



America, The Land of Symbols

Npt Educational Services

MASTER TEACHERS Donna Hooper
LESSON TITLE America, The Land of Symbols

GRADE LEVELS This lesson targets grades 2-3, but may be adapted for other grade levels.

TIME ALLOTMENT This lesson should take five to six 45-minute sessions. This lesson could take longer if availability of computers is minimal.

OVERVIEW Symbols are all around us. They stand for things which nations believe in. Symbols can stand for something we can not carry around or touch. They can help us learn more about the world that we live in. The goal of this lesson is to help the students recognize and understand the national symbols of the United States. Through the use of video streaming and the Internet, students will discover the importance of our national symbols and what they mean to the United States.

SUBJECT MATTER Social Studies and Technology

LEARNING OBJECTIVES Students will be able to:

- Define what a symbol is.
- Identify national symbols.
- Discuss facts about the symbols that represent the United States.
- Explain the history behind the various symbols of the United States.
- Use primary and secondary resources to create a historic picture.

STANDARDS **Metro Standards:** **Social Studies**

<http://www.mnps.org>

Acquires historical knowledge and understands its relationship to historical themes and recurring human dilemmas by analyzing the past and its relationship to the present and future.

- Identifies major events, people, and symbols of Tennessee and United States. (Recognizes national symbols)

MEDIA **Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids** COMPONENTS <http://bensguide.gpo.gov/>

This site describes various symbols of the United States.

Primary Games

http://www.primarygames.com/holidays/july4/games/match_up/start.htm

This site uses a matching game to discover various symbols and monuments in the United States.

Enchanted Learning

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/history/us/symbols>

This site provides information on various symbols of the United States. Teachers can pay a yearly fee and have access to detailed information about various subjects.

South Salem

<http://www.salem.k12.va.us/south/America>

This site was created to help American children learn more about the great country in which they live.

Digital Video on Demand

<http://wnpt.unitedstreaming.com>

This site allows teachers to download or stream videos into the classroom using the computer in all subject areas. (Requires username and password to access.)

Download:

“America the Beautiful” (4:00)

“U.S. Symbols”-segment: “Introduction” (1:11); -segment: “Flag” (5:26); -segment: “The Liberty Bell” (2:20); -segment: “Statue of Liberty” (2:31); -segment: “The Eagle” (2:51)

MATERIALS **PER CLASS:** Computer with Internet access connected to large screen monitor, chart for recording student responses, crayons or colored pencils, poster paper or construction paper for creating posters, white drawing paper, coat hangers for mobiles

PREP FOR TEACHERS Prior to lesson, preview and book mark the web sites used in the lesson.

Preview and download the following videos to the computer, or CD from **NPT'S *unitedstreaming*** at <http://wnpt.unitedstreaming.com>
"America the Beautiful" (4:00)
"U.S. Symbols"-segment: "Introduction" (1:11); -segment: "Flag" (5:26); -segment: "The Liberty Bell" (2:20); -segment: "Statue of Liberty" (2:31); -segment: "The Eagle" (2:51)

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY: SETTING THE STAGE **Step 1.** Introduce the lesson by finding out what the students know about symbols by asking them what exactly is a symbol. Have students discuss with their neighbors first for about 2 minutes and then report their ideas back to the whole class. Write the ideas down on a chart for future reference to determine if the ideas were correct.

Step 2. Ask the students to watch the following video clip about America to find out some important symbols. **CUE** the downloaded video segment "America the Beautiful". **Provide the students with a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION by asking them what are three symbols or monuments in the following segment that you recognize.** **PLAY** downloaded video segment. When clip finishes, discuss the various symbols or monuments that the students recognized.

Step 3. Next invite the students to watch the following clip to find out exactly what a symbol is. **CUE** the downloaded video segment "U.S. Symbols"-segment: "Introduction". **As a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION students need to find out the definition for a symbol and what are our national symbols.** (Anything that stands for something else. The Flag, Liberty Bell, Statue of Liberty and Bald Eagle are our national symbols.) **PLAY** downloaded video segment. When the clip finishes, discuss the word symbol and the four national symbols mentioned.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Step 4. Tell students that they are now going to create a symbol that represents them. Have students draw pictures that represent them in the form of a shield. They may want to divide the shield into parts showing various objects that are important to them. Have them color their shields and display for others to see. Encourage the students to discover whose shield is whose.

