



## Teacher Share

ART, SOCIAL STUDIES

### Independence Day Parade

Children will have fun making mini “floats” for an Independence Day Parade. Give each child a shoebox (lids not needed) to decorate with paint, markers, crayons, feathers, stickers, glitter, and, of course, anything red, white, or blue! Have children bring a stuffed animal or doll to school on parade day and place it on the float. String the boxes together by stapling one to the next with pieces of yarn. On the day of the parade, play a march (Sousa marches always work well) and have children march through the halls, leading their floats to the beat of the music and a cheering audience!

**Mary Jane Banta**

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For a variation on the Independence Day Parade, plan an Appreciation Parade to celebrate America. Initiate a discussion about what is special about our country's people and places. Have children create flags to carry in a parade, using words and pictures to tell something they appreciate about their country. They can use sturdy paper for the flags, then attach them to yardstick-length dowels.

SOCIAL STUDIES

### Secret Ballot Box

Explore the concept of voting—one of the ways Americans participate in the political process—by setting up a class ballot box.

- ☉ Introduce the activity by asking children what they know about voting. Explain that this is how the president and other people in our government get their jobs.
- ☉ Make a class ballot box to give children an opportunity to vote on class decisions. Have children decorate a shoebox top and bottom with a patriotic theme. Cut a slit in the top and place it on the box bottom.
- ☉ Give each child a copy of the secret ballot slips on page 20. Have children cut apart the ballots and complete the first one to vote on a class snack. (Depending on the size of your class, you may wish to write two or three choices—such as crackers, pretzels, and fruit—on the chalkboard.)
- ☉ When everyone has placed their ballots in the box, remove the lid and take a count.
- ☉ Use the other ballots as you choose: every few days, once a week, and so on. Make new ballots to take votes on other class decisions, such as when to have free-choice time.



## Book Break

**Betsy Ross**

by Alexandra Wallner (Holiday House, 1998)

Set in Colonial Philadelphia, this charming book tells the story of Betsy Ross's life, including her most famous accomplishment—the sewing of the first American flag. Children will love the details of eighteenth-century American life and the descriptions of Revolutionary times. After reading, let children follow Betsy's directions in the back of the book as she teaches them how to make a five-pointed star in just one snip!

**Computer****Connection**

For facts about the Statue of Liberty, including measurements, go to

[www.nps.gov/stli/](http://www.nps.gov/stli/)

*Teacher Share*

SOCIAL STUDIES, MATH

**Measure the Statue of Liberty**

**A**lmost all children have seen pictures of the Statue of Liberty, but not many have seen it up close. This measuring activity will help children understand just how big this national symbol is.

- ☉ On green paper, draw the outline of an eye measuring 2 feet, 6 inches across. (You may need to tape two sheets of paper together.) Do the same for the lips: The correct measurement is 3 feet across. Set these aside.
- ☉ Give children non-standard units of measurement. (Unifix cubes work well because they can be counted by tens.) Show children a photograph of the statue and point to one of the eyes. Ask: *On the real statue, how many units would it take to get across the eye?* Have children record estimates. Do the same for the mouth.
- ☉ Display the actual-size drawing of the eye and mouth. Let children revise their estimates, then measure! *If just one eye is that large, how big do they think the whole statue is?*

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## ART, SOCIAL STUDIES

**Design a Class Flag**

*What does America's flag stand for?* Invite children to share their thoughts, then read *The Flag We Love* to learn more. (See Book Break, below.) Investigate other countries' flags (see Computer Connection, right), then work together to create a class flag. Discuss what the class flag will stand for, then brainstorm colors, designs, symbols, and so on. Make a sketch, then create the flag. Hang your class flag proudly outside your door. Children may want to salute it each day as they come in!

**Book Break****The Flag We Love**

by Pamela Munoz Ryan (Charlesbridge Publishing, 1996)

Each right-facing page of this inventive book is a colorful painting of the American flag under different circumstances: being raised in front of a log schoolhouse, at the Vietnam memorial, even on the moon! Each left-facing page includes a smaller picture, and facts about the flag and the event.

## MUSIC, SOCIAL STUDIES

**Singing and Signing the Red, White, and Blue**

Part of being a patriotic American lies in appreciating the diversity of our nation. This includes showing respect and consideration for people who speak different languages and have special needs. You can touch on these concepts while teaching about the American flag with this song.

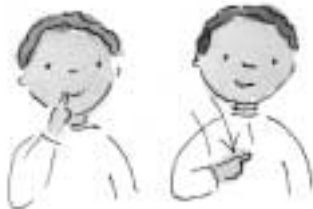
(*Sing to the tune of "Three Blind Mice."*)

Red, white, blue,	Oh what a wonderful sight to see,
Red, white, blue,	A flag for you and a flag for me,
I love you,	It means we live in a land that's free,
I love you.	Red, white, blue.

Write the words to the song on chart paper, and sing it a few times with children. Once children are familiar with the song, teach them the hand signs that go along with it. (See illustrations, below.)



I love you



red



white



blue

**Computer****Connection**

Learn more about the American flag with these web sites.

[w3f.com/gifs/flag/country/index.html](http://w3f.com/gifs/flag/country/index.html)

View pictures of nearly 200 flags, representing countries from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe.

[www.ushistory.org/betsy/index.html](http://www.ushistory.org/betsy/index.html)

Flag facts, history, trivia, even theories about what the colors stand for.

To learn more about ASL, check out the following web sites. Some even provide animation!

[www.bconnex.net/~randys/index\\_nf.html](http://www.bconnex.net/~randys/index_nf.html)

[where.com/scott.net/asl/](http://where.com/scott.net/asl/)

[commtechlab.msu.edu/sites/aslweb/](http://commtechlab.msu.edu/sites/aslweb/)



# Secret Ballot

My Vote

I think  
we should have

---

for snack.



# Secret Ballot

My Vote

I think  
we should read

---

at story time.



# Secret Ballot

My Vote

I think  
we should do

---

for our group project.



# Secret Ballot

My Vote

I think our class  
show-and-tell theme  
should be