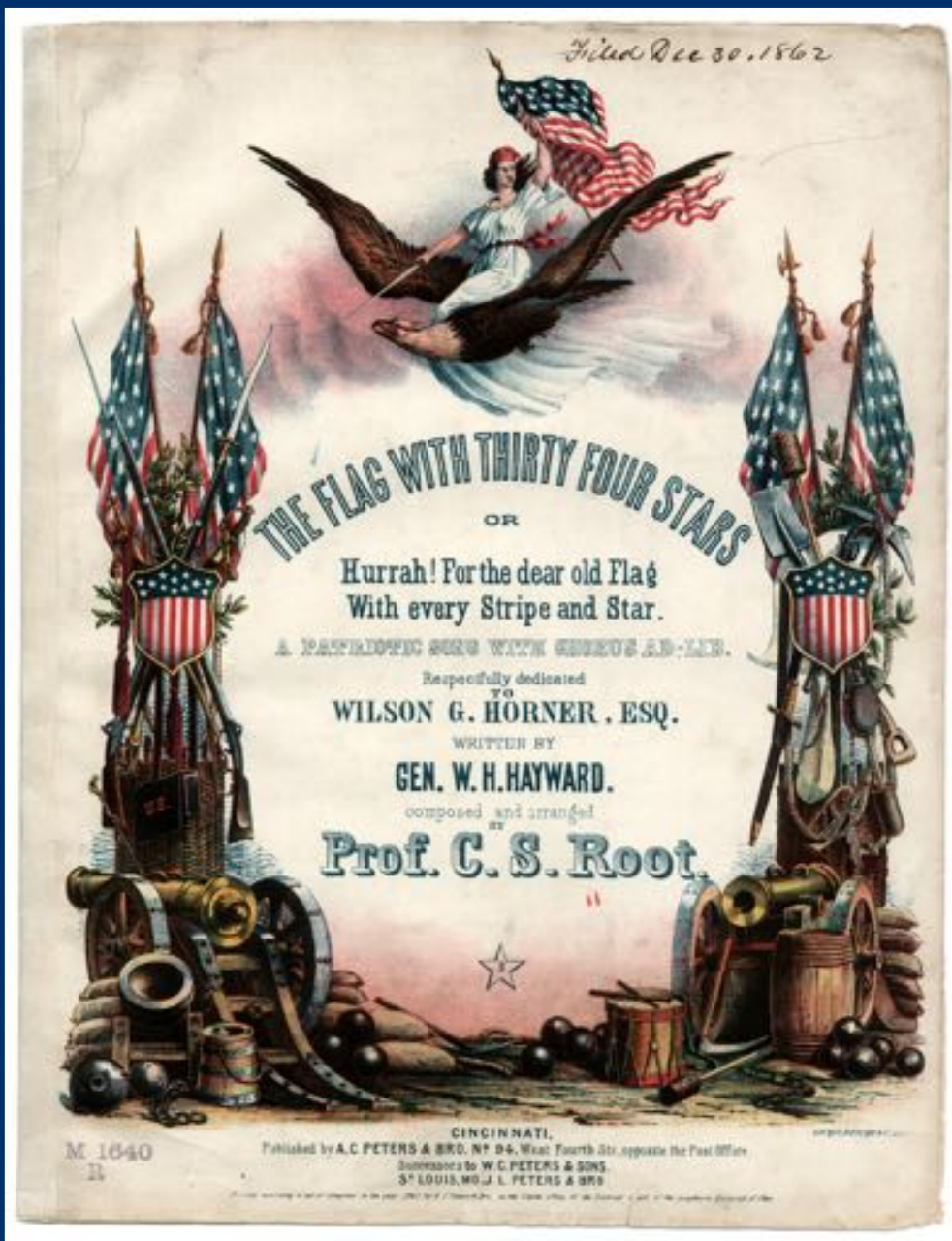


Chapter
6

Can Symbols Tell Stories?

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Figure 1. *The Flag with Thirty Four Stars*



Note. Root, C. S. & Hayward, W. H. (1862). *The Flag with thirty four stars, or Hurrah for the dear old flag with every stripe and star.* [Notated Music]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/ihms.200001877/>

Can Symbols Tell Stories?

C3 Disciplinary Focus U.S. History	C3 Inquiry Focus Evaluating sources and using evidence	Content Topic Elementary students using primary sources to learn the history of United States symbols through the use of visual and digital literacy
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C3 Focus Indicators

D1: Identify facts and concepts associated with a supporting question (D1.3.K-2).
Identify the disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a supporting question that are open to interpretation (D1.3.3-5).

D2: Generate questions about a particular historical source as it relates to a particular historical event or development (D2.His.12.K-2).
Generate questions about multiple historical sources and their relationships to particular historical events and developments (D2.His.12.3-5).
Select which reasons might be more likely than others to explain a historical event or development (D2.His.16.K-2).
Use evidence to develop a claim about the past (D2.His.16.3-5).

D3: Evaluate a source by distinguishing between fact and opinion (D3.2.K-2).
Use distinctions among fact and opinion to determine the credibility of multiple sources (D3.2.3-5).

D4: Construct an argument with reasons (D4.1.K-2).
Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources (D4.1.3-5).

Grade Level K-5	Resources Resources cited throughout chapter and in Appendices	Time Required Approximately 30 minutes for each activity
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Context for Chapter

United States Symbols

A symbol is an action, object, song, or event that expresses a particular idea or quality. In the United States, we have several symbols (bald eagle, the White House, Martin Luther King, Jr. Monument), but this chapter will focus on patriotic symbols. These are symbols meant to inspire meaningful and daily patriotism in all citizens, regardless of age. The intention of this chapter is to focus on United States symbols, specifically on how to read a symbol, which is one of the skills of *visual literacy*, as well as the skills of *digital literacy*, “access, analyze, and evaluate all forms of information and communication” (Berson & Berson, 2003, p. 164). The chapter offers ideas for inquiry (often using historical thinking skills) in elementary social studies that draw on resources from the Library of Congress and focus on the United States flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, Uncle Sam, the *Star-Spangled Banner*, the Great Seal, the Liberty Bell, and the Statue of Liberty.

Symbols

Symbols have many different meanings, but more specifically, the same symbol can have different meanings to different people. According to Brugar and Dickman (2013), symbols have always played a significant part in determining the identity of the United States. Different symbols, like the United States flag, the Statue of Liberty, and the bald eagle “help to convey American values such as liberty, freedom, democracy, and independence” (Brugar & Dickman, 2013, p. 17). This is one perspective regarding those symbols, and there are many other perspectives. For instance, for some cultures or religions, it is not appropriate to pledge one’s allegiance to a symbol, such as the flag. Though, in some groups, it is imperative to pledge allegiance to the American flag. American military personnel of all creeds and religions recite the Pledge of Allegiance while saluting the American flag.

It is important for you to remind your students that many topics are controversial, but it is also necessary for you to tread carefully with young learners. It is imperative for you to share a variety of perspectives, but some information is better suited for older students, such as middle and high school students. For instance, telling students that it is their right to stand or not to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance may not be appropriate for elementary students. Some parents would not appreciate their child’s teacher telling their student they can make a choice to stand or not stand for the Pledge. However, sharing the different perspectives and the reasons supporting the perspectives (i.e., Jehovah Witnesses believe one should not worship idols) would be more appropriate at the elementary level. However, Cowhey (2006) offers another alternative: she simply does not have her class recite the pledge every day, nor does she address it. Cowhey (2006) suggests that reciting the pledge is “developmentally inappropriate” for primary students and advocates that they should make the decision to

recite the Pledge when they are adults and fully understand what it means (p. 220).

There are many different perspectives on any topic. Some people, for example, kneel during the National Anthem as a form of protest, while others find that disrespectful. You should take advantage of an opportunity when it arises and is appropriate for elementary students and allow for discussion regarding different perspectives. You could pose questions such as: “Whose voices are heard and whose voices are missing?” In this chapter, the focus will be on the historical context and the origins of some of the United States symbols, and strategies for teaching about them, in ways that promote visual literacy and digital literacy along with historical thinking skills.

Visual Literacy

Visual arts and social studies provide an opportunity for teachers to teach and explore the ten themes of social studies and at the same time reinforce students’ skills and cultivate academic achievement (Cruz et al., 2019). According to [NCSS \(2010\)](#), those ten themes are culture; time, continuity, and change; people, places, and environments; individual development and identity; individuals, groups, and institutions; power, authority, and governance; production, distribution, and consumption; science, technology, and society; global connections; and civic ideals and practices. Visual literacy is the capability to read, write, comprehend, and generate visual images (Note, 2011).

Visual literacy is learned through analyzing visuals and having the ability to discuss the visual through verbal means, writing, cooperative learning, and projects (Note, 2011). Visual analysis is a method using art that encourages students to develop critical thinking skills and in the case of social studies, develop historical thinking skills too. Communication skills can also be fostered during discussion of visuals (illustrations, artwork, photographs, etc.).

One strategy that could be used in the elementary classroom is the Visual Thinking Strategy (VTS) approach. This approach uses a visual analysis which encourages students to respond to a series of questions, using learner-centered discussions about the visuals they are working with (Hailey et al., 2015). Ask: “What is going on in this picture?” “What do you see that makes you say that?” and “What more can you find?” Then repeat back what the student has replied and reference the part of the visual the student is referring to. These questions are intended to stimulate student discussions (Cruz et al., 2019). Simmons (2019) conveys that using the VTS approach in the elementary classroom will teach students skills that are easily transferred to other content areas, such as reading, social studies, science, and even math. For instance, observing images is part of visual literacy and observation is a major skill in science. Taking a closer look at things is practiced in all subject areas, like close reading, including looking closely at the illustrations in a text. Even being able to visualize things in math will increase math skills.

Digital Literacy

In 2018, the U.S. Department of Education (Mamedova & Pawlowski, 2018) publicized a report that explains the significance of digital literacy. The report explains that there are a substantial number of adults who are deficient in digital literacy. To close this gap, USDOE disclosed three features that are predominant to digital literacy: the ability to control devices, navigate a computer (find files, use hyperlinks), and communicate in digital spaces (saving and sending files and email, opening various media, interacting responsibly) (Mamedova & Pawlowski, 2018). As students acquire the skill of digital literacy, by locating, sharing, and employing newly gained information through the Internet (specific to this chapter—digital archives, digital libraries, government sites), they will learn to analyze the information and provide evidence of its validity, thus continuing to build their critical thinking skills.

In other words, in today's technology-rich world, digital literacy is required. Students who are taught to properly manage technology will have further opportunities to develop the critical skills needed with budding technology. Students will be better equipped to solve problems, think critically, and be better prepared to enter new virtual platforms (UWA Teaching News, 2020). It is necessary for you as a teacher to build this foundation with your students. This foundation can make the learning process more engaging, interactive, and effective.

