Read the “Directions” sheet for step-by-step instructions.

SUMMARY
In this activity, children will play the role of newspaper reporters in order to research, write, and publish an article about the history of the Star-Spangled Banner.

WHY
The skills required to research for this story (comparing-and-contrasting, evaluating, and synthesizing) are helpful in the real world for everyday activities like understanding current events and shopping for the best product in a store.

TIME
- 90 minutes

CHALLENGE WORDS
- **banner**: the flag of a nation, state, or army
- **flag**: a piece of cloth of a specific size, color, and design, used as a symbol, standard, signal, or emblem

YOU NEED
- Directions sheets *(attached)*
- Step Back in Time sheet *(attached)*
- Your Web Quest Sources sheets *(attached)*
- Computer with Internet and printer
- Art materials (colored pencils, markers, collage paper, or crayons)

GET READY
Read the book *The Flag Maker* together to begin building an understanding of the War of 1812, knowledge about the Star-Spangled Banner, and emotional connections to the themes of pride and patriotism. For tips on reading this book together, check out the Guided Reading Activity *(http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/starspangled/reading_the_flag_maker.pdf)*.

RECOMMENDED AGE GROUP
This activity will work best with children in third through fifth grade.

More information at http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/starspangled/
For adults and kids to follow together.

1. Prepare your questions (The 5 Ws and H)

Reporters ask questions to get the whole story. Some important questions to ask are:

**Who?** “Who” questions ask about people, like: Who was involved in the event? Who benefited from the event?

**What?** “What” questions usually ask about actions and objects, like: What happened during the event? What proof do we have?

**When?** “When” questions usually ask about timing, like: When was the event? When did others find out what happened?

**Where?** “Where” questions usually ask about locations, like: Where did the event occur? Where were the people from?

**Why?** “Why” questions usually ask about reasons, like: Why did the event happen? Why did it happen at that time?

**How?** “How” questions aren’t all the same, but they often ask about methods, like: How do we know what happened? How did the people get there?

Write down six starting questions you would like to ask about the story of the Star-Spangled Banner, one for each of the 5 Ws and the H. As you do your research, you’ll answer these questions, and then try to ask follow-up questions to find good details for your article.

2. Look at your sources

Reporters take notes while they research to write down the questions they have and the answers they find. To gather information, reporters use many types of sources to find the information they need, including books, Web sites, interviews, newspapers, diaries, and legal documents.
For this assignment, you’ll be using Web sites on “Your Web Quest Sources” to research the story of the Star-Spangled Banner. You don’t have to use all of the Web sites to write your article, but a good reporter always uses more than one source.

**Tip** Begin research with the National Museum of American History’s Web site (listed first on the “Your Web Quest Sources” sheet) to build a basic understanding of the topic, including important people, places, and things.

After reviewing the first Web site, talk about what parts of the story are most interesting. Select your next Web site based on what you are most curious about.

### 3. Write your article

Now that you have finished your research, it’s time to use your notes to write, design, and publish your newspaper article. Try to include information from several of your sources and make sure your article answers the 5Ws and H (Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?).

Before you start typing, open the ReadWriteThink printing press ([http://interactives.mpced.org/ppress110.aspx](http://interactives.mpced.org/ppress110.aspx)), choose to create a newspaper, and start spreading the news about the Star-Spangled Banner. The printing press is really fun, and it has instructions that make it easy to use.

### 4. Proofread and publish

Print a draft copy so you can revise, proofread, and edit before printing your final draft. When you’re done, make sure to print several copies to share with family and friends!
Now, add your own pictures to the article. You can use crayons, markers, or cut out pictures from magazines. You’re the reporter, so it’s up to you to choose pictures that really go with your article.

**Tip** Printing the newspaper at the end may seem like a small thing, but it will make it easier to add artwork and share what you’ve learned.
Spreading the News

Your Web Quest Sources, page 1 of 2

An overview of the story of the Star-Spangled Banner
http://americanhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner/default.aspx
Use this Web site to answer questions like:
  - What war was going on when the flag was made?
  - Where did the flag fly?
  - Why is the flag important?
  - Who wrote the song The Star-Spangled Banner?

The War of 1812
http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/subjects/warof1812.htm
http://americanhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner/the-war-of-1812.aspx
Use these Web sites to answer questions like:
  - Who fought in the War?
  - Why did they fight this War?

