

How to Use This Resource in Your Classroom:

Share Your Story

Educator's Guide

SUMMARY:

Students will discuss, investigate, reflect, and make a photograph connected to the American flag. They will then write a detailed description that responds to one or more prompt questions and share both photographs and descriptions online.

RATIONALE:

Students should be encouraged to produce personal expression in multiple formats and analyze resources presented in various formats. Many formats of primary sources (such as written documents, photographs, and objects) are invaluable to the work of researchers and historians.

OBJECTIVES: The students will be better able to:

- Describe various meanings that the American flag has to different people.
- Analyze primary resources.
- Express what the American flag means to them through photograph(s) and caption(s).

TIME: 35–50 minutes in or out of class (*varies by depth of engagement and age of students*)

AGE GROUP: K–12

TARGET VOCABULARY: (*none*)

MATERIALS:

- Digital camera [1 or more]
- Computer(s) with word processing software, [photograph editing software-optional]
- [Student Guide](#) [1 for each student]
- (*If students have Flickr accounts*) [Flickr for Students Step-by-Step Directions](#)
- (*If teacher will upload the photographs*) Electronic [Student Worksheet](#) file

PREPARATION:

- Preview the content that other students and teachers have uploaded to the Smithsonian National Museum of American History's "[Share Your Story](#)" flag.

SKILLS: Photography, Critical Thinking, Creative Writing

CONTENT AREAS: Arts-Photography, Educational Technology-Multimedia Education, Language Arts-Writing, Social Studies-United States History

STANDARDS:

NCHS History Standards

K–4 Historical Thinking Standards

2. Historical Comprehension

H: Draw upon the visual data presented in photographs, paintings, cartoons, and architectural drawings

4. Historical Research

B: Obtain historical data from a variety of sources.

D: Marshal needed information of the time and place in order to construct a story, explanation, or historical narrative.

K–4 Content Standards

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

5–12 Historical Thinking Standards

2I: Draw upon visual, literary, and musical sources

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

5–12 Content Standards

Era 4: Expansion and Reform (1801–61)

1A: The student understands the international background and consequences of the War of 1812.

IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts

1. Students read a wide range of print and nonprint 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.
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

National Educational Technology Standards for Students (NETS.S)

1. **Creativity and Innovation:**
Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology.
2. **Communication and Collaboration:**
Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.
3. **Research and Information Fluency:**
Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information.

21st-Century Skills

Learning and Innovation Skills:

Creativity and Innovation
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Information, Media, and Technology Skills:

Information Literacy
Media Literacy
ITC (Information, Communications, and Technology) Literacy

Life and Career Skills:

Social and Cross-Cultural Skills

Share Your Story

Introduction

In November 2008, the National Museum of American History launched a new exhibition *The Star-Spangled Banner: The Flag that Inspired the National Anthem* that explores the significant and ongoing role of the American flag in American history. Visit the [online version of the exhibition](#) to learn more.

The Museum created a [Flickr group](#) dedicated to collecting photographs and descriptions of what the American flag means to people today.

In this activity students will document, in an image and words, their personal response to the American flag. They may explore a section of *The Star-Spangled Banner* online exhibition to examine the many ways Americans have used the American flag to express themselves since the 1800s, have a classroom discussion, and then set out to take digital photographs and write verbal responses (up to 300 words) to prompt questions. With a teacher's help, students will share their work with others via the Web.

Share Your Story

Directions

Part One

1. Together, look at all or some of the pages of the Legacy section in the online exhibition *The Star-Spangled Banner*, including “[Symbols of a New Nation](#),” “[The Flag in the Civil War](#),” “[Flag Rules and Rituals](#),” “[The Flag in WWII](#),” and “[The Flag in the Sixties](#).”
2. Discuss how other Americans have expressed their ideas about what it means to be an American through their use of the flag. How have they modified the flag? What different groups have used the flag as a symbol?
3. Look at some of the images and written descriptions submitted by others on the “[Share Your Story](#)” page of the *Star-Spangled Banner* online exhibition.

Transition

Let students know that in Part Two of this activity, they will have the chance to document their own reflections on the American flag and share them with the Smithsonian National Museum of American History via the Web.

Part Two

For younger students:

Take a photo with your class posing with an American flag and write the photo caption as a class. You can do this by either: asking the students what the flag means to them and compiling their ideas into a caption OR asking each student to share a word or brief statement that they think of when they see the flag and then write the photo caption by listing each student’s name and quote.

For older students:

1. Offer your students this quote from the “[Symbols of a New Nation](#)” page of the *Star-Spangled Banner* online exhibition.

“In the years since 1814 (when the national anthem was written), in times of celebration and crisis, pride and protest, people have raised the flag to express their ideas about what it means to be American.”

2. Discuss the following prompt questions as a whole class or in small groups. Be sure to explain that the answers to these questions will vary from one person to another.
 - What does the American flag stand for?

- What does the American flag mean to you?
 - Is the American flag considered a sacred symbol? Why or why not?
 - How important is the American flag to you? Has it meant something important to you?
 - Does it represent you? Why? In what way?
 - Have you ever used the flag to make a statement?
3. Ask students to choose a subject to photograph that illustrates their response to one or more of the prompt questions that they feel most strongly about. Students may include a flag in their photographs or not.

Technology Tips: Students may use their own digital cameras or borrow digital cameras from the school. Camera phones may be used if students have their own Flickr account and can upload the photographs themselves.

Review basic camera functions such as on/off, shutter button, and zoom with students prior to signing out school cameras.

