I Love America 1700s

October Lessons



Parent / Teacher Manual

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I Love America 1700s
OCTOBER LESSONS

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Who can doubt that the Holy Ghost inspired me?"

Christopher Columbus

I Love America 1700s October

LESSON #1
Designing a Family Flag

SUBJECT OF THIS LESSON: Using various symbols for making a family flag as a service project to display at home and share with relatives.

Items needed:

- ☐ Your own creation of a family flag to show as an example
- ☐ Copies of heraldry designs and symbols for each student (included)
- ☐ Copy of Presidential Seal and "coat of Arms" symbols (included)
- ☐ Parchment paper (or other quality type paper) for each student (1 each)
- ☐ Article—"My Family Flag -- Meaningful Colors and Symbols" for each student

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE INSTRUCTOR:

Advance Preparation: You may wish to make your personal family flag to display so the students will have some ideas for creating their own flag. As part of this lesson, explain the meanings of various symbols (information is included).

The students may want to copy some of the symbols used the Middle Ages, the Crusades, and knights and ladies. Although the symbols of Medieval cults should be highly discouraged, there can be special meanings of ancestry in the authentic symbols of heraldry. Heraldry has been described this way:

> "In ancient times, direct communication between a ruler and the people was often impossible. The rulers used special officials, called *heralds*, to deliver messages and orders, and to announce important events to the people.
>
> "During the Middle Ages, heralds became personal agents for the king, somewhat like modern ambassadors.
>
> "As the king's representatives, they enjoyed great honor. It was a crime to interfere with their work.
>
> "Medieval heralds became authorities on *coats of arms*, the emblems used on the shields and clothing of nobles for identification during battle. They supervised the selection of new designs to prevent duplication." (*The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1979 Ed., Volume 9, page 185)

Because knights were usually covered from head to toe in armor, no one could tell who that armored gentleman was! So it became very important to be able to identify him by the designs on his shield and the surcoat worn over the armor. The heralds were in charge of selecting and designing the armor, and choosing the colors and symbols that best fit the knight and his family.

During the Crusades of the 1200s, a *coat of arms* was used to distinguish different families. Today, many families still use a coat of arms. Also, most countries have flags, seals and other decorations which display heraldic symbols. Special officials are responsible for creating and maintaining the country's heraldic symbolism.

Even the United States has a heraldic symbol, depicted in the Great Seal that appears as the official President of the United States Seal. (If you wish you can show an example of this during the lesson, and discuss it further.)

A complete coat of arms consists of three main emblems:

- A shield (the basic element)
- A crest
- A motto

Other elements include:

- A helmet
- Supporters -- like lions or other animals on the outside of the shield
- A wreath -- representing a device used to cover the point where the crest was attached to the knight's helmet
- Mantling -- originally protected the knight from the direct rays of the sun and also protected the helmet from stains and rust.
- Scroll

Students will enjoy designing their own flags using the symbols of heraldry. Several pages are included which show different symbols and their meanings.

Explain the various symbols to the class and display examples so they can choose what they want to put on their family flag. Some symbols are included in the student packets.

REVIEW: Remind the class that last month they learned about America's honored symbol – the Flag of the United States. Today's lesson they will have the opportunity to create their own family flag after the lesson.

QUESTIONS: Do you remember the meanings of the colors of the American flag? Do you remember the sayings of some of the folds, as the flag is being folded? Do you remember the Pledge of Allegiance and what the words mean?

LESSON: Families are very important. Tell the class that as they create their own family flag, they will want to remember the meanings of America's flag colors for the project they will do today. Their special flag will be a "banner" that can be Alifted up" and displayed in their own home.

Point out that before America had its own official flag, many different families, villages, and colonies displayed their individual flags. Even other *countries* like Spain and France kept their flags in the parts of America they were trying to claim.

After America had her own flag, the people rallied together under our beautiful flag and united as loyal citizens belonging to one country. Betsy Ross's flag unified our country.

Perhaps your flag will be a symbol the whole family can respect and use to show loyalty to each other, unity and friendship.

Let's learn about more symbols called "heraldry." (Share the information on heraldry and symbols in the BACKGROUND INFORMATION). You may wish to associate the word "herald" with the song "Hark, the herald angels sing," and explain the meaning of herald *(a person who proclaims important news; a messenger)*. Tell the students that the flag they will be making will proclaim or "herald" important things about their family.

Show and explain the symbols on the Presidential Seal. Explain that our Founding

Fathers felt that these symbols were important to let people know what America stood for. Point out the colors, the shield, the 13 arrows, the olive branch, the 13 stars above the eagle, and all the things they represent. The motto, "*E Pluribus Unim*" means "Out of Many--One". In other words, we can have many states but we are still one united country.