Mary Pickersgill and the making of the flag
  Mary-Pickersgill.pdf
http://americanhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner/making-the-flag.aspx
Use these Web sites to answer questions like:
  - Why did Mary Pickersgill make the flag?
  - How was the flag made?
  - What did the flag look like?

More information at http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/starspangled/
Spreading the News

Your Web Quest Sources, page 2 of 2

Fort McHenry and the Battle of Baltimore
www.nps.gov/fomc
http://library.thinkquest.org/22916/baltim.html
Use these Web sites to answer questions like:
- Where is Fort McHenry?
- What happened at the Battle of Baltimore?

Francis Scott Key
http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/symbols/anthem.html
Use this Web site to answer questions like:
- Who was Francis Scott Key?
- Why is he important to the story?

What happened to the Star-Spangled Banner after the Battle of Baltimore?
http://americanhistory.si.edu/news/pressrelease.cfm?key=29&newskey=346
http://americanhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner/family-keepsake.aspx
Use these Web sites to answer questions like:
- What happened to the flag after the War of 1812?
- How did it get to the Smithsonian Institution?
O say can you see, by the dawn’s early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight’s last gleaming;
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through
the perilous fight,
O’er the ramparts we watched, were so
gallantly streaming?
And the rockets’ red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through 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?

On the shore, dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe’s haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o’er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, now conceals, now discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning’s first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream,
‘Tis the star-spangled banner—O long may it wave
O’er the land of the free, and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havock of war and the battle’s confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out thier foul foot-steps’ pollution.
No refuse could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave,
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O’er the land of the free, and the home of the brave!

O! thus be it ever when the freeman shall stand
Between their loved home, and the war’s desolation!
Blest with victory and peace,
may the heaven-rescued land
Praise the power that hath made
and preserved us as a nation.

Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto: “In God is our trust,”
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O’er the land of the free, and the home of the brave!
OurStory: Making the Star-Spangled Banner

Spreading the News

Step Back in Time

In 1813, when Mary and Caroline Pickersgill sewed the Star-Spangled Banner, and in 1814 when the Battle of Fort McHenry was fought, there was no radio or television to spread the news. People learned of the events through newspapers, flyers, and other sources that were printed on paper. As a matter of fact, people first read about the flag in a poem entitled “Defence of Fort M’Henry” that was published in a newspaper called the Baltimore Patriot almost a week after the battle!

This song later became our national anthem. Check out the whole poem (which might be longer than you thought it was) on the “Defence of Fort M’Henry” sheet.

Have you ever read a newspaper? Who writes newspaper articles?

You can spread the news about the Star-Spangled Banner!

For more information, visit the National Museum of American History Web site http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/starspangled/.

The Star-Spangled Banner was created in 1813.

Illustration of the Battle of Fort McHenry, from The Flag Maker
### Research Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>LEVEL ONE</th>
<th>LEVEL TWO</th>
<th>LEVEL THREE</th>
<th>LEVEL FOUR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ask and answer questions (5 Ws and H)</td>
<td>demonstrates limited ability to ask and answer questions</td>
<td>demonstrates some ability to ask and answer questions</td>
<td>demonstrates considerable ability to ask and answer questions</td>
<td>demonstrates exemplary ability to ask and answer questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>locate information from a variety of sources</td>
<td>uses a limited variety of sources to locate information</td>
<td>uses a sufficient variety of sources to locate information</td>
<td>uses a good variety of sources to locate information</td>
<td>uses a wide variety of sources to locate information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>collect and evaluate information</td>
<td>demonstrates limited ability to collect and evaluate information</td>
<td>demonstrates satisfactory ability to collect and evaluate information</td>
<td>demonstrates considerable ability to collect and evaluate information</td>
<td>demonstrates exceptional ability to collect and evaluate information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Article Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>LEVEL ONE</th>
<th>LEVEL TWO</th>
<th>LEVEL THREE</th>
<th>LEVEL FOUR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>use a variety of sentence types correctly and appropriately</td>
<td>uses a limited variety of sentence types correctly and appropriately</td>
<td>uses an adequate variety of sentence types correctly and appropriately</td>
<td>uses a good variety of sentence types correctly and appropriately</td>
<td>uses a wide variety of sentence types correctly and appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use all components of a newspaper article appropriately (headline, byline, article, and image caption)</td>
<td>uses a limited number of components appropriately</td>
<td>uses some components of a newspaper article appropriately</td>
<td>uses most components of a newspaper article appropriately</td>
<td>uses all components of a newspaper article appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>revise and edit written work</td>
<td>is beginning to revise and edit written work</td>
<td>revises and edits written work with satisfactory success</td>
<td>revises and edits written work with considerable success</td>
<td>revises and edits written work with outstanding success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use visual material to reinforce a message</td>
<td>needs assistance when using visual material to reinforce a message</td>
<td>suitably uses visual material to reinforce a message</td>
<td>capably uses visual material to reinforce a message</td>
<td>expertly uses visual material to reinforce a message</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spreading the News