Hobbs (2019) defines digital literacy as “collaborations and participation, the use of digital tools for inquiry learning, a deeper awareness of how digital texts circulate in culture, and the confidence that comes from trial-and-error exploration of how digital texts, tools and technologies work.” Spires and Bartlett (2012) shared that digital literacy involves locating, consuming, creating, and communicating digital content, while simultaneously evaluating the information. Digital literacy is similar to the way people navigate printed text by using strategies of reading and writing, but instead the text and illustrations are digital and can be processed digitally (Spires et al., 2017).

[Holterhoff \(2017\)](#) has pointed out that digital literacy urges students to practice critical thinking, as well as language arts skills, and visual skills. Teacher guided use of digital materials (e.g., primary source documents found online) can provide powerful engagement for students, as well as offer them real-life experiences, which may include frustration with digital materials (Rosinbum, 2017). Keep in mind that prior to teacher-guided use of digital materials, you should model the use of digital materials. If possible, you should model by displaying what you are doing on a digital device, such as an interactive whiteboard alone or with a document camera, where you are annotating a primary source or pointing out specific features. As you are going through the steps of using the digital materials, you should verbally and visually show the students what you are doing. After this, you can facilitate learning and guide students, as needed.

After sufficient modeling of digital materials, the students should work in pairs or small groups, following the “I do. We do. You do.” instructional model, also known as teacher-modeling first, teacher-guided practice (with a partner or small team) second, and independent practice last (Fisher & Frey, 2008). According to Fisher and Frey (2008), gradually releasing responsibility to students is a way to differentiate instruction, as the responsibility gradually shifts to the learners. Finally, students should independently use digital materials, with teacher guidance, as needed. Activities including digital experiences can inspire discussions on digital literacy and assist students in navigating unknown platforms (Rosinbum, 2017). Additionally, with today’s wealth of technology, having access to so many sources can encourage students to dig deeper into the past and can help to form an understanding of the past.

Digital tools help learners visualize what they customarily could not see and provide learners the resources to investigate these visuals. However, digital literacy also includes tools to form the possibilities of communicating, such as decisions to blog or create a digital artifact and where to display these digital pieces (Castek & Manderino, 2020). Because of these digital possibilities and the reach of the Internet, this expands the possible audience. With that said, it is imperative that you provide learning opportunities to help grow digital literacy skills and to find ways for learners to develop and expand their involvement with online resources (Castek & Manderino, 2020).

Digital literacy correlates easily with history and historical thinking, creating more opportunities for inquiry that continues far outside traditional classroom experiences and into endless possibilities with simply a device and Internet access. You must instruct students on how to correctly investigate digital resources, the vast possibilities of digital resources, and the reliability of resources in general.

Historical Context Is Necessary

When teaching visual and digital literacy skills, it is necessary to know the historical context. Wineburg et al. (2011) shared that Lincoln, the “Great Emancipator,” shared some words that may make today’s reader think he was a white supremacist, if the reader does not consider the context. Lincoln was attempting to appeal to voters and chose very specific words on slavery to do that, in response to a debate with his opponent. “Contextualizing in history is about working to understand historical phenomena—speeches, people, events—as they existed in their original worlds, in order to understand them on their own terms rather than through a modern lens” (Wineburg et al., 2011, p. 32).

Often elementary teachers do not have a history background, as their major in college is generally elementary education, which encompasses all subject areas, up to and including art, music, and physical education. This is much different than middle and high school teachers who took several courses based on their specific content major. More specifically, middle school social science teachers take approximately 27-39 credit hours focused on their major

of social sciences (history, civics, economics, geography); whereas, the elementary academic program only requires three credit hours on how to teach elementary social studies. With that in mind, this chapter will provide adequate historical context for the teacher prior to each symbol activity.

Contextualizing is a fundamental part of teaching history. This chapter offers historical context for each symbol to provide background knowledge for you to use that could also be shared with students. The historical context provided could be modified for use with elementary students. Contextualization is not the principal strategy focus of this chapter, but it will assist you in feeling more comfortable and prepared to teach the topics presented.

Can Symbols Tell Stories?			
Staging the Compelling Question	Primary: Symbols of the U.S. (YouTube video) Intermediate: National Symbols of the United States (YouTube video)		
Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3	Supporting Question 4
Regarding the origin of the American Flag, which source is more believable and why?	What does the Pledge mean? How do we show respect to the United States flag?	What or who is Uncle Sam and what is its or his relationship to traditions in the United States?	How can a symbol, specifically a song, tell a story?
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
The students will independently answer the inquiry question (for primary students, rephrase the inquiry question): “Which primary source do you believe? Why?” using the sentence starters “I think the _____ source is more believable because...”	The primary students will respond to the supporting questions verbally. The intermediate students will complete the activity sheet, which includes responding to the supporting questions.	The students will work in teams of two or four to create (draw, paint, build a model/statue) a modern-day Uncle Sam, representative of their classroom, school, community, or the US. Based on materials, allow students to decide how to create.	The students will take the information they learned and respond by creating a visual of the song, with few to no words. For primary students the question can be modified: “How does this song tell us a story” or “What story does this song tell us?”

Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources
<p>Betsy Ross, 1777</p> <p>Primary Source Analysis Tool</p> <p>Teacher's Guide for Analyzing Primary Sources</p> <p>Heft article</p> <p>Caroline Purdy letter</p>	<p>Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, 8th division, 1899</p> <p>San Francisco, Calif., April 1942. First-graders</p> <p>How Do We Show Respect activity sheet (Appendix F)</p>	<p>Mobilizing the Homefront During WWI video</p> <p>Primary Source Analysis Tool</p> <p>I Want You for the US Army</p> <p>Teacher's Guide for Analyzing Photographs & Prints</p> <p>Your Red Cross Needs You poster</p> <p>Boys and Girls!</p>	<p><i>The Star-Spangled Banner</i> audio recording</p> <p>Kid-friendly video of the Star-Spangled Banner</p>

Can Symbols Tell Stories?		
Staging the Compelling Question	Primary: Symbols of the U.S. (YouTube video) Intermediate: American Symbols (YouTube video)	
Supporting Question 5	Supporting Question 6	Supporting Question 7
What characteristic of the Great Seal represents the United States best? Why?	What makes the Liberty Bell significant?	What story can the Statue of Liberty tell us?
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
The students will design a family, school, or town seal, providing support/evidence for how their seal represents their family, school, or town.	The students will respond to the supporting question by verbal or written response. For verbal response, the students could choose to create their own podcast or a one-minute appearance on the school news. For a written response, the students could write an article for the school newspaper or create a poster to display in the school hallway.	The students will respond to the supporting question using at least two pieces of evidence that they heard or observed. Then the students will record their answer to create a short class video responding to the question.
Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources
The Great Seal of the United States Great Seal of the United States PDF The Great Seal of the United States video	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Liberty Bell Primary Source Analysis Tool	Deconstructing of the Statue of Liberty Newspaper article from Chronicling America Head of the Statue of Liberty on display at Champ-de-Mars, 1878 The Statue of Liberty on Liberty Island, New Jersey Statue of Liberty Unknown Newspaper articles regarding the Statue of Liberty Selected Views of the Statue of Liberty Statue of Liberty virtual tour

The American Flag

Historical Context

When viewing primary sources, it is vital to consider the historical context. It is key to temporarily move past today's lenses and be there, in the moment of time being discussed. On January 1, 1776, under the leadership of George Washington, the Continental Army was reorganized. On this same date, at Prospect Hill, George Washington ordered the Grand Union flag be hoisted. The Grand Union flag contained thirteen stripes of red and white, on behalf of the thirteen colonies, and the upper left corner included a British Union Jack. Many people claim that the Grand Union flag is truly the initial American flag (Whipple, 1910/2000; Leepson, 2005). At this time, most Americans (white Colonists) were fighting for respect and representation, not for independence. Therefore, the Grand Union flag with a British emblem showed an unceasing loyalty to the crown.

Figure 2. “*The Star-Spangled Banner*” Lithograph



Note. Currier & Ives (1860-1870). *The Star Spangled Banner*. [Lithograph]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2001706271/>

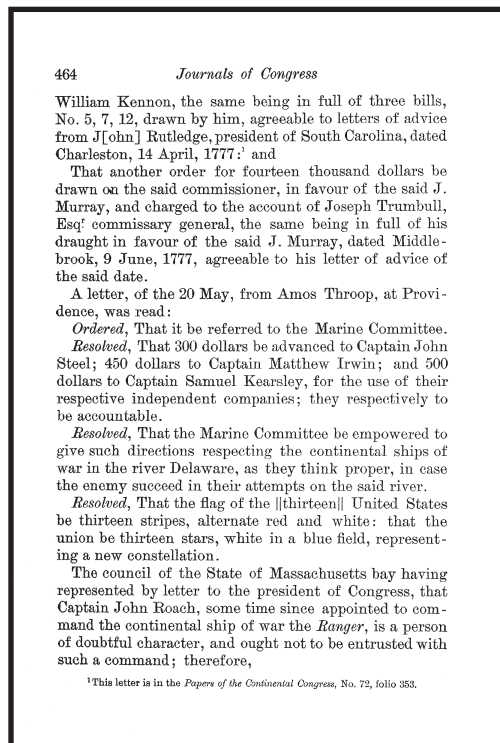
There is much argument over who sewed the next American flag. Leepson (2005), author of *Flag: An American Biography*, expressed,

Virtually every historian who has studied the issue believes that Betsy Ross did not sew the first American flag. Yet a significant number of others who have looked into the matter...believe that Betsy Ross did, indeed, stitch the first American flag. (p. 39)

Depending on the historical account, roughly six months after the Grand Union flag was created, in June 1776, or a year and a half later in June 1777, Betsy Ross allegedly sewed the first American flag. Purportedly, she constructed this flag based on proposed designs by George Washington and his committee. Nevertheless, some authors have conveyed that she modified the recommended six-pointed star to the five-pointed star that we see on the flag today. Who sewed the first American flag is still a huge controversy, but many think the story is a favored American legend.

The Continental Congress passed the first Flag Act (Figure 3) on June 14, 1777, which detailed that the flag would have thirteen red and white stripes and thirteen stars in a field of blue, which represented a new constellation.

Figure 3. *Flag Act from June 14, 1777*



Note. *Journals of the Continental Congress*, Vol. 8 (1777 June 14). <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwjc.html>

As mentioned previously, the origin of the United States flag has been challenged for approximately 140 years. Did Betsy Ross sew the original United States flag, or is that just

a treasured story passed down through the centuries? Did Francis Hopkinson (an author, composer, member of the Continental Congress) design the first American flag, or did he design the United States Navy flag? This flag was known as the Thirteen Star Flag and is the most commonly known colonial flag. The Flag Resolution did not state how the thirteen stars should be organized, so there are several versions of the Thirteen Star Flag.

