

Hooray for Independence Day!

Grade Level or Special Area: Kindergarten

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Length of Unit: Six lessons (approximately 25 minutes each)

I. ABSTRACT

This unit introduces students to terms of democracy and symbols of our nation. Through reading and writing skills the students will discover why we celebrate the Fourth of July, how we received the Statue of Liberty, and what the American flag means to our country. Students will also participate in an mock election.

II. OVERVIEW

A. Concept Objectives

1. Understand the chronological organization of history and know how to organize events and people into major eras to identify and explain historical relationships. **[Colorado State Standard History 1]**
2. Understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time. **[CSS History 3]**
3. Understand political institutions and theories that have developed and changed over time. **[CSS History 5]**

B. Content from the *Core Knowledge Sequence*

1. **History:** July 4, "Independence Day" (p. 12)
 - a. The birthday of our nation
 - b. Democracy (rule of the people)
2. **History:** Americans wanted to rule themselves instead of being ruled by a faraway king. (p.12)
3. **History:** Recognize and become familiar with the significance of: (p. 13)
 - a. American Flag
 - b. Statue of Liberty
4. **Language Arts:** Use letter-sound knowledge to write simple words and messages, consistently representing initial and final consonant sounds (for example, writing "bot" for "boat"). (p. 8)
5. **Language Arts:** Understand and follow oral directions. (p. 8)
6. **Language Arts:** Listen to and understand a variety of texts, both fiction and non-fiction. (p. 8)

C. Skill Objectives

1. Students will discuss what it means to be an American.
2. Students will discover that Americans were not always ruled by a democracy.
3. Students will write 2-3 sentences about why they are proud to be an American.
4. Students will be able to use initial and final consonants in their writing.
5. Students will discuss the meaning of the fourth of July.
6. Students will illustrate how their family celebrates Independence Day.
7. Students will write a sentence about their illustration.
8. Students will learn why the statue of liberty became a symbol of freedom.
9. Students will illustrate a timeline of their own depicting the events leading up to the U.S. receiving the Statue of Liberty.
10. Students will discuss the reasons why the statue of liberty is a symbol of freedom.
11. Students will recognize the American flag as a symbol of freedom and respect.
12. Students will discover that the American flag represents our country.

13. Students will learn the proper folding technique of the American flag.
14. Students will create a flag that represents themselves.
15. Students will participate in singing “The Star Spangled Banner.”
16. Students will understand that a democracy means that rule belongs to the people.
17. Students will understand that a democracy involves voting.
18. Students will participate in a mock election.
19. Students will predict the winners of the mock election.

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- A. For Teachers
 - None
- B. For Students
 1. U.S. Presidents, past and present
 2. Early slavery in America

IV. RESOURCES

- A. Cheney, L. *America: A Patriotic Primer*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster for Young Readers, 2002. 0-689-85192-8. (Lesson One)
- B. Hoig, S. *It's the Fourth of July!* New York, NY: Cobblehill Books, 1995. 0-525-65175-6. (Lesson Three)

V. LESSONS

Lesson One: Proud To Be An American

- A. *Daily Objectives*
 1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.
 - b. Understand political institutions and theories that have developed and changed over time.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Americans wanted to rule themselves instead of being ruled by a faraway king.
 - b. July 4, “Independence Day”, the birthday of our nation
 - c. Listen to a variety of texts, both fiction and non-fiction.
 - d. Use letter-sound knowledge to write simple words and messages, consistently representing initial and final consonant sounds (for example, writing “bot” for “boat”).
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will discuss what it means to be an American.
 - b. Students will discover that Americans were not always ruled by a democracy.
 - c. Students will write 2-3 sentences about why they are proud to be an American.
 - d. Students will be able to use initial and final consonants in their writing.
- B. *Materials*
 1. Appendix A – one copy per student
 2. Pencils – one per student
 3. Appendix B – one copy per student
 4. Chart paper
 5. Markers – for the teacher
 6. *America: A Patriotic Primer* by Lynne Cheney

- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Democracy – government by the people
 2. Proud – self-respecting
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Seat students on the floor where it is easy to have a class discussion.
 2. Display chart paper where students can easily see it.
 3. Begin to discuss what it means to be an American.
 4. Ask the students what an American is and why is it important to be an American.
 5. As the students are giving you ideas, begin writing what the children say on the chart paper.
 6. Allow enough time for all students to answer.
 7. After the discussion, read the book *America: A Patriotic Primer* to the students. This is a long book with a lot of pictures and comments. You may choose to begin the book in this lesson and finish it in a later lesson.
 8. Be sure as you are reading this book to thoroughly explain each item you are reading. If you choose to finish this book in a later lesson, be sure to read at least through the letter N.
 9. When finished with the story, discuss the book with the students. Some possible discussion questions are:
 - a. *Did you learn anything that you didn't already know?*
 - b. *Why did America have a declaration?*
 - c. *What does the American flag stand for?*
 - d. *Why is it important for us to know about America and it's past?*
 10. Tell the students that they are going to write about why they are proud to be an American. You may choose to brainstorm some ideas first before having the students write, or remind them of what was written on the chart paper.
 11. Seat the students where they are able to write.
 12. Pass out one copy of Appendix A and a pencil to each student.
 13. Remind the students to sound out their words on their own.
 14. Have the students begin writing. As they are writing, circulate around the classroom.
 15. Write the translation for what the students write underneath their work.
 16. After everyone is finished, allow time for students who want to share.
 17. Collect the papers for assessing.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teacher observation
 2. Use checklist from Appendix B for writing

Lesson Two: Why the Fourth of July?

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand the chronological organization of history and know how to organize events and people into major eras to identify and explain historical relationships.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Americans wanted to rule themselves instead of being ruled by a faraway king.
 - b. July 4, "Independence Day", the birthday of our nation.
 - c. Listen to a variety of texts, both fiction and non-fiction.
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will discuss the meaning of the fourth of July.

- b. Students will illustrate how their family celebrates Independence Day.
 - c. Students will write a sentence about their illustration.
 - d. Students will be able to use initial and final consonants in their writing.
- B. *Materials*
- 1. *Independence Day* by David Marx
 - 2. Storybook paper – one piece per student
 - 3. Crayons – one box per student
 - 4. Pencils – one per student
 - 5. One copy of Appendix C per student
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
- 1. Independence –free from influence or bias of others
 - 2. Celebrate - observe in a special way
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
- 1. Ask the students if they know why we celebrate the Fourth of July. Allow time for everyone to answer.
 - 2. Read the book *Independence Day* by David Marx to the class.
 - 3. Lead a discussion following the story. Possible discussion questions are:
 - a. *What is another word for Fourth of July?*
 - b. *Who ruled the United States before it was a free country?*
 - c. *Why did the people who lived in the United States want to be free?*
 - d. *What was the Declaration of Independence for?*
 - e. *Why is July 4 the birthday of the United States?*
 - f. *How do people celebrate Independence Day?*
 - g. *What is your favorite part about the fourth of July?*
 - 4. Tell the students that they are going to draw a picture of how their family celebrates the fourth of July.
 - 5. Have the students sit where they are able to write. Pass out a piece of storybook paper and crayons to each student.
 - 6. Ask the students to begin by drawing a picture of what their family does to celebrate the fourth of July.
 - 7. Remind students that they need to sound out their own words.
 - 8. After the students have completed their picture, ask them to write a sentence about their family’s celebration.
 - 9. Write the translation for what the students write underneath their work.
 - 10. Allow time for students to share if they would like to.
 - 11. Collect papers for assessing.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
- 1. Teacher observation
 - 2. Use rubric from Appendix C for writing and illustration

Lesson Three: Statue of Liberty: A Symbol of Freedom

- A. *Daily Objectives*
- 1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand the chronological organization of history and know how to organize events and people into major eras to identify and explain historical relationships.
 - 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Recognize and become familiar with the significance of the statue of liberty.

