



A Lesson on The First Flag by Laura Manke

Grade Level: Grade 3

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 1 hour 45 minutes

Lesson Keywords: flag, Betsy Ross, American Revolution, war, United States of America, Independence Day, 4th of July, freedom

Lesson Description: The goal of this lesson is to give students a point of view text to help students think about the why the flag is so important. Students have been learning about the flag and this lesson should provide them some context as to why there are so many "flag rules" and why our flag is so important to our country.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.1: Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.1d: Explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.4a: Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

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Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

Instructions: Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

The First Flag

by

Content: It had been a busy day. I helped Betsy Ross. I am a seamstress. I can sew well. We were tired from sewing. Betsy Ross made her living by sewing for people. She sewed many things. She sewed clothes. She sewed curtains. Every day she would start with a pile of cloth and end with things people needed. Everyone knew she would do a good job. So they came to her home and asked her to sew for them. She hired me to help.

One day three men came to her home. They asked her if she could make a flag. I listened to them talk. One of them was named George Washington. I had heard of him. There he was. He came to the store in May. I remember it well because it was my birthday. He was leading the army. The army did not have a flag. The army was fighting for freedom. No one knew if we would win.

They showed Betsy Ross a drawing. It was for the flag of the new country. It had stars. It had stripes. It would have stripes and stars. I said, Silver stars would be good. Betsy said, No. It will be too hard to make. It should be red, white, and blue. So we set to work that day.

We worked on the flag for the next month. It would be very big. We had to do other work, too. She said we have to make more clothes to get money. We're doing the flag as a present. We would not be paid for the flag. It would be a present.

Finally the flag was ready. George Washington sent someone to get it. He opened it up and said, This is it. This is just what we need to inspire the army. He did not show it anyone yet, though. He kept it for a special day.

On July 4th, the army flew the new flag. That was the first Independence Day. On that day the United States said it was a new country. It had a new flag. We were not there. But we heard about it later.

The army had to fight more battles. Just saying they were independent did not make it true. The war went on for 7 more years. We worried. We made more flags. In all those battles, soldiers saw that flag. Still, it was hard to win.

When the war ended, the country started. I was proud when I saw the flag. I didn't just make a flag. I was part of making the United States.

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Task 1: Vocabulary

Instructions: Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

Q: 1 WordPhrase: seamstress **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: In the story the main character says, "I am a seamstress. I can sew well. We were tired from sewing." What does the word "seamstress" mean in this sentence?

- A: A woman who dances.
- B: A woman who sews.
- C: A women who bakes.
- D: A woman only makes flags.

Question: Which of the sentences below uses the word "seamstress" properly?

- A: The seamstress painted a flower for her mother.
- B: The seamstress baked a cake for the birthday boy.
- C: The seamstress made a small dress for the new baby.
- D: The seamstress had the lead role in the play.

Q: 2 WordPhrase: independent **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: The main character says, That was the first Independence Day. On that day the United States said it was a new country. It had a new flag. We were not there. But we heard about it later.

The army had to fight more battles. Just saying they were independent did not make it true. The war went on for 7 more years." What does the word "independent" mean in this sentence?

- A: Fighting wars
- B: A type of flag
- C: A celebration
- D: Free or not controlled by another country

Question: Which of the sentences below uses "independent" correctly?

- A: After the American Revolution, the United States became independent from Britain.
- B: When France and the United States worked together, they were working independent from each other.
- C: The country said they wanted to be independent of all other countries, meaning that they wanted to work with them.
- D: The country was independent when it received help from China.

Q: 3 WordPhrase: inspire **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: The main character in our story says, "He opened it up and said, "This is it. This is just what we need to inspire the army." He did not show it anyone yet, though. He kept it for a special day." What does the word "inspire" mean in this sentence?

- A: To make someone want to quit
- B: To feed
- C: To make someone sad
- D: To encourage someone to do something

Question: Which of the sentences below uses "inspire" correctly?

- A: It was important to inspire the students so that they would feel hopeless.
- B: It was important to inspire the students so that they would do their classwork.
- C: It was important to inspire the students so that they would not be hungry.
- D: It was important to inspire the students so that they would fail the class.

Q: 4 WordPhrase: proud **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: The main character in our story says, "When the war ended, the country started. I was proud when I saw the flag. I didn't just make a flag. I was part of making the United States." What does the word "proud" mean in this sentence.

- A: sad about something you have done
- B: happy with something you have done
- C: angry about something you have done
- D: scared about something you have done

Question: Which of the sentences below uses the word "proud" correctly?

- A: The student was proud when she counted to 100.
- B: The student was proud when she ripped her pants.

C: The student was proud when she failed her test.

D: The student was proud when her teacher said there was going to be a pop quiz.

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Task 2: Forum Discussion

Instructions: This discussion forum will have questions for students to respond. Read the posted questions, and respond to each. Students are responsible for posting one initial and two peer responses for each topic.

1 - How rich or poor is Betsy Ross?

Do you think Betsy Ross had a lot of money or not? Use details from the text to support your answer.?

2 - Why did George Washington need the flag?

Why do you think George Washington needed a flag to inspire his men? What background knowledge did you call on to answer this question? Please also select a sentence from the text to support your answer.?

3 - Main character thoughts

The main character says, When the war ended, the country started. I was proud when I saw the flag. I didnt just make a flag. I was part of making the United States. What does she mean when she says I was part of making the United States.?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: In class we talked about flag etiquette such as not touching a flying flag, not flying a flag at night without a light and not dragging the flag on the ground. Please write one paragraph (5-7 complete sentences) explaining how this text helped you to understand why it is so important that we respect our flag.?

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