

## LEARNING ABOUT THE FOURTH OF JULY IN APRIL

Learning Objective(s): The students will

1. Explain the origin and significance of Independence Day.
2. Understand some of the customs and traditions associated with Independence Day.
3. Apply their critical thinking skills by acquiring information from visual sources and synthesizing that information through pantomime, writing, or the use of questioning strategies.

NEW TEKS: SS K.1, K.15, 1.1A, 1.14E, 1.18, 2.1A, 2.14D, 2.19

Materials Needed: The "Happy Birthday, America!" PowerPoint presentation that accompanies this lesson, computer, LCD projector, *Happy Birthday, America* (Roaring Book Press, 2003) by Mary Pope Osborne, a set of the attached "Fourth of July Vocabulary Word Cards," cut out, pieces of 8½ " x 11" paper (1<sup>st</sup> grade only), glue (1<sup>st</sup> grade only), straight pins or tape (2<sup>nd</sup> grade only), a copy of the attached Word List (2<sup>nd</sup> grade only)

Vocabulary: American Revolution, celebrate, colonies, Declaration of Independence, delegates, freedom, holiday, Independence Day, settlers, traditions, war

Teaching Strategy:

1. To introduce the lesson, have students brainstorm a list of things that they associate with the Fourth of July. Record their ideas on the board or visual presenter.
2. Show students the "Happy Birthday, America!" PowerPoint presentation that accompanies this lesson. Clarify vocabulary and/or add additional historical background information as needed.
3. Read the book *Happy Birthday, America* (Roaring Book Press, 2003) by Mary Pope Osborne to the class. Discuss traditions that the students' families have for the Fourth of July. Add any new information to the brainstormed list.
4. Kindergarten Strategy: Duplicate the following seven "Fourth of July Vocabulary Word Cards:" barbeque, concert, fireworks, parade, picnic, sparklers, and war.

Divide students into groups of 3 or 4. Give each group one of the seven “Fourth of July Vocabulary Word Cards.” Explain to the class that each group is going to pantomime the word on their card. When they perform their pantomime, they may use gestures and facial expressions, but may not make any sounds or use words. (The teacher may want to demonstrate the art of pantomiming by pantomiming brushing teeth and/or discuss how a group of people might pantomime playing baseball.)

Allow groups a few minutes to plan how they are going to pantomime their word. When groups pantomime their “Fourth of July Vocabulary Word,” the class will try to guess the vocabulary word they are portraying.

5. First Grade Strategy: Using all of the attached vocabulary word cards, give each student one card. Instruct them to glue the card at the top of a piece of 8½” x 11” paper. Students should use the word(s) in a sentence and explain the significance of the word as it is related to Independence Day.
6. Second Grade Strategy: Pin or tape one of the vocabulary words on the back of each student. Students should not be told which word is on their backs.

Explain that students are going to play the “What Am I?” game. Tell them that the object of the game is for them to figure out the “Fourth of July Vocabulary Word” that is on their back.

Students will mingle with other students in the class and be allowed to ask each classmate one question to try to discover their identity. After they have asked a classmate a question, they must question someone else. They may only ask questions that can be answered with a “yes” or “no” response. Questions should begin with “Am I ...?” (The attached “Word List” may be displayed for students to see during the game, if desired.)

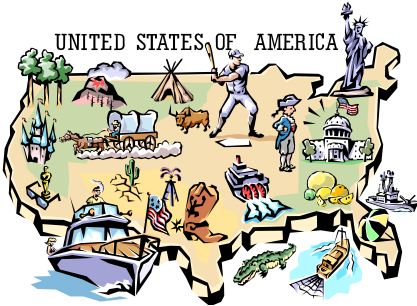
When students think they have figured out their word, they should sit down in their seats. Allow approximately 5 minutes for students to try to figure out their identity.

Debrief the activity by having each student report what word he/she thinks is on his/her back. Verify their guesses and have each student explain how their word is connected to the celebration of the Fourth of July.

7. Conclude the lesson by having students discuss the following questions:
- Why do Americans celebrate Independence Day on July 4<sup>th</sup>?
  - The Fourth of July is an important holiday. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?
  - If you created a symbol to represent Independence Day what would it look like? Explain.
  - What is your favorite activity or tradition associated with the Fourth of July?

Extension for Gifted/Talented: Have students conduct research to determine the federal holidays that are celebrated in our country. (They can be easily located on the Internet.) After students have compiled a list, have them hypothesize which holiday will be the most popular among students in their class or school. Instruct students to survey students in their class or school to determine which holiday is students' favorite of those listed. Have students report their collected data from the survey in the form of a bar graph. They should share their study with the class and tell whether they proved or disproved their hypothesis.

**FOURTH OF JULY VOCABULARY WORD CARDS**



**America**



**Barbeque**



**Blue**



**Concert**



**Declaration of Independence**



**England**



**Fireworks**



**Freedom**



**Hot Dogs**



**National Anthem**



**Parade**



**Picnic**



**Red**



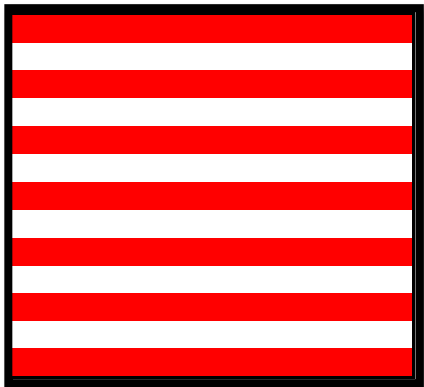
**Sparklers**



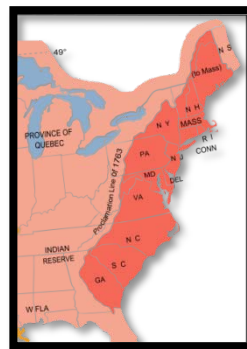
**Speeches**



**Stars**



**Stripes**



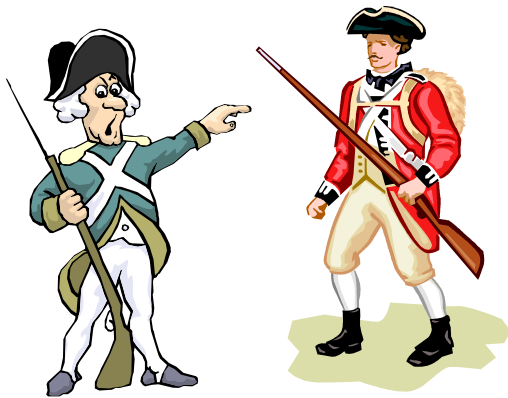
**13 Colonies**



**Uncle Sam**



**U.S. Flag**



**War**



**White**

## **WORD LIST**

**America**

**Barbeque**

**Concert**

**Declaration of Independence**

**England**

**Fireworks**

**Freedom**

**Hot dogs**

**National Anthem**

**Parade**

**Picnic**

**Red**

**Sparklers**

**Speeches**

**Stars**

**Stripes**

**13 Colonies**

**Uncle Sam**

**U.S. Flag**

**War**

**White**