Over the years, as states have been added to the Union, the flag has been altered. President Eisenhower endorsed a proclamation acknowledging Hawaii as part of the Union on August 21, 1959. It was the fiftieth and final state to be admitted to the Union to date. Eisenhower presented the new flag at the ceremony to add Hawaii. It was America's twenty-seventh design of the flag and is still the flag we use now. It has thirteen stripes and nine rows of stars with five or six stars per row. According to the Library of Congress (2002), it is officially the longest-serving flag of the United States.

According to an American flag scholar, “nor does any nation turn to its flag as an emotional, political, and patriotic symbol in good times and bad the way Americans do” (Leepson, 2005, p. 1). Some Americans fly the flag to show their belief that the nation is not living up to the true meaning of the flag. Some have burned the flag to show disappointment or opposition. No matter what, this flag, this symbol, is part of this country's experiment of democracy, and it is a huge part of American history—a history that is filled with imperfections, and progress.

The American Flag Activity: Contextualizing, Sourcing, and Digital Literacy (Grades K-5)

“Regarding the origin of the American Flag, which source is more believable and why?”

Prior to the activity, you should familiarize yourself with the historical context regarding the American flag. You should introduce the activity by presenting the supporting question “Regarding the origin of the American Flag, which source is more believable and why?” or for primary students, rephrase the supporting question “Which primary source do you believe? Why?” Content knowledge and understandings are learned by engaging students in historical questions that spark their curiosity and make them passionate about seeking answers (Wineburg et al., 2011).

Grades K-2

You should present primary and secondary students with hard copies of *Betsy Ross, 1777* (Figure 4). Preferably, allow each student to have their own copy to write on, observe, and investigate; but one copy per pair or team could work. Display the print from the link digitally and allow the students one to two minutes to just simply observe the print, without any

conversation. Then display the digital version of the Library of Congress's *Primary Source Analysis Tool* (Figure 5). This can be displayed digitally for the students to watch and be a part of the analysis as the you fill in your responses. For primary students, it is not necessary to present students with the LOC tool, but instead, you should facilitate a discussion about the image by following the questions listed on the tool. In other words, the handout would likely be more distracting for the students and challenging for those who are still learning to write. However, talking about what children see/think/wonder (Tishman & Palmer, 2007) is developmentally appropriate. See/Think/Wonder is a thinking routine often used with art and visuals and asks students to respond to the following questions: "What do you see?" "What do you think about?" and "What does it make you wonder?" (Tishman & Palmer, 2007).

Figure 4. *Betsy Ross, 1777*



Note. Ferris, J. L. G. (n.d.). *Betsy Ross, 1777*. [Painting]. Library of Congress.
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002719536/>

Figure 6. Digital Version of Library of Congress’s Primary Source Analysis Tool: Sample

PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS TOOL

NAME:

OBSERVE
 a clock; a doll; people; chairs; flag; sword; window; George Washington; portrait on the wall; pitcher;

REFLECT
 it seems like they are gathered around the flag for some reason; the clothing is much different from today; this may have been created to document an event, like a photograph does today

QUESTION
 I wonder who all the people are in the image? I wonder what George Washington and the child are talking about? What is the lady doing? Why is the flag spread out instead of hanging up?

Figure 7. Correlation Between Library of Congress’s Questioning and VTS Questioning


Questions from Library of Congress’s Primary Source Analysis Tool	Questions from Visual Thinking Strategy approach
“Observe” section: Describe what you see? What people or objects are shown? How are they arranged?	What do you see that makes you say that?
“Reflect” section: What is happening in the image?	What is going on in this picture?
“Question” section	What more can you find?

Prior to completing the first section, “Observe,” you must be very specific about what is meant by “observe.” The students must only state what they can actually see in the print, not what they think is happening. What they think is saved for the “Reflect” section. The *Teacher’s Guide: Analyzing Primary Sources* (Figure 8) offers additional questions for you to guide this activity with students. For K-2 students, it is recommended to give the students a prompt to help them complete each section. For the “Observe” section, the students could be given the prompt, “I see _____.” Have the students share a quick list of observations with their shoulder partner or a team, using the given prompt; and then have a few responses shared with the whole class to add to the digital organizer. The quick part is purposeful to have the students focused on only what they can see. Often, students immediately want to say what they *think* is happening. For instance, if they *see* a puff of smoke coming from a rifle, they will state something like “there is a battle happening.” However, for this part of the analysis, they must only state what they see: puff of smoke, rifle, men in uniform, etc. The thinking/reflecting/infering piece comes next. Then share with them that the “Reflection” section

allows them to share what they think, based on what they see. In other words, the students will draw conclusions or make inferences about what they observed.

Figure 8. Teacher’s Guide: Analyzing Primary Sources

TEACHER'S GUIDE ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES



Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. **Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.**

OBSERVE

REFLECT

QUESTION

Have students identify and note details.

Sample Questions:
 What do you notice first? · Find something small but interesting. · What do you notice that you didn't expect? · What do you notice that you can't explain? · What do you notice now that you didn't earlier?

Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the source.

Where do you think this came from? · Why do you think somebody made this? · What do you think was happening when this was made? · Who do you think was the audience for this item? · What tool was used to create this? · Why do you think this item is important? · If someone made this today, what would be different? · What can you learn from examining this?

Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

What do you wonder about...
 who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.

Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

A few follow-up activity ideas:

Beginning
Have students compare two related primary source items.

Intermediate
Have students expand or alter textbook explanations of history based on primary sources they study.

Advanced
Ask students to consider how a series of primary sources support or challenge information and understanding on a particular topic. Have students refine or revise conclusions based on their study of each subsequent primary source.

For more tips on using primary sources, go to
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers>

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS | LOC.gov/teachers

Note. From Library of Congress.
<https://www.loc.gov/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/guides/>

Finally, the last section, “Question,” provides the students an opportunity to wonder. Often, wondering is something that needs to be taught too, because the students are unclear how to wonder about something. You will need to model what wondering looks like. For instance, “I wonder what the little girl is saying to President Washington?” “What is in the chair?” “Are they hot with that many clothes on?” or “What are the men saying to the woman?” With that said, this process is not always expected to be linear. For example, asking students to state what they see often leads them to question. However, for elementary students, with varying experience in analyzing primary sources, it is best to use the LOC’s tool in the suggested order at, least at the beginning stages of analyzing and thinking historically.

For the “Further Investigation” section, ask the students what else they would like to know about and how they can find out. You may need to guide them to respond to the “how” part of the question: “What resources would we use to find out what else you would like to know?” This may require your prompting: “How do we learn new information?” (by reading or listening to parents, families, or teachers) and “How do your families learn new information?” (Google,

search on the Internet, read a book). Then, have a few books (see Appendix A) about the flag for the students to explore, based on the ability of the class or individual students, for read-alouds.

Grades 3–5

For the intermediate students, you should conduct a close read, which is a historical thinking skill, by sharing the flag’s historical context (see [Appendix B](#)) with the students. Instructional strategies that develop historical thinking skills can be used in conjunction with primary and secondary sources in a variety of ways from a teacher-modeled close read to student inquiry. For a close read, you must read it through a second time, while thinking aloud, to model your thinking process while reading, and encourage the students to jot down any questions or thoughts they may have as the context is being read. Allow students to share their thoughts with their shoulder partners and allow a few students to share with the whole group. Then elicit questions from the students about anything they may not understand: “What questions do you have?” Jot these down on the board, so the focus is on these questions for the final read (and possibly further inquiry). Reread the context for a third and final time. This reading is to focus on the meaning of the passage. At this point, introduce the *Analyzing the Origin of the U.S. Flag* organizer ([Appendix C](#)).

Figure 9. Teacher’s Think-Aloud

From the text	Teacher’s think aloud
“On this same date, at Prospect Hill, George Washington ordered the Grand Union flag be hoisted.”	I wonder why George Washington wanted the flag raised?
“The Grand Union flag contained 13 stripes of red and white, on behalf of the 13 colonies...”	Ohhh...that’s why the flag has 13 stripes! That makes sense.
“Virtually every historian who has studied the issue believes that Betsy Ross did not sew the first American flag.”	What??? Betsy Ross did not sew the first American flag?
“It was America’s 27th design of the flag...”	Imagine designing the flag 27 different times or designing anything that many times!?
“...it is officially the longest serving flag of the United States.”	That’s pretty sweet! The flag we have now has been around the longest amount of time.

Next, pre-read the questions from the organizer with the students to address any needs that must be met in the classroom (e.g., English Language Learner students or Exceptional Services Education students who have education plans with accommodations allowing for questions and answers to be read to them). Share the sources with the students digitally, but also present the students with hard copies of *Betsy Ross, 1777* (Figure 4), the [Caroline Purdy letter](#), and the [article about Heft](#). Be sure to include details of sourcing (another historical thinking skill), such as the date the source was created, along with each primary source. You

need to share the sources digitally to provide an explanation of where the sources came from (Library of Congress, Smithsonian, and Baltimore Sun). Display or make copies of *Words and Definitions* (Appendix D), so that students do not use their time looking up the words and instead focus on content, visuals, and historical thinking skills. For the first minute or two of source analysis, instruct the students to be silent and focus on observing the three sources, not reading them from top to bottom. They may read a few words here or there, but the focus should be on observing. For instance, they should observe things such as old paper, cursive handwriting, three men, a girl, a lady, a flag, *The Baltimore Sun*, 2010, George Washington, old clothing, etc. Encourage them to write notes in the margins of the sources and circle things they notice or have questions about. After that, allow student pairs or teams of students to share and discuss their findings with each other, instructing them on which student should go first, so that time is managed appropriately (students tend to spend a great deal of time on deciding who should discuss first). Then, allow students to continue working with their partner or team to complete the *Analyzing the Origin of the U.S. Flag* organizer, while discussing the questions. As for the Purdy letter, students might be excited by the challenge of deciphering cursive, or they may be frustrated. It is suggested to allow the students to grapple with the cursive for a minute or so and then offer them the transcribed version. Students should always be given the original source prior to providing them with a transcribed version.

To wrap up this activity, have the students independently answer the supporting question “Regarding the origin of the American Flag, which source is more believable and why?” Or, for primary students, rephrase the supporting question “Which primary source do you believe? Why?” and have students answer using the sentence starters provided: “I think the *Betsy Ross, 1777* source is more believable because...” “I think the *Caroline Purdy* source is more believable because...” or “I think the source about *Heft* is more believable because...” Depending on the grade and ability of the students, you could write a sentence, based on class input (kindergarten/early first grade); have them write one sentence (first/second grade), at least two to three complete sentences (third grade), or a paragraph (fourth/fifth grade), and they must provide specific evidence to support their answer/opinion. If they have provided specific evidence, there are not necessarily wrong answers. This assignment allows students to have an opinion, based on primary sources and their interpretation of the sources. Be sure to emphasize this with the students because standardized testing has taught students to think there is only one correct response. Possible student answers may include “I think the Purdy letter is more believable because Caroline Purdy wrote the letter, and she told the story her grandmother told her” or “I think the Heft article is more believable because it is written more recently in 2010.” This last response is not necessarily a favorable response, but rather what an elementary student may say.

