



Honoring the Spirit of America

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“Patriotic Songs” Grades K-5

Topic: Patriotic words found in America (My Country ‘Tis of Thee) and America the Beautiful.

Objective: **SS1CG2** The student will explain the meaning of the patriotic words to America (My Country ‘Tis of Thee) and America the Beautiful.

This objective covers GPS requirement **SS1CG2**.

(For teachers outside the state of Georgia, check your local or state education curriculum to see what requirements this lesson plan may satisfy.)

Materials:

- A copy of the words for both songs on chart paper or an overhead transparency (The words and instrumental audio for America (My Country ‘Tis of Thee) can be found at: <http://www.hymnsite.com/lyrics/umh697.sht>, and for America the Beautiful, <http://www.scoutsongs.com/lyrics/americanthebeautiful.html>)
- Board, or chart paper
- Dry erase markers, or regular markers
- Paper and pencils
- crayons

Introduction:

1. Begin a discussion on what it means to be proud to be an American. Do this by asking students to think of something that they are proud of. Stimulate thinking by providing the example of how some people are really proud of a certain sports team and they love to support them by wearing their colors, etc. Continue to describe the actions of true and loyal fans to a certain sports team.
2. Write student responses on the board and briefly discuss each of their examples.
3. Once again using the sports team example, ask if everyone likes the same team. Of course the answer will be “no”. Turn the discussion towards the fact that everyone in the room is an American, and ask if we can all be proud of that fact.
4. Ask students what most Americans wear on the fourth of July. Relate this back to the fact that sports fans wear the teams’ colors to show their support.

5. Discuss with students that we can be proud to be an American, just as sports fans are proud to support their favorite team. Being proud to be an American is called being patriotic.

Procedure:

1. Once students have gained an understanding of what it means to be proud to be an American, ask them what things we are proud of. For example, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, our system of democracy, etc. (Of course this ideas will need to be explained in the students' terms.) Write students' responses on the board and briefly discuss each.
2. Tell students that there were two Americans that were so proud to be Americans that they wrote songs about America and the wonderful things found in this great country.
3. The first song is called "America (My Country 'Tis of Thee)" and it was written by Samuel F. Smith. Display the words of the song on chart paper or on an overhead transparency. Listen to the instrumental and invite students to sing along. **For grades K-2:** Discuss the four stanzas of the song, one at a time. Have the students help reword each stanza into words that are common to them. After each stanza is rewritten, discuss why the words are patriotic and the meaning of the words in relation to patriotism. **For grades 3-5:** Divide the students into four groups. Assign each group a stanza to reword into words that are common to them. Once all groups have finished, have each group share their stanza as they rewrote it. As each stanza is shared, discuss why the words are patriotic and the meaning of the words in relation to patriotism.
4. The second song is called "America the Beautiful" and it was written by Katharine Lee Bates. Display the words of the song on chart paper or on an overhead transparency. Listen to the instrumental and invite students to sing along. Now that the students are in the groove of rewriting stanzas, do the same for this song. It is much longer than the prior song, so choosing certain stanzas to rewrite may be appropriate.

Assessment:

For grades K-2, 3-5: Have students draw a patriotic picture and dictate/write a caption underneath explaining why it is a patriotic picture.

For grades 3-5: Have students work in groups to create their own patriotic song. Students should be able to explain why their song is patriotic.

Enrichment:

Have students write a patriotic song for their school.