

Our Country's Symbols

MATERIALS

FOR STUDENT: (one per student unless otherwise noted)

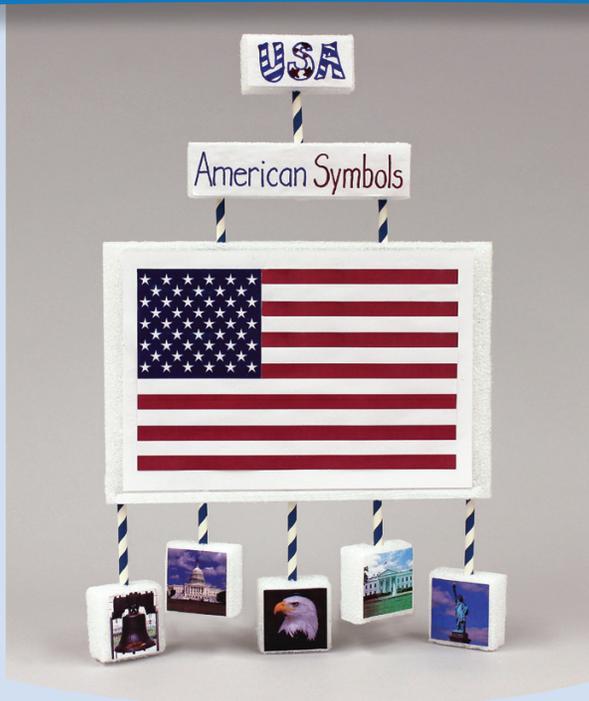
- FloraCraft® Make It: Fun® Foam Block, eight pieces cut from large Foam Block (See "FOR TEACHER"): 7" x 10"; five 2" x 2"; 1 1/2" x 6" and 1 1/2" x 3"
- American symbols, 1 3/4" x 1 3/4", five (copy paper to print them if the students are printing)
- Cardstock, white strips: 1 3/8" x 2 7/8" and 1 3/8" x 5 7/8"
- Paper straws, blue or red stripe, four
- Large paper clip
- Pencil
- Washable fine tip markers: Red and blue
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Paper plate
- Computer and printer (optional)

FOR TEACHER:

- FloraCraft® Make It: Fun® Foam Block, 1" x 12" x 36" (can get enough for three students per block)
- Cardstock, white, 12" x 12" (can get enough for approx. ten students per sheet)
- Sheet of white address labels

- Copy paper (to print the American flag and symbols)
- Washable fine tip markers: Red and blue
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Serrated knife

- Paper cutter
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Glue gun (for teacher only)
- Cutting mat or stack of old newspapers
- Computer and printer



SOCIAL STUDIES

GRADE LEVEL
SECOND – THIRD

COMPLETION TIME
• 60 minute session



OBJECTIVES

Students learn to:

- Recognize symbols of the United States of America
- Understand the reason behind each of the images being USA symbols
- Consider what freedom means to the individual

STANDARDS

- Investigate and show how communities, state, and nation are united by symbols that represent citizenship in our nation. Explain the significance of various community, state, and national celebrations (e.g., Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Thanksgiving)
- Identify and explain the significance of various national symbols, documents, and landmarks (e.g., Declaration of Independence, Constitution of Independence, Pledge of Allegiance, national monuments, national capitol building, etc.)

TEACHER PREPARATION

Note: Read through all the instructions first and check out the TIPS! Have a glue gun plugged in and ready to use (ideally set on low temperature) but out of student reach. This can give you immediate adhesion when you're in a hurry to help students. It is also recommended that you make a sample first, before preparing the materials for any others, since knowing how the parts fit, might affect how you prepare the rest of them. If the students are providing the symbols, have them locate, print and trim them to size before this class session.

[1] To cut the horizontal foam block, use a ruler and pencil to divide the block into thirds (12" x 12" each). Each of these will provide the foam needed for one student. Inside each of those, measure and mark: Cut one 7" x 10"; five 2" x 2"; one 1 1/2" x 6"; and one 1 1/2" x 3" as shown in the photo.

On a cutting mat or stack of newspapers, use a serrated knife against the edge of a ruler to cut the foam block into thirds, with several passes of the knife. Similarly, cut apart each one into smaller pieces as marked. (Keep the groups of pieces separated for the students.)

[2] On the computer, on the internet, search for a printable American flag and print it as large as you can on copy paper, one per student. Leaving

approximately a 1/2" border all around, trim the flags on a paper cutter.