After all students have provided their explanation, you should share additional thoughts regarding the three sources, without alluding to their personal opinions. Then, share that the Betsy Ross print was published in 1932 but was portraying a scene from 1777. Also, the

letter was written by the granddaughter and was what she had heard her grandmother say. You might say “Could Caroline have gotten parts of the story confused?” The newspaper article was written in 2010, regarding a story that happened in 1958. You may say “How did he come up with the information to write this article?” Share with the students that these are questions and thoughts that go through a historian’s mind when they are looking at primary and secondary sources.

The Pledge of Allegiance

Historical Context

Arguments also surround who wrote the Pledge of Allegiance, but the evidence concerning the debate was thoroughly scrutinized in 1939. It was finally resolved that although someone had previously created a pledge for the flag, Frank Bellamy was definitely the author of the Pledge of Allegiance of the United States of America that is used today. As the editor for *The Youth’s Companion*, a children’s literature magazine, Mr. Bellamy helped plan the National School Celebration of Columbus Day, which was an Act of Congress. This act declared every school in America ought to commemorate Columbus Day by doing several patriotic duties, such as raising the flag, saluting the flag, and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. As a section of the celebration, Bellamy penned the Pledge of Allegiance. The *Youth’s Companion* published the Pledge of Allegiance of the United States of America, for the first time, on September 8, 1892. Later, on October 21, 1892, the Pledge was articulated for the first time (Bellamy, 1892).

The Pledge of Allegiance is significant to the United States. The definition of pledge is a promise, and many Americans say the pledge to honor the United States and the men and women who fought and continue to fight for America. The Pledge is often the commencement of many important events, such as school days, graduation ceremonies, government meetings, and Congressional sessions. For many Americans, the Pledge is a symbol of patriotism to the United States, signifying that they are unified and stand together as a single nation. People may have varied perspectives on what patriotism means to them. When those Americans do recite the Pledge, it is a way of thanking the United States and those who went to battle for us and still go to battle for us, who in turn gave us the freedoms we possess today. It also is important to remember, as mentioned previously, that not everyone views the Pledge of Allegiance in the same way. For instance, some students’ religion may dictate that they may not pledge allegiance to any object, and therefore, they may not participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Additionally, some historical context is necessary to share prior to analyzing one of the photographs from the lesson, a photograph of first graders in San Francisco, California, in April 1942 (Figure 10). In the early 1940s, the United States participated in World War II. The bombing of Pearl Harbor (December 7, 1941), which started as an attack on United States

territory by Japanese forces, promptly provoked a Declaration of War (December 8, 1941). In February 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt placed an order that affected thousands of Japanese Americans residing on the west coast of the United States. His order required that all Japanese Americans be removed from their homes and located in secured internment camps, also referred to as incarceration camps. The Library of Congress's [Japanese American Internment Primary Source Set](#) describes the Japanese American internment camps: "located in remote, desolate, inhospitable areas, the camps were prison-like, with barbed wire borders and guards in watchtowers." For primary students, the Library of Congress's description could be transcribed to state that the Japanese American internment camp was located far away from towns, where there was nothing else. These camps were not camps at all but were more like jail. For intermediate students, you should guide the students through deciphering the statement. For instance, define each word: "What does 'remote' mean?" (gather responses from the class), "What does 'desolate' mean?" "What does 'inhospitable' mean?" "What is prison?" "What is barbed wire?" and "What are guards?" Then allow the students to recreate that sentence using their own words, in pairs or in teams of four.

Figure 10. *San Francisco, Calif., April 1942. first-graders*



Note. Lange, D. (1942). *San Francisco, Calif., April 1942. First-graders*, some of Japanese ancestry, at the Weill public school pledging allegiance [sic] to the United States flag. The evacuees of Japanese ancestry will be housed in War relocation authority centers for the duration of the war. [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2001705948/>

The Pledge of Allegiance Activity: Contextualizing, Close Reading, Visual Literacy (Grades K-5)

“What does the Pledge mean?”

Grades 3–5

First, you should pose the question “What does the Pledge mean?” The Pledge is recited daily across America, but do the reciters even know what the Pledge means? Do they know what the words mean? Provide each student with a copy of the *Pledge Activity* page ([Appendix E](#)). Next, read the *Pledge Activity* page, including the definitions, and discuss it with the students. Based on the grade and academic levels, guide the students through this activity, allowing students to work in pairs, or have students do the activity independently. If the students complete the activity independently, allow them time to discuss what they came up with, with a partner or small team. Then, have the students independently complete the bottom of the *Pledge Activity* page by summarizing the pledge into their own words. As needed, for ESE, ESOL, or students who may need extra support, have them pair up with another learner to complete the summarizing section. Directly following the summarizing, allow the students the opportunity to share their summaries. This is an opportunity for formative assessment that enables you to see whether the students understand what the Pledge means.

Grades K–5

To further add to the meaning of the Pledge, the second part to this activity involves visual literacy skills. Share the supporting question: “How do we show respect to the United States flag?”

Then, provide each pair or team of students Figure 10, with *San Francisco, Calif., April 1942. first-graders* and Figure 11, *Pledge of allegiance to the flag, 8th division, 1899* and share them digitally. Guide students through completing Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) questions. This can be done as a whole group, for primary students, ESE students, and ESOL students, while you document the students’ responses on chart paper, a whiteboard, or an electronic board. Intermediate students can use the *How Do We Show Respect* activity sheet ([Appendix F](#)). Students could work in pairs or in teams to complete the activity sheet. Allow them to discuss each part of the activity sheet. Discussion is important to stimulate ideas for students who may be struggling with responding and therefore to support the needs of all learners. For instance, a student who may not understand what is being asked will listen to responses of others and could make the connection. To accommodate kindergarten, first grade, ESE, or ESOL students, you could dictate sentences for the students or allow for verbal responses.

Figure 11. *Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, 8th division, 1899*



Note. Johnston, F. B. (ca. 1899). *Pledge of allegiance to the flag, 8th Division*. [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2001703605/>

Uncle Sam: Historical Context

Uncle Sam is an icon and image that began during the War of 1812 and became an epithet for the United States. Samuel Wilson, a meat packer, from Troy, New York, supplied the United States military with barrels of beef. In 1961, Wilson was acknowledged as Uncle Sam's namesake. The barrels would be stamped with the abbreviation U.S. because the meat was packed in the United States. Soldiers designated the food as "Uncle Sam's." Soon, the media began writing about these Uncle Sam's meat barrels, and it quickly became widely accepted that Uncle Sam was a nickname for the U.S. federal government.

Thomas Nast, a political cartoonist, began what we know as the popular image of Uncle Sam (Bell, 2014). These initial pictures depicted Uncle Sam with a white beard and a stars-and-stripes suit. The most recognizable image of Uncle Sam was originated by James Montgomery Flagg during World War I to recruit men for the military (Bell, 2014). The print of Uncle Sam pointing with the caption "I want you for the U.S. Army," developed into a national image. Over four million copies of this print were reproduced between 1917 and 1918.

Uncle Sam Activity: Corroborating, Digital Literacy, Visual Literacy (Grades K-5)

“What or who is Uncle Sam, and what is Uncle Sam’s relationship to traditions in the United States?”

To introduce this activity, you will pose the supporting question: “What or who is Uncle Sam, and what is Uncle Sam’s relationship to traditions in the United States?” With primary grades, it is suggested that you break the question apart, into two questions, or just use the beginning part: “What or who is Uncle Sam?” To build some historical context for the students, you could first share the first paragraph of historical context to explain where the title “Uncle Sam” came from originally. Then, play the following short video from the Library of Congress and the History Channel, “[Mobilizing the Homefront: Posters During WWI](#).” This video is a great integration of digital literacy and visual literacy. You may want to stop the video a few times to discuss the following words as they are presented: “curator,” “recruiting,” “iconic,” and “enduring.” It is recommended that you also stop the video at 1:40 to allow the students to imagine they are in the time period. This may mean you have to paint a mental picture (elementary appropriate) for them, as they may have little to zero knowledge about World War I or World War II. Then, finish the video. After the students have some historical context, present the students with the *I Want You* poster ([Figure 12](#)) and provide the necessary guidance for them to analyze the poster, using the [Primary Source Analysis Tool](#), which is a blank organizer. This can be used on a device, providing students with practice for digital literacy, or you can print the organizer. You may also want to display the [Teacher’s Guide for Analyzing Photographs & Prints](#) to allow for guiding questions to complete each section. Depending on the experience the students have analyzing primary sources, they can use the guiding questions or just simply complete the blank organizers with what they observe (which addresses visual literacy), what they reflect, and what they question.

Figure 12. *I Want You for the U.S. Army*



Note. *I want you for the U.S. Army.* (1941). [Poster]. Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2002718900/>

For kindergarten through first grade, you will want to scribe the student responses for them but allow the students to verbalize what to write. You could provide the questions verbally and allow teams to verbally discuss their responses; or you could provide each team with one copy of the PDF, so the students can read the questions for themselves. If the second option is used, provide guidance to have one person write one response and then pass the paper to the next person for recording. This will encourage participation for all students instead of one student doing all the documenting.

Repeat this same process with the [Your Red Cross Needs You poster](#) and the [Boys and Girls! poster](#) both of which feature Uncle Sam. Then, you should have the students answer the

following questions, by sharing their response verbally, with a partner: “What or who is Uncle Sam, and what is its or his relationship to traditions in the United States?” A possible student response could be “a firm, stern, serious, symbol of the United States who isn’t a real person.” You may want intermediate students to respond with a piece of evidence or two from some of the primary and secondary sources provided during this lesson. A great way to have intermediate students respond is by using a token method. Give each student two or three tokens (pennies, math tiles, Skittles, etc.). In small groups of about four students, the students have their three Uncle Sam posters and their two or three tokens. Designate which student goes first to reply to the question, using a piece of primary source evidence. When the student responds, they slide out one of their token pieces. The next student can reply directly to what the first student said or offer their own interpretation of the response. Then that student slides out one of their token pieces. For instance, student A may say “Uncle Sam is bossy, based on the way he points his finger at me in the *I Want You* poster.” Then, they slide a token out on their desk to signal they have spoken one time. Student B responds by saying “but he seems kind based on the way he placed his hand on the shoulder of the nurse and the way he held the little girl in his arms.” Then Student B will slide their first token piece out on their desk. This will continue until each student has used all their tokens. The tokens hold each student accountable for contributing to the discussion. Having the sources in front of them helps the students as references when responding.

