



OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM: THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

Learning Objectives: The students will...

1. Understand that the United States flag inspired the writing of “The Star-Spangled Banner.”
2. Identify “The Star-Spangled Banner” as the national anthem.
3. Understand the significance of the words in “The Star-Spangled Banner.”
4. Work cooperatively with their peers in order to put information in the correct sequence.

TEKS: 2.11B, 2.13B, 2.17A

Materials Needed: *The Star-Spangled Banner* illustrated by Peter Spier, one set of The Star Spangled Banner Vocabulary Strips (laminated), tape.

Vocabulary: brave, dawn, free, gallantly, perilous, proof, ramparts, streaming, twilight

Teaching Strategy:

1. Introduce the lesson by asking students what an “anthem” is. Tell students that our national anthem, “The Star-Spangled Banner,” was originally a poem.
2. Explain to students that about 200 years ago our country was at war with the British. Francis Scott Key, a well-known American lawyer, heard that the British had captured the town’s doctor. Key and another friend attempted to save the doctor. The two men sailed from Baltimore to a British boat where the doctor was being held. The two men convinced the British to free the doctor, but then the British put all three men under guard because they had heard the British plan of attack on Fort McHenry in Maryland.
3. Relate that while he was being held by the British, Francis Scott Key watched the British bomb Fort McHenry. Key was so inspired to see that the American flag was still flying after the British had bombed the fort that he wrote a poem.
4. Share the poem with students by reading the book *The Star-Spangled Banner*. Direct student’s attention to what is happening in the illustrations on each page and have them imagine what sounds might be heard in each scene. Discuss how the pictures in the book help students better understand the meaning of each phrase of the poem.
5. Tell students that Francis Scott Key’s poem became so popular that people began singing it to the tune of a familiar song. The song, “The Star-Spangled Banner,” officially became our national anthem on March 3, 1931.
6. Give each student in the class a Star-Spangled Banner Vocabulary Strip and a piece of tape. Have students assemble “The Star-Spangled Banner” by putting the phrases in the correct order. (The phrases should be taped on the board or wall so the complete song may be viewed by the entire class.) When each student places his/her strip on the wall, lead a discussion concerning the meaning of each phrase using the graphic/picture as reference.
7. Conclude the lesson by having the class sing “The Star-Spangled Banner”.

Extension for Gifted/Talented:

Tell students that during the 1920s some people thought “America the Beautiful” should be the national anthem and others liked “Yankee Doodle.” Have students decide which song they think would be the best national anthem: “The Star-Spangled Banner,” “America the Beautiful,” or “Yankee Doodle.” Have students defend their choice through writing or a short speech.

The Star-Spangled Banner Vocabulary Strips

O say,



can you see,



by the dawn's early light,



What so proudly



we hail'd



at the twilight's



last gleaming?



Whose broad stripes



and bright stars,



thro' the perilous



fight,



O'er the ramparts



we watch'd,



were so gallantly streaming?



And the rockets' red glare,



The bombs bursting in air,



Gave proof



thro' the night



that our flag



was still there.



O say,



**does that star-spangled
banner**



yet wave



O'er the land of the free



and the home of the brave?