- b. Use letter-sound knowledge to write simple words and messages, consistently representing initial and final consonant sounds (for example, writing “bot” for “boat”).
 - c. Understand and follow oral directions.
 - d. Listen to and understand a variety of texts, both fiction and non-fiction.
3. Skill Objective(s)
- a. Students will learn why the statue of liberty became a symbol of freedom.
 - b. Students will illustrate a timeline of their own depicting the events leading up to the U.S. receiving the Statue of Liberty.
 - c. Students will discuss the reasons why the statue of liberty is a symbol of freedom.
- B. *Materials*
- 1. Plain white paper – one piece per student
 - 2. Pencils – one per student
 - 3. Scissors – one pair per student
 - 4. Crayons – one box per student
 - 5. One copy of Appendix D per student
 - 6. *It's the Fourth of July!* By Stan Hoig
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
- 1. Freedom – having liberty; independent
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
- 1. Begin by showing the students a picture of the statue of liberty. Ask if they know what the picture is a picture of.
 - 2. Ask the students if they know where the statue of liberty is located. Allow students to answer.
 - 3. Explain to the students that the statue of liberty was a gift to America from France. Ask the students to discuss what the statue is a symbol of. You may want to make a list of the student's answers on the chalkboard.
 - 4. Read portions of chapter 6, New Emblems of Liberty, from the book *It's the Fourth of July!* by Stan Hoig.
 - 5. Show pictures of the construction of the statue from the book.
 - 6. After reading the chapter, discuss the fact that the statue of liberty became a symbol of freedom to those entering the United States from other countries.
 - 7. Instruct the students to sit where they are able to write.
 - 8. Pass out one blank sheet of plain white paper to each student.
 - 9. Pass out a pencil to each student.
 - 10. Instruct the students to fold their paper in half lengthwise (like a hot dog).
 - 11. Next, have them fold their paper into thirds so that they have three separate sections.
 - 12. Unfold the “thirds” so that the paper is still folded in half lengthwise.
 - 13. The students should have three creases in their lengthwise paper.
 - 14. Now, have the students open up their paper to its full size. There should be creases on each side.
 - 15. Using their scissors, have the students cut along the creases on ONE SIDE ONLY.
 - 16. Do not allow the students to cut all the way through. Be sure they stop cutting at the middle of the paper.
 - 17. Have the students fold their paper back in half lengthwise. They should now have three separate flaps on one side of their paper.

18. Instruct the students to write the word *first* on the first flap, *next* on the second flap, and *last* on the third flap. You may need to write these words on the board for the students.
 19. Pass out crayons to the students.
 20. Explain to the students that under the flap that says *first* they will draw a picture of what happened first with the statue of liberty. You may choose to help the students brainstorm some ideas before they get started.
 21. Under the flap that says *next*, have the students draw a picture of what happened next with the statue of liberty.
 22. Under the flap that says *last*, have the students draw a picture of what happened last with the statue of liberty.
 23. An example could be first the man who built in constructed the statue in pieces, next he had to put it together, and last it sits in the New York harbor.
 24. After the students have completed their pictures, ask them to write a sentence under each flap that helps to explain their picture.
 25. Remind the students that they need to sound out their own words.
 26. Write the translation for what the student writes under their writing.
 27. Allow students time to share their work with their classmates.
 28. Collect the students' papers for assessing.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teacher observation
 2. Use rubric from Appendix D

Lesson Four: It's a Grand Ol' Flag!

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Recognize and become familiar with the significance of the American flag.
 - b. Understand and follow oral directions.
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will recognize the American flag as a symbol of freedom and respect.
 - b. Students will discover that the American flag represents our country.
 - c. Students will learn the proper folding technique of the American flag.
 - d. Students will create a flag that represents them.
 - e. Students will participate in signing "The Star Spangled Banner."
- B. *Materials*
1. One piece of 8 ½" x 11" paper per student
 2. Crayons – one box per student
 3. Markers – one box per student
 4. A picture of the American Flag
 5. A picture of the first flag showing the 13 colonies
 6. Pictures of other countries flags
 7. A sample flag to show proper folding technique
 8. Appendix F – proper flag folding instructions
 9. One copy of Appendix E per student
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Flag – cloth used as a symbol or signal
 2. Freedom – having liberty; independent

- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Show the students a picture of the American flag.
 2. Ask the students to tell you what it is a picture of.
 3. Ask the students to tell you what the American flag stands for.
 4. Explain that like the Statue of Liberty, the American flag is also a symbol of our freedom.
 5. Show the students a picture of the first flag. Explain that the first flag had 13 stars and 13 stripes to represent the 13 colonies.
 6. Ask the students why the United States needed a flag. Allow students time to answer.
 7. Explain that every country has its own flag. You may want to show the students pictures of other countries flags.
 8. Explain that our first flag represented what the country was like at that time.
 9. Ask the students what is different about the first flag and the flag we have today.
 10. Discuss with the students the special things about the American flag. Include the following in your discussion:
 11. Our flag today consists of 50 stars representing the 50 states and 13 stripes representing the first 13 colonies.
 12. Our national anthem, “The Star Spangled Banner” was written about our flag when Francis Scott Key saw the flag still waving after an attack.
 13. There is a special way to fold the flag. You may want to have the students help you demonstrate the special fold.
 14. A flag flown at half-staff indicates mourning.
 15. A flag flown upside-down indicates distress.
 16. We say the pledge of allegiance as a symbol of respect for our country.
 17. Explain that the flag represents who we are.
 18. Tell the students that they are going to create a flag about themselves.
 19. Have the students sit where they are able to write.
 20. Pass out a piece of 8 ½” x 11” piece of paper to each student.
 21. Pass out crayons and markers to each student to use for coloring.
 22. Explain to the students that you would like them to create a flag that tells about them.
 23. Have each student take a few moments to brainstorm what is special about him or her. Do they play a sport? Do they enjoy doing something like playing the piano?
 24. Tell the students they can also include their family as a part of their drawing.
 25. Allow the students plenty of time to complete their flags. Be sure they fill up the entire piece of paper with their drawings.
 26. Be sure students understand that they may create multiple drawings about themselves on the single sheet of paper.
 27. Circulate around the room to assist students if needed.
 28. When finished, allow students time to share their personal flags. This is a great way for classmates to get to know one another better.
 29. End the lesson by singing “The Star Spangled Banner.”
 30. Collect student’s flags to display around the room.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teacher observation
 2. Use checklist from Appendix E

Lesson Five: What It Means To Be Free

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand political institutions and theories that have developed and changed over time.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Americans wanted to rule themselves instead of being ruled by a faraway king.
 - b. Democracy (rule of the people)
 - c. Understand and follow oral directions.
2. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will understand that a democracy means that rule belongs to the people.
 - b. Students will understand that a democracy involves voting.
 - c. Students will participate in a mock election.

B. *Materials*

1. One copy of Appendix G per student
2. Pencils – one per student

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. Democracy – government by the people
2. Vote – formal expression of choice or opinion
3. Election – select by vote
4. Ballot – paper used to vote

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. Ask the students to tell you what the meaning of democracy is.
2. Explain that a democracy means that rule belongs to the people.
3. Explain that the United States became a democracy after the declaration of Independence was written.
3. Ask the students to brainstorm some ways that America is a democracy or a country where rule belongs to the people. You may choose to write down some of their ideas.
4. Explain to the students that one of the main ways our country shows that it is a democracy is by voting.
5. Ask the students what the word vote means. Ask them if they have ever had to vote for anything.
6. Tell the students that when you go and vote for a person, you are choosing them to be in charge.
7. Tell the students that they are going to be voting. Tell them that you are going to have a pretend election in your classroom.
8. Discuss the rules of an election.
9. It's done in secret.
10. You may only choose one person for each item.
11. You may not tell anyone else whom they have to vote for.
12. Tell the students that they are going to vote for four pretend people to be President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
13. Pass out a pencil to each student.
14. Pass out one copy of Appendix G to each student.
15. Explain that what they are voting on is called a ballot.
16. Before allowing students to vote, go over the names in each section so that the students know what their choices are.

17. Instruct students to find a quiet place to sit with their ballot. Allow them enough time to complete their ballots.
 18. Let the students know that if they vote for more than one person in each section, that their ballot will not be counted.
 19. When finished, have them place the ballots into a box.
 20. Tell the students that you will count the votes tomorrow as a class.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teacher observation
 2. Appendix G – make sure the votes are all properly filled in