Finally, have students work in teams of two or four to create (draw, paint, build a model or statue) a modern-day Uncle Sam that is representative of their classroom, school, community, or the United States. Based on materials available, allow the students to decide how they want to create their representative figure. For further research to assist students in creating a new Uncle Sam, the following resources provide additional information on the previous Uncle Sam: “[Uncle Sam: Another Look at an American Icon](#)” and “[Uncle Sam: American Symbol, American Icon](#).”

To take informed action, the students could answer “Is Uncle Sam an effective symbol now? Why or why not?” Have the students discuss their response and have them include some visual evidence from the primary and secondary sources that were shared during this activity. To demonstrate their response to this, they can create a poster that demonstrates their response to the informed action question. The students should include visuals in their poster. These posters could be displayed in the classroom, or in the school hallways, or be photographed to include in a slideshow to share with others on a bigger scale.

The National Anthem

Historical Context

In 1814, after observing the attack of Ft. McHenry from a British ship, Francis Scott Key composed a poem. This poem eventually became a song, “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Eventually the words were set to music based on a club song from The Anacreontic Society, which was a gentlemen’s club in London. The melody from “The Star-Spangled Banner” was primarily from their club.

In an attempt to make “The Star-Spangled Banner” the official national anthem of the United States, fifteen different bills were posed in Congress between 1912 and 1917. Ultimately, the bill did not pass until 1931 and was not signed into law until March 3, 1931, by President Herbert Hoover (Library of Congress, 2002).

The national anthem can be heard at many special events, such as government meetings, sporting functions, and military occasions. Many Americans recognize this song as the song representing the United States. When the national anthem is playing, it is expected and respectful for audience members to remove their hats, stand, and hold their right hand over their heart (Patriotic and National Observances, Ceremonies, and Organizations Law, 1942). A veteran or anyone in a military uniform, should stand at attention, in a ceremonial way, and salute the flag (Patriotic and National Observances, Ceremonies, and Organizations Law, 1942).

It took a while for “The Star-Spangled Banner” to become the official national anthem. By the 1890s, the military were playing it ceremoniously, as they raised and lowered the flag each day (Smithsonian, n.d.). It was understood that all officers and soldiers were required to stand at attention during the anthem. Civilians also began to stand at attention. It was played at plays, movies, and sporting events. In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson ordered the military to play “The Star-Spangled Banner” at all military affairs (USArmyFieldBand, 2020).

The National Anthem Activity: Digital Literacy (Grades K-5)

“How can a symbol, specifically a song, tell a story?”

Playing music can evoke personal meanings or emotions that allow the listener to connect with the topic at hand. For this activity, do not provide any introduction or any supporting question, but instead play “[The Star-Spangled Banner](#)” audio recording. After listening to the recording, have the students turn to their shoulder partners and respond to one question at a time: “Describe what you hear.” “What instruments do you hear?” “Do you know the song?” Some children may not recognize instruments, but they may recognize the song. Then play the audio recording one more time. At this point, if the students are not aware of what the

song is, let them know it is the national anthem, also known as “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Then pose these questions, one at a time, as the students discuss their responses with their shoulder partner: “What do you think the purpose of the recording was?” “Who would be interested in hearing this?” “What type of equipment do you think was used to record this?” “Do you like what you hear? Why or why not?” “What can we learn from this recording?”

Next, play the [kid-friendly version video of “The Star-Spangled Banner,”](#) which includes the lyrics to follow along. This will allow readers to see the words and possibly sing along. For the primary grades, they may recognize some sight words as the video is playing. Directly following this video, you should show the written lyrics ([Appendix G](#)) and discuss what the lyrics mean. With primary students, you should completely guide this part, but with intermediate students, you could allow them to have a copy of Appendix G and complete their own analysis of the words. If time is an issue, perhaps have the intermediate students only analyze two or three lines of their choice. After the designated amount of time you want the students to spend on the analysis, then share what each line means ([Appendix G](#)).

“What do you wonder about (who, what, when, where, why, how)?” Based on their response of what they wonder about, allow them to conduct further inquiry. For kindergarten through second-grade students, offer some resources. Possible resources could include: [Ben’s Guide](#), a kid friendly webpage; [Smithsonian’s Star-Spangled Banner](#); or a [video clip of Jordan Shelton](#), winner of the 2009 Oh Say Can You Sing contest. You should lead the inquiry for kindergarten and first grade. It is possible that some second graders could do the inquiry independently or with a partner. It would be best to gather a few of their “wonder” questions on one day and then return to the “inquiry” portion on the next day. This will offer you some time to find the answers prior to modeling the inquiry in front of the students. It is good to model not finding the answer right away, but it is also good to be prepared so that you are not wasting valuable instruction time. For instance, if a student posed the question, “I wonder what the flag looked like that the song is about,” go to Ben’s Guide website first. Skim read it (or read it completely). The end of the webpage suggests that the reader go to the Smithsonian website to see photographs of the original flag. Take the students to the [Smithsonian Interactive Flag website](#) where they are able to see the actual Star-Spangled Banner flag that inspired the national anthem and interact with it. If you have an interactive board, allow the students to participate, by having one at a time choose a “hot spot” of the flag to enlarge and learn a new fact. This site has amazing zoom quality, and the viewers are able to see the smallest details in the fabric. Now, you have modeled digital literacy and answered something a student wondered about, while at the same time engaging learners in digital visual literacy.

For third- through fifth-grade students, along with your modeling as needed, they should use their digital literacy skills such as navigating various websites, copying and pasting primary and/or secondary sources, or typing responses to their “wonder” questions into a Word document. The following websites could provide resources to contribute to the student responses: [Smithsonian: The Star-Spangled Banner](#), [Smithsonian: Star-Spangled](#)

[Banner Interactive Flag](#), [The Star-Spangled Banner, written in Francis Scott Key's hand](#), or [Bringing the "Banner" to Light](#).

To conclude the activity, primary and intermediate students can take the information they learned and respond to the question "How can a symbol, specifically a song, tell a story?" by creating a visual of the song, with few to no words. For primary students, the question can be modified: "How does this song tell us a story?" or "What story does this song tell us?" As an extension, and as a family involvement piece, students can take home their paragraph or drawing and share it with an adult family member. Then the family member can sign it, along with a short comment.

The Great Seal Historical Context

The Great Seal of the United States is used to authenticate the signature of the President on official documents, such as proclamations, warrants, treaties, international agreements, and commissions of high officials of the government. The idea for a national seal began at the same time as the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776. Franklin, Jefferson, and Adams, three of the five revolutionaries who authored the Declaration of Independence, decided that the United States needed an emblem to represent the new nation. A resolution was made to create a seal, but it took an additional six years before the seal became a reality on June 20, 1782 (Thomson, 1782).

The first approved version of the seal is credited to Charles Thomson, Secretary of Congress, and lawyer William Barton, who was very artistically inclined. Thomson (1782) submitted a report to Congress with a description of the seal: "the red and white stripes of the shield represent the several states...supporting a [blue] Chief which unites the whole and represent Congress." The American flag is the source for these colors.

White signifies purity and innocence, Red, hardiness and valour and Blue, the colour of the Chief, signifies vigilance, perseverance and justice. The shield is born on the breast of an American Eagle without any other supporters to denote that the United States of America ought to rely on their own Virtue. (Thomson, 1782, n.p.)

The thirteen arrows, thirteen stripes on the shield, and thirteen stars in the constellation represent the original thirteen colonies. The power of peace and war is represented by the olive branch and the arrows. Thomson (1782) also explained the motto "e pluribus unum," Latin for "out of many, one," which is on the scroll clenched in the eagle's beak. This represents the union of the thirteen states into one nation.

Reverse side of the Great Seal

The reverse side of the seal is the pyramid that signifies strength and duration. "Annuit coeptis" is above the eye and translates from Latin to mean, "he has favored our

undertakings.” The date underneath is the date of the Declaration of Independence and the words beneath it, “novus ordo seclorum” translate from Latin to mean “a new order of the ages.” This was used to signify the beginning of the new American era in 1776 (Thomson, 1782).

The Eagle

The Founding Fathers deliberated over what the national bird should be, the imperial eagle or the turkey. Benjamin Franklin wrote his daughter, Sarah Bache, a letter expressing the belief that it should be the turkey. The following is an excerpt of [his letter](#), written on January 26, 1784:

Others object to the Bald Eagle as the Representative of our Country. He is a Bird of bad moral Character. He does not get his living honestly. You may have seen him perch'd on some dead Tree near the River, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the Labour of the Fishing Hawk; and when that diligent Bird has at length taken a Fish, and is bearing it to his Nest for the Support of his Mate and young Ones, the Bald Eagle pursues him and takes it from him. With all this Injustice, he is never in good Case but like those among Men who live by Sharping and Robbing he is generally poor and often very lousy. Besides he is a rank Coward.... He is therefore by no means a proper Emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America who have driven all the *King birds* from our Country.... The Turkey is in Comparison a much more respectable Bird, and withal a true original Native of America. Eagles have been found in all Countries, but the Turkey was peculiar to ours.... He is besides, tho' a little vain and silly, a Bird of Courage, and would not hesitate to attack a Grenadier of the British Guards who should presume to invade his Farm Yard with a red Coat on. (Franklin, 1784, n.p.)

Imagine if the United States' national bird were a turkey!

Later, after the decision was made to have the eagle as the national bird of the United States, Thomson was instructed to create a Seal for the new country. The previous recommendations had included a crested imperial eagle. Thomson decided the symbol should be strictly American and chose the bald eagle. The bald eagle is native to North America. It has a wingspan of 6 to 8 feet and can fly 30 miles an hour.

The Great Seal Activity: Visual Literacy, Digital Literacy, Jigsaw Method (Grades K-5)

“What characteristic of the Great Seal represents the United States best? Why?”

This activity will include visual literacy, as the students analyze a visual, discuss the visual through verbal means, and eventually create a project based on the visual. This activity will encourage students to develop critical thinking and historical thinking skills. To begin, present

the students with the supporting question: “What characteristic of the Great Seal represents the United States best? Why?” Then, the students will practice the historical thinking skill of contextualizing. Select small sections from the [Great Seal of the United States document](#) for you or students to read the historical context regarding the Great Seal. For example, scroll through and read only the timeline portions at the bottom of each page or read only page 16, which shows the front and the back of the seal.

Figure 13. *The Great Seal*



Note. Svendsen, O. (1941). *The great seal of the United States*. [Broadside]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/rbpe.0320250d/>

Grades K-5

For kindergarten through second grade, read the selections to them, modeling close reading, or for advanced learners, as well as third- through fifth-graders, the students could be paired up to read teacher-selected short selections. The document does include sixteen pages of reading and should not be assigned to be read in its entirety. However, if you did want to use all sixteen pages, a useful strategy would be to divide the pages up among teams of students and conduct a Jigsaw Method reading. For instance, in teams of four, student A will read pages 1–4, student B will read pages 5–8, student C will read pages 9–12, and student D will read pages 13–16. After the students have all read their sections, the students come together to share and discuss what they read in their section in two steps. The first step

is to have all the student As gather together to discuss what they read, all the student Bs gather together to discuss what they read, and so on. The next step is to have all students return to their original teams, which would include a student A, student B, student C, and student D. Each student would share a summarized version of what they read to teach that section to the rest of their team.

