



## The First Flag by Juliet Wheeler

**Grade Level:** Grade 3

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts

**Lesson Length:** 1 hour

**Lesson Keywords:** American Flag, Betsy Ross, History, Reading, Writing

**Lesson Description:** In this lesson, the students will learn about how the American Flag was made and what it represents. Students will read the passage, answer the multiple choice vocabulary questions, do a discussion activity, and have a writing activity.

### 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.RL.3.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.6: Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.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.RI.3.4: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 2-3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.1b: Provide reasons that support the opinion.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.1d: Provide a concluding statement or section.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.8: Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

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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:** Leading **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** In the story, the author says "He was leading the army." What does the word "leading" mean?

- A: following
- B: guiding
- C: leaving
- D: abandon

**Question:** In which sentence is the word "leading" used correctly?

- A: Josh was leading his classmates from the back of the line.
- B: The leading team was in 5th place.
- C: The coach was leading his team to victory.
- D: The caboose is leading the train.

**Q: 2 WordPhrase:** Seamstress **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** In the story, Betsy Ross is a seamstress. What is a seamstress?

- A: Someone who sews.
- B: Someone that plays baseball.
- C: Someone who likes math.
- D: Someone who paints.

**Question:** Which of the following sentences uses the word "seamstress" correctly?

- A: Because she was a seamstress, she could fix the car.
- B: When you graduate nursing school, you become a seamstress.
- C: A seamstress knows how to fly a plane.
- D: Julie took her dress to the seamstress to fix the zipper.

**Q: 3 WordPhrase:** Inspire **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** In the story, the author says "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.'" What does the word "inspire" mean?

- A: To make someone laugh.
- B: To help someone.
- C: To make someone feel bad about something.
- D: To fill someone with the urge or ability to do or feel something.

**Question:** Which sentence uses the word "inspire" correctly?

- A: The child inspires to go to the playground.
- B: If you inspire someone, they will not like you.
- C: You inspire me everyday to be a better person.
- D: I inspire to take the trash out.

**Q: 4 WordPhrase:** Worried **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** In the story, the author says "The war went on for 7 more years. We worried. We made more flags." What does the word "worried" mean?

- A: To be excited about.
- B: Anxious or troubled about actual or potential problems.
- C: Happy or calm.
- D: To be uncaring.

**Question:** Which sentence uses the word "worried" correctly?

- A: She worried about her father in the hospital.
- B: Josh was worried about his new bike.
- C: Going to the store made him worried.
- D: Kayla and her friend worried at the new playground.

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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 - What is Independence day?

What is the meaning of Independence Day and why is it important? What day do we celebrate it?

### 2 - The American Flag

What does the American Flag represent? Explain your answer.

### 3 - Betsy Ross

Who was Betsy Ross? What input did she give when the flag was being made?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

**Instructions:** Write 3 paragraphs to answer the following questions:?

1. What do the stars and stripes on the American Flag represent?
2. Why is the American Flag important today and what does it represent?
3. What does freedom in this country mean to you?

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