Lesson Six: Election Results

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand political institutions and theories that have developed and changed over time.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Democracy (rule of the people)
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will predict the winners of the mock election.
- B. *Materials*
1. Ballots and ballot box from previous day
 2. Appendix H – tally sheet
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Predict - foretell
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Tell the students that today they are going to find out who won the election from yesterday.
 2. Begin by explaining how you are going to tally each of the votes.
 3. You may choose to write the tally sheet, Appendix H, on the chalkboard or on chart paper so the students are able to see it better.
 4. Begin tallying each of the votes.
 5. When you are half way through tallying the votes, ask the students to predict who they think is going to win. You may record their predictions on a separate sheet of paper.
 6. When you have finished tallying the votes, announce the winners of the kindergarten election.
 7. Have the students who predicted correctly raise their hands.
 8. Congratulate the class on a good and fair election.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teacher observation

VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITY

- A. Appendix I: Oral Quiz
- B. Throw a birthday party for America (optional).
- C. Make an American flag by tearing pieces of construction paper for the red and the blue. Glue the tiny torn pieces onto the flag in the appropriate places. This makes a great bulletin board. Use Appendix J for flag.

VII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

- A. Appendix A: Proud to be an American
- B. Appendix B: Checklist for writing

- C. Appendix C: Rubric for writing and illustration
- D. Appendix D: Rubric for story order
- E. Appendix E: Flag checklist
- F. Appendix F: Proper flag folding technique
- G. Appendix G: Kindergarten ballot
- H. Appendix H: Ballot tally sheet
- I. Appendix I: Oral quiz
- J. Appendix J: Flag outline

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A. Cheney, L. *America: A Patriotic Primer*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2002. 0-689-85192-8.
- B. Gore, W. *Independence Day*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers, Inc., 1993. 0-89490-403-5.
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- E. Marx, D. *Independence Day*. New York, NY: Children's Press, 2001. 0-516-22232-5.
- F. Merrick, P. *Fourth of July: Fireworks*. New York, NY: The Child's World, Inc., 2000. 1-56766-640-x.
- G. Shachtman, T. *America's Birthday: The Fourth of July*. New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986. 0-02-782870-0.

Checklist for Writing

Student Evaluated: _____

Date of Evaluation: _____

Did the student's writing include at least one reason why they are proud to be an American?

Yes _____ No _____

Did the student understand the assignment and complete it correctly?

Yes _____ No _____

Did the student use initial and final consonants in their writing?

Yes _____ No _____

Did the student sound out most of their words by themselves?

Yes _____ No _____

Comments:

Rubric for Writing and Illustration

Student evaluated: _____

Date of evaluation: _____

1. Did the student write one or two sentences about how their family celebrates the Fourth of July?

_____ **pts./2 pts.**

2. Did the student's illustration correctly depict their written sentence?

_____ **pts./2 pts.**

3. Did the student follow directions correctly?

_____ **pts./1 pt.**

Total: _____ **pts./5 pts.**

Comments:

Rubric for Story Order

Student evaluated: _____

Date of evaluation: _____

1. Did the student include the beginning, middle, and end of the story?

Yes _____ No _____

2. Were the events in the proper order?

Yes _____ No _____

3. Did the student include a sentence and a picture for each event?

Yes _____ No _____

4. Were all of the events correctly used from the Statue of Liberty story?

Yes _____ No _____

5. Did the student use initial and final consonants in their writing?

Yes _____ No _____

_____pts./_____5pts.

Comments:

Checklist for Personal Flag

Student evaluated: _____

Did the student depict multiple things that represent themselves?

___Y ___N

Did the student fill up the entire piece of paper?

___Y ___N

Was the flag colorful?