Then, display the digital picture of the seal (see [Figure 13](#)). The students could also display this on student devices, if possible. For kindergarten and first-graders, use chart paper or displayed technology, and do the recording for the students. For second- through fifth-graders, provide the students with blank pieces of paper (lined or blank) and have the students fold these papers into thirds. Direct the students to turn the paper horizontally and begin listing everything they “see,” making sure they do not list anything they “think,” in the first column. Be sure to remind the students what the difference is between what they see and what they think. They must actually observe it to see it. For instance, they may observe that the eagle has something in its mouth, but they cannot observe the eagle is hungry. That comment will fall into the next category of thinking. Then, allow the students to discuss their list with a partner or team. The next step involves “thinking,” as the student can then make inferences based on what they see. Again, allow the students time to discuss their thinking.

Have the students view the quick video “[The Great Seal of the United States](#).” It demonstrates how the seal is applied to a document and how it is kept under lock and key. Then have the students list what they “wonder” about, regarding the seal, based on the picture of the seal as well as the video. Then, allow the students to share what they wonder about.

Depending on time allowed, the students could execute further inquiries into what they wondered about. This could be teacher-guided, as you gather additional resources to respond to their questions, or it could be the student inquiring on their own or with a partner. Possible resources for further inquiry are an [etching of the reverse of Great Seal for the Columbian Magazine](#) and [National Museum of American Diplomacy webpage about The Great Seal](#).

Finally, expanding upon visual literacy, have the students design a family, school, or town seal, providing support and evidence for how their seal represents their family, school, or town. As part of the C3 Framework, Dimension 4: Communicating Conclusions, the students could share their seal (along with expected supporting details) with another class, on the school news, or in the school newspaper. Another potential idea is to hold a class discussion of what they feel should be added or changed about the current seal. How might it be updated to reflect a more modern U.S.? The students could take this idea even further by creating a new design of the seal.

The Liberty Bell Historical Context

In 1751, a new bell was ordered by the Pennsylvania Speaker of the House. The bell was cast in London and shipped to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The bell cracked on its initial ring in the United States (National Park Service, n.d.a). Metal workers melted down the first bell and used the same metal (bronze) to create a new bell. This bell weighed 2,080 pounds and includes the inscription “Proclaim LIBERTY throughout all the Land unto all the inhabitants thereof” (National Park Service, n.d.a). The bell housed at the Pennsylvania Assembly, which is now Independence Hall, rang many times for public announcements, and it was a way to alert people, much like the school bell. It was first mentioned as the “Liberty Bell” by a group of people trying to outlaw enslavement in the 1830s because of its inscription. In the late 1800s, after the Civil War, the Liberty Bell was sent around the country. It reminded people of the days when they had united to fight for independence against Great Britain.

The Liberty Bell Activity: Digital Literacy, Visual Literacy, Civic Action (Grades K–5)

“What makes the Liberty Bell significant?”

Grades K–5

Begin the lesson by introducing the supporting question: “What makes the Liberty Bell significant?” Be sure to emphasize that there is no right or wrong answer, as long as specific evidence is provided to support the answer. There are a variety of “right” answers and interpretations.

Next, share the digitized picture of the Liberty Bell ([Figure 14](#)). Have the students in pairs or in small teams practice visual literacy as they discuss what they see, what they think, and what they wonder about after looking at the Liberty Bell.

Grades K–1

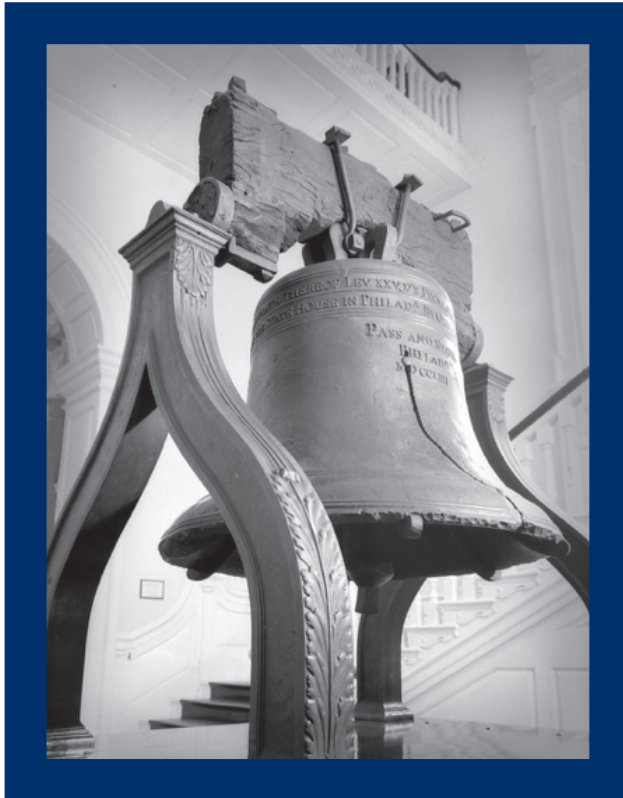
Complete this practice by having the students go to the digital version of Library of Congress’s Primary Source Analysis Tool ([Figure 5](#)). For kindergarten and the first grade, you may want the students to only answer one or two questions, and they may do it verbally. You should also record their responses on chart paper or project them digitally.

Grades 2–5

Complete this practice by having the students go to the digital version of the Library of Congress’s Primary Source Analysis Tool ([Figure 5](#)). For differentiation, allow the students to select the questions they would like to answer using the question marks at the top of the three sections found on the analysis tool. However, you should provide specific directions

on how many questions to answer per category. For instance, the students could type their answers on the digital tool and select the two questions they want to answer. For intermediate-grade students, you may want to have them answer three questions in each category.

Figure 14. The Liberty Bell



Note. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Liberty Bell. (1935–1945).

Finally, based on what they heard from the podcast and what they saw in the photograph, have the students respond to the supporting question: “What makes the Liberty Bell significant?” Some responses you may hear include “it is old,” “it has been around for a while,” “it is a primary source,” “it is on display,” or “it weighs a lot.” This can be accomplished by verbal or written response. For verbal responses, the students could choose to create their own podcast or perhaps do a one-minute appearance on the school news sharing their response. For a written response, the students could write an article for the school newspaper or create a poster to display in the school hallway. To take this lesson a step further, the students can take civic action to report their opinion on “What makes the Liberty Bell significant?” This can be done by sharing their responses with their peers as well as their family members.

Statue of Liberty Historical Context

The proper title for the Statue of Liberty is *Liberty Enlightening the World* (Lamberson, 2020; Statue of Liberty.org, n.d.). A Frenchman, Edouard de Laboulaye, initiated his idea of giving the United States the Statue around 1865 (Statue of Liberty.org, n.d.). His idea was that democracy was a workable form of government and one that he desired for France. The United States had just endured the Civil War and had abolished enslavement. Laboulaye's idea for the statue gift was based on celebrating the abolishment of slavery as well as a symbol of friendship between France and the United States. Frédéric-August Bartholdi was appointed to form this sculpture (Statue of Liberty.org, n.d.). Bartholdi identified Bedloe's Island in New York Harbor as the perfect location for placing the sculpture (Lamberson, 2020; Statue of Liberty.org, n.d.). There, his statue would always have a captive audience of ships sailing past in the harbor.

The Statue is made with a copper skin that is only 3/32 of an inch thick, which is equivalent to about two pennies (History.com editors, 2019). A French engineer, Alexandre Gustave Eiffel, conceived a massive iron pylon and secondary skeletal framework. This design permitted the statue's skin to shift independently and still stand erect. This was essential due to the strong harbor winds.

This joint effort between the American people and the French people offered quite the creation. The Americans built the pedestal, and the French built the Statue and handled the assembly of the pieces once it arrived in America. In July 1884, the Statue was finished, and it arrived in New York by 1885 (Statue of Liberty.org, n.d.). It took four months for the Statue to be re-assembled. The dedication of the Statue of Liberty was held on October 28, 1886 (History.com editors, 2019).

The Statue of Liberty embraces a variety of symbols. The broken chains and shackles at her feet represent America's liberation from Great Britain, as well as the emancipation of the enslaved people after the Civil War (National Park Service, n.d.b). She is traditionally dressed in Greco-Roman palla and stola (cloak and gown), commonly worn by women in Rome. The tablet has the date July 4, 1776, inscribed on it in Roman numerals. The tablet is fashioned like a *keystone*, which is significant in architecture. A keystone is the essential stone in the design of an arch and holds it together. Liberty is the keystone that embraces a free society. The crown is constructed of two parts, with the part closest to her head called the *diadem*. This is comparable to a halo and signifies that her ideas are above all. The upper part of her crown is termed the *nimbus*, or seven rays. A nimbus expresses enlightened thought. There are seven rays in her crown representative of the seven continents and the seven seas of the world (History.com editors, 2019). The Statue of Liberty is a world citizen. The torch in her right arm is one of the most momentous symbols. The torch illuminates the way to liberty and freedom. The basket circling the torch is a Native American basket and contains spearheads

and corn. For further historical context, watch the short video, “[Deconstructing of the Statue of Liberty](#),” from the History Channel.

Statue of Liberty Activity: Digital Literacy, Visual Literacy (Grades K-5)

“What story can the Statue of Liberty tell us?”