Read the “Directions” sheet for step-by-step instructions.

SUMMARY
This activity is a guided Internet hunt, or “Web quest”, in which students play the role of newspaper reporters in order to research, write, and publish an article about the history of the Star-Spangled Banner.

RATIONALE
Authentic tasks are central to a 21st-century education. In this activity, students are given a real-world problem and asked to produce an original product, a newspaper article about the history of the Star-Spangled Banner. They will be incorporating technology to help them gather information and create the article. The students will use critical reading skills to analyze a number of different sources and then use written and visual communication skills to accomplish their task. At the end of the Web quest, they will gain content knowledge about an important chapter in American history and the origins of one of our most important national symbols.

OBJECTIVES
The students will be better able to:

- synthesize ideas and facts in written and artistic products.
- ask and seek answers to historical questions.

TIME
- 90 minutes (can be divided into two 45-minute periods)

AGE GROUP: 3rd-5th grades

TARGET VOCABULARY:
- **banner**: the flag of a nation, state, or army
- **flag**: a piece of cloth of a specific size, color, and design, used as a symbol, standard, signal, or emblem

More information at [http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/starspangled/](http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/starspangled/)
Spreading the News

MATERIALS
- Directions sheets (attached)
- Step Back in Time sheet (attached)
- Your Web Quest Sources sheets (attached)
- Computer with Internet and printer
- Art materials (colored pencils, markers, collage paper, or crayons)

PREPARATION
Read the book *The Flag Maker* together to begin building an understanding of the War of 1812, knowledge about the Star-Spangled Banner, and emotional connections to the themes of pride and patriotism. For tips on reading this book together, check out the Guided Reading Activity (http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/starspangled/Reading_The_Flag_Maker.pdf).

LOCATION
- Classroom or computer lab

STUDENT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA (SEE ALSO ATTACHED RUBRIC)
- Asks and answer questions.
- Locates information from a variety of sources.
- Collects and evaluates information.
- Uses a variety of sentence types correctly and appropriately.
- Uses all components of a newspaper article appropriately.
- Revises and edits written work.
- Uses visual material to reinforce a message.

STANDARDS
*NCHS History Standards*

*K-4 Historical Thinking Standards*
- 2H. Draw upon visual data presented in photographs, paintings, cartoons, and architectural drawings.
- 3A. Formulate questions to focus their inquiry or analysis.
- 4A. Formulate historical questions.
Spreading the News

4B. Obtain historical data from a variety of sources.

4D. Marshal needed knowledge of the time and place, and construct a story, explanation, or historical narrative.

K-4 Historical Content Standards

3E. The student understands the ideas that were significant in the development of the state and that helped forge its unique identity.

4C. The student understands historic figures who have exemplified values and principles of American democracy.

4E. The student understands national symbols through which American values and principles are expressed.

6A. The student understands folklore and other cultural contributions from various regions of the United States and how they help to form a national heritage.

IRA/NCTE Language Arts Standards

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic, and contemporary works.

7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes.

ISTE Education Technology Standards for Students (NETS.S)

1B. Create original works as a means of personal or group expression.

2B. Communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.

3A. Plan strategies to guide inquiry.
Spreading the News

3B. Locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.

3C. Evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness to specific tasks.

4A. Identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.

6B. Select and use applications effectively and productively.

21st-Century Skills

Learning and Innovation Skills

- Creativity and Innovation
- Communication and Collaboration

Information, Media, and Technology Skills

- ICT (Information, Communications, and Technology) Literacy