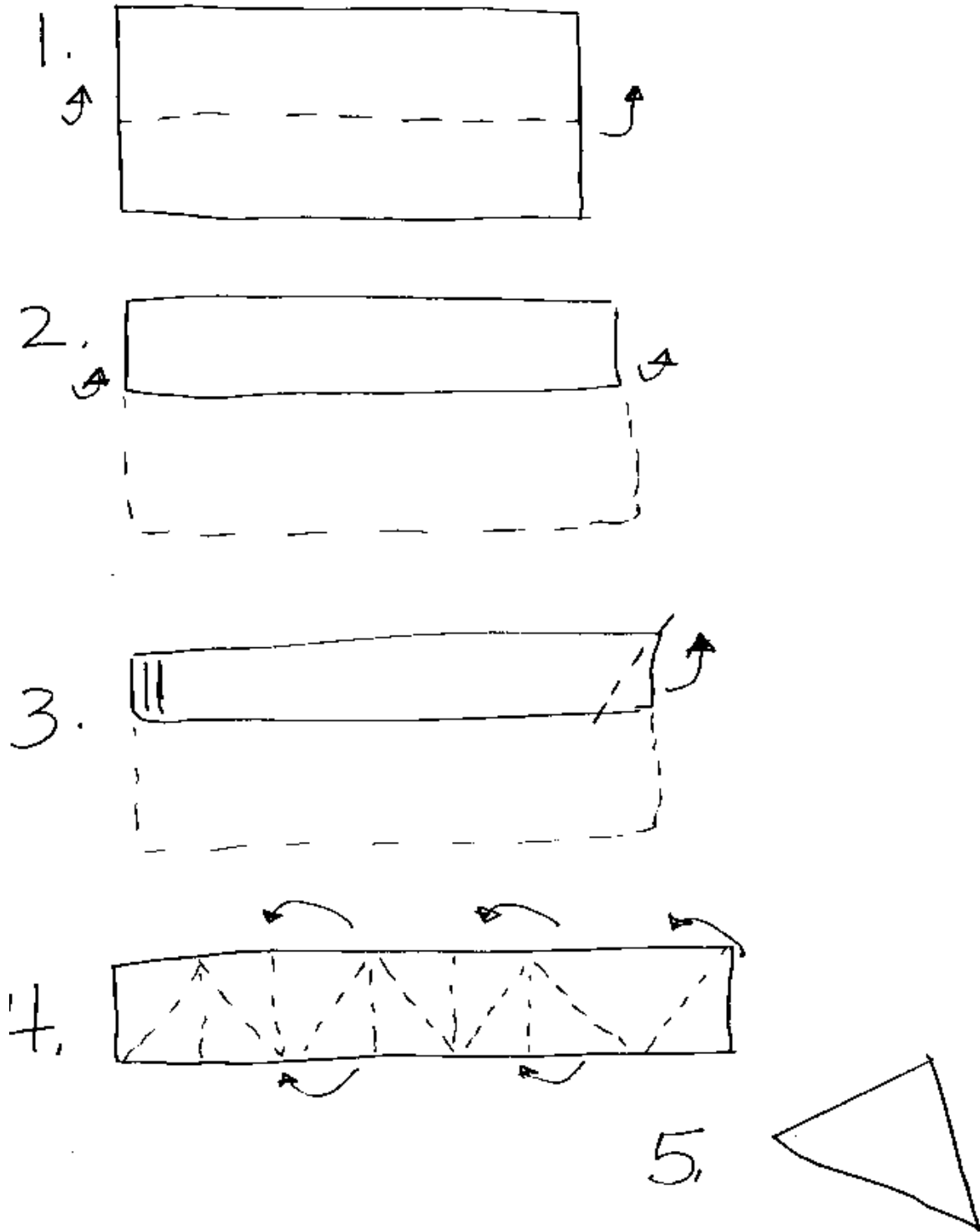
___Y ___N

Was the flag unique to the student?

___Y ___N

What was the student's favorite part of their flag?

Appendix F



Kindergarten Ballot

President:

_____ Mickey Mouse _____ Garfield _____ Batman

Vice President:

_____ Donald Duck _____ Spiderman _____ Tigger

Secretary:

_____ Goofy _____ Pooh bear _____ Arthur

Treasurer:

_____ Clifford _____ Franklin _____ Minnie Mouse

Tally Sheet for Election

Mickey Mouse _____

Garfield _____

Batman _____

Donald Duck _____

Spiderman _____

Tigger _____

Goofy _____

Pooh bear _____

Arthur _____

Clifford _____

Franklin _____

Minnie Mouse _____

Quiz

Name: _____

1. Did France give the United States the Statue of Liberty?

Yes No

2. America wanted to be ruled by a far away king?

Yes No

3. How many stars were on the very first American flag?

15 13 23 29

4. What day is America's birthday?

July 14 August 4 July 4

5. Democracy means rule of the people?

Yes No

6. How many flags are on the American flag today?

25 75 50 10

7. Being an American means you also get to vote?

Yes No

Appendix J