Step 1. Inform students that they are now going to take a closer look at the national symbols of the United States. Starting with the American flag, tell students that they are going to discover more about the American flag. **CUE** downloaded video segment “Flag”. **As a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION ask the students to find out how many stripes the flag has and what they stand for; how many stars are on the flag and what they stand for; and two names for the flag.** (13 stripes-13 original colonies; 50 stars for 50 states; Old Glory and Stars and Stripes) **PLAY** downloaded video segment. When clip finishes, discuss facts about the American Flag with students.

Step 2. Next inform students that they are going to discover more about the Liberty Bell. **CUE** downloaded video segment “The Liberty Bell”. **As a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION ask the students to find out when was the last time the bell was rung and where is it housed.** (1874; It is stored in the Liberty Bell Pavilion in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.) **PLAY** downloaded video segment. When clip finishes, discuss facts presented about the Liberty Bell.

Step 3. Now inform students that they are going to discover more about the Statue of Liberty. **CUE** downloaded video segment “Statue of Liberty”. **As a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION ask students who gave the statue to the United States, where is the statue located, and what direction does she face.** (France; Liberty Island; faces the Atlantic Ocean) **PLAY** downloaded video segment. When clip finishes, discuss facts presented about the Statue of Liberty.

Step 4. Next have students discover more about the Bald Eagle. **CUE** downloaded video segment “The Eagle”. **As a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION ask students what does the eagle stand for and what other bird almost became a symbol for the United States.** (freedom and power; the wild turkey) **PLAY** downloaded video segment. When the clip finishes, discuss the facts presented about the Bald Eagle.

Step 5. Finally, divide the students into four or five groups depending on the number of students in the class. Each group will be assigned a topic to research on the Internet using the following web sites:

<http://www.salem.k12.va.us/south/America>

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/history/us/symbols>

<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/>

The topics are The American Flag, The Statue of Liberty, The Liberty Bell, The Bald Eagle, and The American Seal.

Instruct each group to research the topic finding out as much as they can about it. Then each group will be asked to give a report to the class about what they found. A poster should be designed about each topic and displayed in the classroom for future reference.

Step 6. Report by each group to the class.

CULMINATING ACTIVITY

Step 1. Tell students that they are now going to make their own flap book about the national symbols. They need paper, crayons or colored pencils, and access to posters that the students had made earlier. Each student is to draw the symbols and list four facts about each one. If they want to include more information they can. Some students may want to use the following web sites for more information:

<http://www.salem.k12.va.us/south/America>

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/history/us/symbols>

<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/>

Step 2. Now have students take the information about the national symbols and pick out one symbol. Create a mobile about this symbol to be displayed from the ceiling in the classroom or library. Instruct students to put a picture and at least four facts on the mobile.

Step 3. Finally, ask students to play the match game about U.S. symbols. Instruct students to log on web site Primary Games located at

http://www.primarygames.com/holidays/july4/games/match_up/star_t.htm. Have students play game to see how fast they can solve the puzzle and discover what symbol is underneath.

CROSS-CURRICULAR EXTENSIONS

Reading

N is For Our Nation's Capital: A Washington DC Alphabet by Roland Smith, Marie Smith and Barbara Gibson

A Kid's Guide to Washington, DC by Richard Brown

O, Say Can You See? America's Symbols, Landmarks, and Inspiring Words by Shelia Keenen

Social Studies

Write to the various famous landmarks or monuments across the United States and ask them to send information or brochures about that particular landmark. Create a bulletin board for the students to view. Have students choose one of the brochures and report back to the class about what they found. They could make a mobile or flap book about the landmarks or monuments.

Writing & Art

Invite students to design a symbol or monument that represents a person that made a great impression on them or played an important role in their life. Then write about the monument informing people who or what it is, what it represents, and why this is important to you.

Math

Research the heights of various US monuments and create a bar graph comparing their heights.

Using a map, determine the distance to a US monument from where you live and back. Create a bar graph to show the various distances. If possible, use miles and kilometers.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Write to the various famous landmarks across the state and ask them to send information or brochures about that particular landmark. Divide the students into groups and have them create a new travel brochure for that landmark.

Invite the mayor or a state representative to come to the classroom and talk to the students about symbols relevant to your city or state. Then have students create posters showing the city or state symbols.

STUDENT none
MATERIALS