ACTIVITY: Show your personal family flag and explain some of the meanings of the various symbols, etc.

Before the students begin creating their flags, offer these suggestions of design, showing examples as you go. Invite them to sketch their ideas lightly on a practice page.

1. Frame. Some flags have a frame of flowers, various symbols, designs, or even a fringe to go around the outside edge. Students will need to plan this *before* they do any other designing, so there is space enough around the edges.

2. Stripes. The flag can be similar in shape and design to the American flag, if they wish. The number of stripes could equal the number of family members. If there are only three members in a family, these stripes could be equal in width, -- horizontal or verticalBcovering the entire flag.

3. Colors. Each stripe could be a different color, depending on each person's personality or strong trait. Or, like the American flag, all the stripes could alternate with one other color. For example:

   - An outgoing "in charge" person's stripe could be represented with red
   - A quiet, calm, peaceful-type person could be represented by white
   - A person who pays attention to detail and likes to be alone and be creative could be represented with the color blue.
   - A fun-loving, happy person could be represented by the color yellow.
   - A person that has a "royal" bearing would be represented with purple.
   - Someone who has a thirst for learning could be represented with green.
   - A person with lots of energy could be represented by orange.

4. Designs. Shields are often used as a design (such as CTR). Other designs such as pictures can represent a particular message, like the "Don't Tread On Me" flag with the coiled snake.

5. Motto. Explain the meaning of the word Amotto." *(A brief sentence, phrase, or single word used to express a principle, goal, or ideal.)*

   America's motto is "In God We Trust." A motto can be placed anywhere on the flag. It is especially effective if it is placed near the shield, written on a banner or ribbon.

ACTIVITY

Hand out the copies of the flag planning form and let the students think about how they want to design their flag by filling in the form. Then display or hand out copies of types of heraldry, showing various shields and symbols.

After the students fill out the form, let them re-draw their "practice design" on a plain piece of paper.

Review the meanings of some of the symbols you have talked about and have the students write down the following information about their family, on the form provided:

1. What are your favorite colors? Review the meanings of red, white, and blue. Meanings of some other colors are:
    a. YellowBhappy and bright
    b. GreenBgrowing and fruitful
    c. PurpleBroyalty
    d. BrownBearthy and steady

2. What is a symbol that would represent what your father does?
3. What is a symbol that would represent what your mother does?
4. How many are in your family? (Sometimes birds represent siblings)
5. Where do you come in the family? Are you youngest? Oldest? In the middle? (Students can write the child number they are, somewhere on the flag.)
6. Are you related to someone famous? (write initials or draw a silhouette)
7. What are your favorite hobbies? (sketch a soccer ball, skateboard, fishing rod, hunting rifle, etc.)
8. What are some of your talents? (sketch something that represents a talent—an artist's palette, a musical instrument, sports symbol, etc. – even a smile!)
9. What is your favorite animal?
10. What could be your family's motto (or personal saying)?

When the students have an idea of how they want their flag, they can re-create their sketches neatly on the parchment paper. Flags should be filed or taken home in a folder or notebook for protection.

My Family Flag--Meaningful Colors and Symbols

Name _____ Age _____ Today's Date _____

Meaningful Colors:

a. Red--Courage, sacrifice, bravery, and boldness--or to be FEARLESS in the face of danger. Red also reminds us of the blood that was spilt by those who gave their lives to make us a free nation. In addition, red represents earth and hardiness--or strength.
b. White--Purity, innocence, and peace. George Washington described the white in the flag as symbolizing our desire for liberty -- the land of the free. Also, when two armies are fighting each other, they fly a white flag, which signals all the soldiers to stop fighting while the leaders talk, or while they pick up their wounded soldiers.
c. Blue--Loyalty, unity and justice. Blue also stands for Heaven and vigilance. (Vigilance means always being on guard to defend something.)
d. Yellow--happiness and a bright personality
e. Green--growing and fruitful
f. Purple--the color of royalty
g. Brown--humble and dependable

1. The colors I have chosen to use are: _____

2. The symbol that represents what my father's occupation is _____

3. The symbol that represents what my mother does is: _____

4. There are _____ people in my family.

5. I am child # _____ in my family.

6. Someone famous I am related to is: _____

7. My favorite hobby is _____,
   and the symbol for this could look like this:

8. I have a special talent. Its symbol could be: _____

9. My favorite animal is a _____

10. Our Family Motto: _____

Examples of shields and shield designs