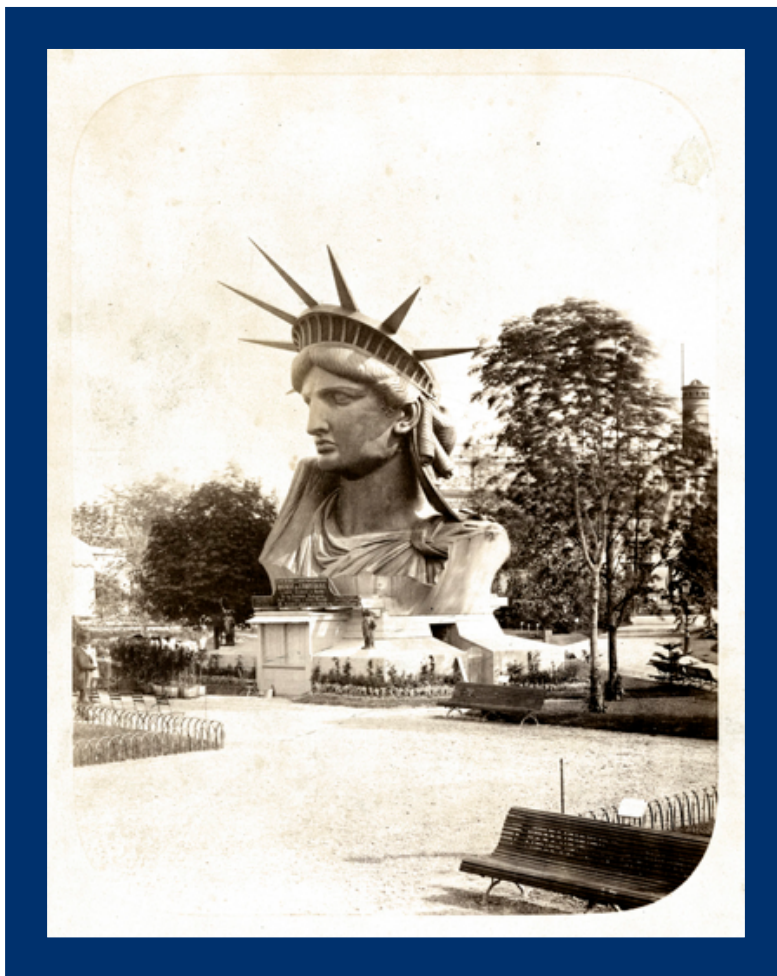
Grades K-5

You should begin the activity with a supporting question, and allow the students to share their response with a partner or a team: “What story can the Statue of Liberty tell us?” This is a way to get their minds thinking about the Statue and what she represents. This may seem like a simple question, but after completing the activities, the responses could reflect a variety of interpretations by students. Some responses may list what all the different parts signify or may include “how New York has changed over the years” or “how people came through Ellis Island,”

Next, display the digitized [newspaper article from Chronicling America](#). Chronicling America offers unique digital tools that allow the viewer to navigate around and manipulate the size of the newspaper. The user can put their cursor on the red square on the right of the window to navigate around the page and see on the enlarged version. Zoom in (using the plus symbol button) and have the students focus on the illustration of the Statue of Liberty.

Have the students go back and forth verbally with a partner, sharing details they observe (visual literacy) from the illustration. For example: Student A, “I see a torch.” Student B, “I see a crown.” Student A, “I see a robe,” etc. Repeat this same method of observation with the photograph of [The Statue of Liberty on Liberty Island, New Jersey](#). This photograph will offer the students a more detailed look at the Statue.

Figure 15. Head of the Statue of Liberty on Display in a Park in Paris



Note. [Head of the Statue of Liberty on display at Champ-de-Mars, Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1878]. (1883). [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/97502744/>

Follow this by watching a short video. Tell them that their focus is on observation and that they should focus on what they see only. Then have the students watch the short video (3:40) “[Statue of Liberty Unknown](#)” from the History Channel and Library of Congress. This video incorporates visuals such as documents, photos, images, and words, as well as audio, making the video a seamless way to include digital and visual literacy. Then have the students discuss what they saw by going back and forth between two students again. Play the video for the students one more time, and this time, have them focus on the words being displayed or reported. Allow the students to share the words they heard or saw and record them on chart paper or the board.

For primary students, have pairs or teams of four discuss the supporting question “What story can the Statue of Liberty tell us?” They can rely on the chart paper to refer to word choices. After allowing pairs or teams to discuss, have them switch partners or teams and

share one more time. This allows the student to practice their response more than once and also hear more than one other response. Remind them that they are able to revise their response if they like what someone else stated. After, allow a few (2-4) students to share their response with the whole class. Choose or allow volunteers to be video recorded sharing their response. Always make sure you have permission to video or photograph a student. Then share the videos with parents, via email or a communication app such as Class Dojo.

Grades 3–5

For intermediate students, inform them that they will be conducting their own investigation on the history of the Statue of Liberty using a list of [newspaper articles regarding the Statue of Liberty](#) collected by the Library of Congress. Provide the students with specific criteria (e.g., at least two pieces of textual evidence, citations/sources for evidence, at least two paragraphs written or verbalized, etc.) to include in their project as well as a choice of project, such as Power Point, short music video or song, or a newspaper article using a digital platform, such as Publisher. Also, have the students include a visual representation of the Statue of Liberty and offer them the collection of [Selected Views of the Statue of Liberty](#) to select a visual from.

Depending on the experience of the students, it may be necessary for you to model how to enlarge the photographs on the Library of Congress website (use the plus sign in the upper right-hand corner). The students should be required to include an explanation of why they selected the specific photographs to represent their project as well as citations for the specific photographs they chose. Finally, the students should present their projects to their classmates.

Grades K-5

To conclude the activity, share the National Park Service's [Statue of Liberty virtual tour](#), engaging students in digital literacy as well as visual literacy simultaneously. Finally, have the students respond to the supporting question: "What is the Statue of Liberty?" First, allow the students to talk with their team to respond to the question and remind them to use at least two pieces of evidence that they heard or observed. Then have the students record their answer, this could be selfie-style or students could record each other (as long as you have permission to record them). Finally, record the students telling their response to the supporting question and create a short class video responding to the question. This video could be shared with the school, another class, or parents.

Conclusion

It is the educator's job to know American history and share that context with their students. We need to use the past to make better decisions, and not repeat the same mistakes. Historical events occurred in a time and place where some activities were deemed appropriate. You and your students need to temporarily view these events through a contextual lens, not through a modern-day lens. After considerable analysis and historical thinking, the students should transfer historical events to today's lens. The educator should encourage the students to determine, "how do we correct it?" It would be a problem if the same event were accepted in today's society.

The origins of symbols are rich with primary and secondary sources, legends, and mysteries. It is the job of elementary educators to provide scaffolding to their students in discovering the origins, myths, and legends, as well as mysteries of those origins. The scaffolding should come from consistent teacher modeling of using digital resources, whether it be reputable websites in search of primary sources; digital tools, such as primary source analyzers; virtual tours; or interactive websites. Additionally, elementary educators should scaffold visual literacy with consistent modeling. Educators should offer numerous opportunities for students to use both digital literacy skills and visual literacy skills to experience observations of paintings, prints, photographs, artifacts, and more, while strengthening their historical thinking strategies.

The Library of Congress website offers an abundance of information and resources for American symbols, but specifically they have a [primary source set for United States Symbols](#) available in their teacher section. They offer a teacher's guide as well as several primary sources.

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Appendix A

Suggested Children’s Books

Bartoletti, S. C. (2007). <i>The Flag Maker</i> . HarperCollins.	A story of the Star-Spangled Banner, as told through the eyes of Caroline Pickersgill, who was the daughter of Mary Pickersgill, who was a flag maker.
Eggers, D. (2017). <i>Her Right Foot</i> (S. Harris, Illus.). Chronicle Books.	This is a fun take on non-fiction, focusing on one aspect of the Statue of Liberty and includes a powerful message of acceptance.
Glaser, L. (2010). <i>Emma’s Poem: The Voice of the Statue of Liberty</i> (C. A. Nivola, Illus.). HarperCollins.	This book shares the story of Emma Lazarus and the poem she wrote for the Statue of Liberty.
Hewitt, D. (2008). <i>Uncle Sam’s America</i> . Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.	The story of America’s past, told through the perspective of Uncle Sam.
Jones, R. C. (1988). <i>The Biggest (and Best) Flag that Ever Flew</i> . Schiffer Publishing.	A story of how the Star-Spangled Banner came to be.
Martin, B., Jr., & Sampson, M. (2002). <i>I Pledge Allegiance</i> (C. Raschka, Illus.). Candlewick Press.	A picture book that unpacks each word of the Pledge of Allegiance.
McDonald, M. (2005). <i>Saving the Liberty Bell</i> . Atheneum Books for Young Readers.	A picture book about keeping the bell safe from the British during the American Revolution. The illustrations add to the story by capturing research, with a touch of humor.
Pearl, N. (1980). <i>The Great Seal of the United States</i> . Capstone.	This picture book offers the history of the Great Seal, narrated by Benjamin Franklin.
Pearl, N. (2006). <i>Our National Anthem</i> . Capstone.	A picture book that tells about the history of the National Anthem.
Rustad, M. E. H. (2014). <i>Can We Ring the Liberty Bell?</i> (K. L. Poling, Illus.). Lerner Publishing Group.	This historical fiction book takes the reader through a visit to the Liberty Bell, on a class field trip.
Rustad, M. E. H. (2014). <i>Why is the Statue of Liberty Green?</i> (H. Conger, Illus.). Lerner Publishing Group.	This historical fiction book takes the reader through a visit to the Statue of Liberty, on a class field trip.
Tatlock, A. (2017). <i>The Statue of Liberty</i> . Purple Toad Publishing. (available on Epic https://www.getepic.com/app/read/37382 for free with registration)	An online book of the history of the Statue of Liberty.

Appendix B

The American Flag: Historical Context

On January 1, 1776, under the leadership of George Washington, the Continental Army was reorganized. On this same date, at Prospect Hill, George Washington ordered that the Grand Union flag be hoisted (raised). The Grand Union flag had thirteen stripes of red and white, to represent the thirteen colonies, and the upper left corner included a British Union Jack. Many people claim that the Grand Union flag is truly the original American flag. At that time, most Americans, who were white Colonists, were fighting for respect and representation (someone to speak on their behalf), not for independence from England. Therefore, the Grand Union flag with a British emblem (symbol) showed a great loyalty (strong support) to the crown (England).

There is an argument over who sewed the next American flag. Leepson, author of *Flag: An American Biography*, said,

Virtually every historian who has studied the issue believes that Betsy Ross did not sew the first American flag. Yet a significant number of others who have looked into the matter...believe that Betsy Ross did, indeed, stitch the first American flag (p. 39).

Depending on who tells the story, about six months after the Grand Union flag was created, in June 1776, Betsy Ross allegedly (supposedly) sewed the first American flag, based on directions from George Washington and his committee. Some authors have stated that she modified (made changes to) the recommended six-pointed star to the five-pointed star that we see on the flag today.

The story of the origin of the United States flag has been challenged (argued about) for approximately 140 years. Did Betsy Ross sew the original United States flag, or is that just a treasured story passed down through the centuries (hundreds of years)? Or, did Francis Hopkinson—an author, composer, and member of the Continental Congress who contributed to other patriotic designs like the Great Seal—design the first American flag? The Second Continental Congress passed the Flag Act which resolved that "the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new Constellation" (Flag Act, 1777). However, the Flag Act did not state how the thirteen stars should be organized, so there are several versions of the Thirteen Star Flag. No matter who sewed the first flag, the Continental Congress passed the first Flag Act on June 14, 1777, which detailed that the flag would have thirteen red and white stripes and thirteen stars in a field of blue, which represented a new constellation.

Over the years, as states have been added to the Union (United States), the flag has been altered (changed) and updated. President Eisenhower authorized a proclamation (official

announcement) recognizing Hawaii as part of the Union on August 21, 1959. It was the fiftieth and final state to be admitted to the Union to date. Eisenhower presented the new flag at the ceremony to add Hawaii. It was America's twenty-seventh design of the flag and is still the flag we use now. It has thirteen stripes and nine rows of stars with five or six stars per row. According to the Library of Congress, it is officially the longest serving flag of the United States.