If students use their own cameras, make sure they have a USB cable to connect to a computer at school, or that they can download the photographs at home and email them to you or themselves at school. Alternatively, they can bring in the photograph file on a USB drive or CD.

4. Ask students to complete a description of the photograph and its meaning (not to exceed 300 words including the identification) that will help future historians understand American life in the early 21st-century. For older students this step could include additional research. For example, what other Americans have shared your thoughts on the flag? How do others think about the flag?

At a minimum, the description must include:

- The subject of the photograph
- Written response to one or more of the prompt questions.
- Identification. Each student is asked to identify their submission with their first name and age as well as city, state, and date the photograph was taken.

Technology Tips: Have students type up their text in a word-processing program so that it can be easily copied and pasted into Flickr. Alternatively, students can use the “Share Your Story” Student Worksheet (included as a downloadable [MS Word file](#)).

Show students the “word count” feature of the word processor to help them stay under the 300 word limit. The feature is usually at the bottom of the screen or within a “tools” drop-down.

Part Three

1. Create a common folder where you and/or the students can download their photographs from the cameras and copy all of the photographs to that folder.

Technology Tips: If students are downloading their own photographs, ask them to save their photographs with their “firstname_teachername_gradenumber” to simplify finding them later. E.g. “Tanya_Jones_grade6” You can use the same name for the text file to help keep things organized.

All photographs must be in JPEG (.jpg) format to be uploaded to Flickr.

2. Upload the photographs and text to Flickr. See the “Flickr for Teachers” (below), “[Flickr for Students](#)” instruction sheets, or the [Submit Your Story Web page](#) for detailed information. “Share Your Story” is a moderated site, so it may take a day or two for your photographs to appear on the Smithsonian map.

Technology Tip: The age requirement for having a Flickr account is 13. Depending on your school’s policies, Middle and High School students may be able to create their own accounts and complete all of the uploading on their own. If not, or if you are working with students age 12 or younger, have students complete and electronically submit the Share Your Story Student Worksheets. Then follow the steps on the “Flickr for Teachers” instruction sheet on your own.

Conclusion

In class, visit both the class’s Flickr group and the “[Share Your Story](#)” flag within the *Star-Spangled Banner* Web site. Explore and discuss submissions from the class and others.

- Think back to what you learned from the *Star-Spangled Banner* online exhibition. How is your photo sharing submission similar to the ways others in American history have viewed the Star-Spangled Banner? How is it different?
- Look at a submission that did not come from your school.
 - Start by looking only at the picture. What people or things do you see in the picture? How does it make you feel? Can you guess what the description will say?

- How is your picture and description similar to that submission? How is it different? Can you guess reasons behind why that person or those people felt differently about the American flag?
- What question(s) does the submission answer?
- If you were a 22nd-century historian, what would you be able to learn from this document?

Share Your Story

Flickr Step-by-Step for Teachers

Setting Up Your Flickr Group¹

1. Go to [Yahoo mail](#) to set up a free e-mail account for your classroom use. You must have a Yahoo e-mail to use Flickr.

Technology Tip: If you create your e-mail as *lastname_gradelevel_schoolname@yahoo.com* and use your school e-mail address as the “primary” email for the account, you will be able to use the account for class projects year after year and will only need to change the password for new groups of students. This will also identify all of the photographs you upload with this account as belonging to your school.

2. Go to [Flickr.com](#) and create a free Flickr account using your Yahoo e-mail address.
3. Sign in to your Flickr account and create a new Flickr group for the project by selecting the pull down menu “Groups” and selecting “Create new group.”
 - a. Select “public, invitation only” as the privacy setting.
 - b. Title the group and select the safety setting.
 - c. Select desired settings on the Group Admin page.
4. Visit <http://www.flickr.com/groups/starspangledbanner/> and click “Join this Group” to join the National Museum of American History’s *Star-Spangled Banner* “Share Your Story” Flickr group.

Uploading Your Photographs/Text to Flickr

1. Place all your students’ photographs and completed Share Your Story Student Worksheets in a single folder on your computer.
2. Login to your Flickr account and go to the group you created.
 - a. Click on “upload photos/video.”
 - b. Select the photographs to upload (from your computer).

¹ You can find a great Flickr tutorial here <http://k12online.wm.edu/usingflickr/usingflickr.html>.

- c. Set privacy settings for the photographs to “public.” (*This is necessary to share the images on the map and with the Star-Spangled Banner Web site.*)
3. **Insert description text.** Cut and paste the description text from your word processing program to the description text box for each photograph. You can add descriptions to your group of photos by clicking the “add description” link once you’ve completed your upload, or you can select an individual photograph and click “edit title, description, and tags” link in the lower right portion of the photograph’s screen.

Technology Tip: The photograph’s “Description” is different than “Comment.” The description stays directly under your photograph, but comments will push down depending on how many comments you receive.
4. Click “send to group” to share the photograph with the Smithsonian National Museum of American History’s *Star-Spangled Banner* Flickr group.

Basics of Online Photograph Sharing

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPU4awtuTsk>

http://news.cnet.com/8301-17939_109-9703620-2.html

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/cogdog/265279980/>

Flickr in the Classroom

<http://k12online.wm.edu/usingflickr/usingflickr.html>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/cogdog/265279980/>

<http://www.educause.edu/ELI/7ThingsYouShouldKnowAboutFlick/162592>

<http://creativecommons.learnhub.com/lesson/1517-flickr-in-the-k-12-classroom>