Appendix C

Analyzing the Origin of the United States Flag			
Questions	Source A: Betsy Ross, 1777	Source B: Caroline Purdy letter	Source C: Article about Heft
Who wrote or created the source?			
When was this source created?			
How do you know when?			
What new evidence does this source contain?			
What is going on in the image?			
Do you trust this source? Why or why not?			
What do you wonder about now?			

Appendix D

Words and Definitions

Use the words below to assist you with the Historical Context and Source B: (transcribed) Letter from Caroline Pickersgill Purdy to Georgiana Armistead Appleton, Baltimore (1876).

origin: the first stage of something or someone existing; the beginning of something

evidence: something that tends to prove or disprove

originate: to begin or start; to take its origin

bombardment: attack

proprietors: the owner of a business

superintend: to oversee and direct; to supervise

precaution: a measure taken in advance to secure safety

ancestors: family members from whom a person is descended

approbation: official approval

Appendix E

Pledge Activity

Name _____

The United States Flag: The Pledge

I **pledge allegiance**, to the flag,
of the United States of America,
unto the **republic**, for which it stands,
one nation, under God, **indivisible**,
with **liberty** and **justice** for all.

Word Bank

pledge: a serious promise

allegiance: faithful support of a country, person, group, or cause

republic: a form of government in which the authority belongs to the people; a country with such a government

indivisible: not able to be divided or separated

liberty: freedom from control by another; the ability to act, speak, or think the way one pleases

justice: fair or right treatment or action

Decide on words or phrases that could easily replace the bolded words in the Pledge of Allegiance. Then, rewrite the pledge in your own words. For example, instead of “I pledge,” you might change it to “I seriously promise” or “I promise.”

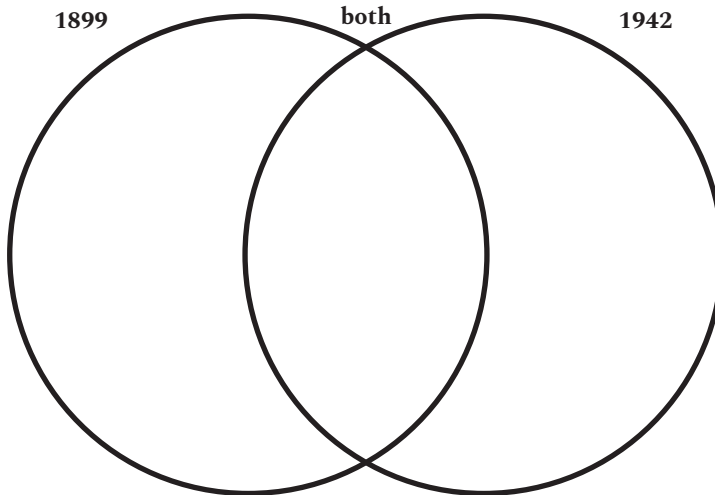
Appendix F

How Do We Show Respect to the United States Flag?

Using visual thinking skills, complete the following questions for both primary source photographs.

Questions	<i>Pledge of allegiance to the flag, 8th division, 1899</i>	<i>San Francisco, Calif., April 1942. first-graders</i>
What is going on in this picture?		
What do you see that makes you say that?		
What more can you find?		

Use details from the two photographs to complete the Venn diagram. Include at least three details in each part.



Using all the information you just collected above, respond to the following question: How do we show respect to the United States flag? The sentence has been started for you.

According to *Pledge of allegiance to the flag, 8th division, 1899* and *San Francisco, Calif., April 1942. first-graders photographs*, we show respect to the United States flag...

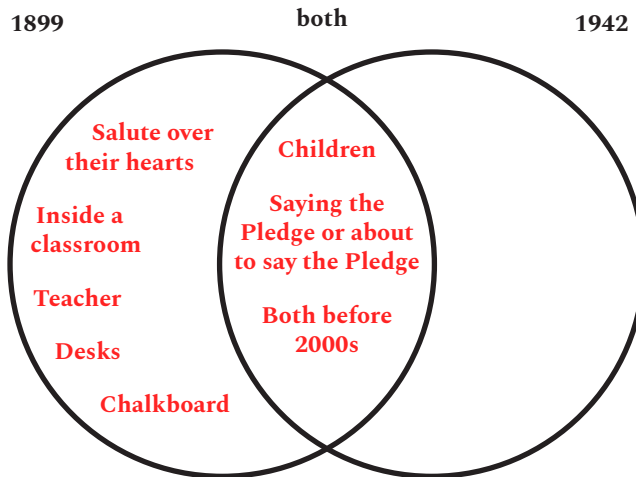
Appendix F

How Do We Show Respect to the United States Flag? Possible Answers

Using visual thinking skills, complete the following questions for both primary source photographs.

Questions	<i>Pledge of allegiance to the flag, 8th division, 1899</i>	<i>San Francisco, Calif., April 1942. first-graders</i>
What is going on in this picture?	Students are saying the Pledge.	Students are saying the Pledge.
What do you see that makes you say that?	They look like they are in a classroom and they are looking at the U.S. flag.	They have their hands over their hearts.
What more can you find?	Desks, teacher, chalkboard, their hands are held differently (like a salute, but over their hearts)	One student is looking directly at the photographer; 4 students have on a jacket/ sweater; 1 student has no jacket, with short sleeves; a building; 4 students seem to be Asian or Asian American

Use details from the two photographs to complete the Venn diagram. Include at least three details in each part.



Using all the information you just collected above, respond to the following question: How do we show respect to the United States flag? The sentence has been started for you.

According to *Pledge of allegiance to the flag, 8th division, 1899* and *San Francisco, Calif., April 1942. first-graders photographs*, we show respect to the United States flag...

by facing the flag and placing our hands on our hearts in some manner.

Appendix G

National Anthem

<i>Oh, say can you see by the dawn's early light</i>	
<i>What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?</i>	
<i>Whose broad stripes and bright stars thru the perilous fight,</i>	
<i>O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?</i>	
<i>And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,</i>	
<i>Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.</i>	
<i>Oh, say does that star-spangled banner yet wave</i>	
<i>O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?</i>	

Appendix G

Answer Key

<i>Oh, say can you see by the dawn's early light</i>	The flag that flew over the fort was enormous. George Armistead (Commander of Ft. McHenry) had Mary Pickersgill make "a flag so large that the British would have no difficulty seeing it from a distance"
<i>What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?</i>	The flag could be seen from several miles away and Francis Scott Key (the author of this song) was sharing that it could be seen in the last bit of light each night and the first light each day
<i>Whose broad stripes and bright stars thru the perilous fight,</i>	The 'perilous fight' is referring to the Battle of Baltimore during the War of 1812
<i>O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?</i>	The flag continued to wave over the ramparts (walls) of the fort
<i>And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,</i>	The "rocket's red glare" and the "bombs bursting" were describing the cannon fire coming from the British navy and the cannons firing from Ft. McHenry
<i>Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.</i>	The red glow from the cannon fire allowed Americans to see their Star-Spangled Banner was still flying, which meant that the British had not captured (taken over) the fort and raised their own flag there
<i>Oh, say does that star-spangled banner yet wave</i>	The Star-Spangled Banner was still waving over the 'land of the free'
<i>O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?</i>	The War of 1812 was popularly known as the 'Second War for Independence'

Additional Resources

Ben's Guide <https://bensguide.gpo.gov/> Ben's guide to US symbols is also a helpful resource for several symbols to provide background for students in grades 4–8.

Flag and Freedom <https://www.socialstudies.org/social-education/67/6/flag-and-freedom> For different perspectives on the 20th century history of the American flag (and not focused on the origin of the flag), *The Flag and Freedom*, an article by Jolene Chu and Donna P. Couper, is a wealth of information, and provides context, a timeline, primary sources, and discussion questions.

Liberty Bell <https://www.nps.gov/inde/learn/education/classrooms/curriculummaterials.htm> This National Park Services website offers curriculum materials based on the Liberty Bell.

National Anthem background <https://loc.gov/item/ihas.200000017> The Library of Congress has a webpage with historical background information surrounding the *National Anthem*.

National Anthem lesson <https://blogs.loc.gov/teachers/2017/05/primary-sources-for-the-primary-grades-exploring-and-learning-the-national-anthem-with-primary-sources/> Library of Congress blog that offers teachers a primary source based lesson: *National Anthem: Primary Sources for the Primary Grades: Exploring—and Learning—the National Anthem with Primary Sources*.

Pledge <https://rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/4159> This is a primary source, the *Pledge*, in Bellamy's handwriting.

Pledge historical context <https://rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/3418> This webpage offers historical context surrounding the *Pledge*.

Star-Spangled Banner Flag House <http://www.flighthouse.org/> This is a website for the Star-Spangled Banner Flag House, which is the house where Mary Pickersgill sewed the flag that was hoisted over Fort McHenry. The site offers a wealth of information regarding the United States flag, Mary Pickersgill, and pictures of their primary source collection.

Star-Spangled Banner (Smithsonian) <https://historyexplorer.si.edu/resource/making-star-spangled-banner-classroom-videos> Watch four short videos to learn about the story of the *Star-Spangled Banner*, the flag that inspired the *National Anthem*. During the presentation, Mary Pickersgill (a historical figure with a fictional monologue) is working on a garrison flag to fly over Baltimore's Fort McHenry.

Statue of Liberty <https://www.nps.gov/stli/learn/education/index.htm> This page from the National Park Service is intended to prepare students for a field trip to Liberty Island, but offers many lesson ideas that could be used for students even if they do not attend a field trip.

Statue of Liberty <https://www.history.com/topics/landmarks/statue-of-liberty> This is a video of less than four minutes with visuals and words explaining the history of the Statue of Liberty.

Symbols of the United States, For Apple users: <https://books.apple.com/us/book/symbols-of-the-united-states/id915912393>

Symbols of the United States Primary Source Set <https://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/symbols-us/> The Library of Congress offers primary source sets based on specific topics and includes teacher's guides to accompany the sources.

Uncle Sam <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/united-states-nicknamed-uncle-sam> For further history on Uncle Sam, visit history.com.

Uncle Sam: American Symbol, American Icon <https://blogs.loc.gov/teachers/2014/07/uncle-sam-american-symbol-american-icon/> for additional history on Uncle Sam, written by Danna Bell, in a Library of Congress blog.

Under God and the Pledge of Allegiance: Examining a 1954 Sermon and Its Meaning <https://www.socialstudies.org/social-education/77/4/under-god-and-pledge-allegiance-examining-1954-sermon-and-its-meaning>. An article by Groce, Heafner, and Bellows (2013), offers additional context on the “colorful history” of the American flag.

The Youth’s Companion, 1892 <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/njp.32101078190053?urlappend=%3Bseq=474> The children’s magazine where the Pledge was first published on September 8, 1892.