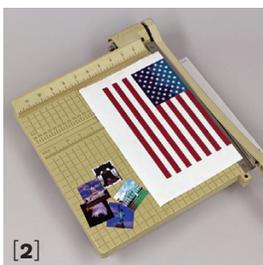
Decide if you will find on line and print five 1 3/4" square symbols for the students, or have them do the research and print them. If you are doing it, trim them on the paper cutter.

[3] Use the paper cutter to cut the white cardstock into strips that measure 1 3/8" x 2 7/8" and 1 3/8" x 5 7/8" (which is slightly smaller than the foam) per student. This assures that the strips will not extend over the edge of the foam.

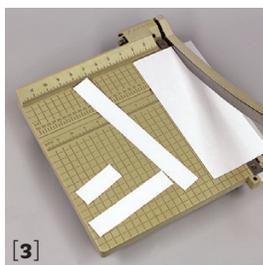
[4] Cut apart address labels, one per student. On a paper plate for each student, set: Eight foam pieces, flag, four straws, ruler, pencil, scissors, markers, glue stick, label and five paper symbols.



[1]



[2]



[3]



[4]



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FloraCraft-SS-3014

INSTRUCTIONS

[1] For a more finished look, show the students how to compress the cut edges of the foam. Place the foam edge on the table and press down, to compress it, rocking it back and forth a little. Rotate and repeat with each side but don't round the points of the corners too much, just the edges.



[2] Demonstrate and have the students apply a generous amount of glue stick to one 2" square foam piece and press a 1 3/4" square image into it. Repeat with the other four squares.



[3] Similarly, have the students apply glue stick to the large foam piece, center their flag onto it and press in place. (Caution them not to press in place until they're sure it is straight.)



[4] Demonstrate and have the students make three light guidelines using their pencil and ruler on their 6" long strip and neatly print "American Symbols" in upper and lower case letters. Then, have them draw a top and bottom guideline on the 3" long strip and make upper case letters "USA". When they are satisfied, have them trace over the letters in marker, decorating "USA" with stripes and stars if

desired. When the marker is dry, have them erase their guidelines.



[5] Have the students generously apply glue stick to the remaining foam pieces and attach their strips to them.

Then, ask the students to cut each of their four straws in half. Demonstrate and have them push one half-straw into the top center of one 2" square foam piece, going in about 1/2" for now. Repeat with the other four squares. Have them position the flag foam flat on the table, with the straw foam pieces evenly spaced underneath. Demonstrate how to push the top of one half-straw up into the bottom edge of the flag foam, about 1/2". Have the students repeat with the others. Then, if they want to stagger the heights, they may push the half-straws of the second and third ones further into the flag, so that they will be higher.



[6] Similarly, demonstrate and have the students insert a half-straw into the bottom of the "American Symbols" foam, on each side. Have them press those half-straws into the top of the flag foam. Ask the students to insert one half-straw into the center bottom of the "USA" foam, and press it into the top center of the "American Symbols" foam.

Last, ask them to put their name on their address label and attach it to the back of the flag foam.

MODIFICATIONS

To simplify project:

- Pre-print and pre-cut the words.
- Mount both titles, flag and five symbols on one larger piece of foam.

To expand project:

- Add additional symbols with half-straws inserted into the right and left of new 2" square foam pieces and then inserted into the right and left of the flag foam.

For multiple ages:

- Younger and older students can work side-by-side with the older students doing the research, writing titles and assembling, while the younger students cut and glue.
- Younger students can learn the Pledge of Allegiance and patriotic songs while the older students can research the stories behind the symbols.

ADDITIONAL IDEAS

- Discuss why each of the items in the photos have become symbols.
- Ask students to answer the question, "How might your life be different, if you lived in another country, instead of the United States?"
- Also put out the displays for special holidays such as Memorial Day, Labor Day, Fourth of July, etc.
- Create a jumbo-sized display for the whole class using larger photos, larger pieces of foam and full-length straws.
- Ask the students to talk to their families about any other symbols of our country that could be added. (Symbols can be everyday family scenes of people enjoying our freedoms, too.)



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TIPS

- When cutting the foam, keep the serrated knife blade perpendicular to the table so that the foam edges are straight. Score it lightly first and then press more firmly to cut deeper with several passes of the knife.
- If the students are going to find their own symbols, cut a 1 3/4" square from cardstock for each one. Show them how they can trace around the cardstock templates onto their images to see where to trim the images with scissors.
- The reason for applying the glue stick to the foam is that a generous application will fill in the foam pores a little and create a stronger bond with the cardstock, than if the glue were applied to the cardstock and set onto the foam.
- If you plan to hang them, slightly separate the ends of a large paper clip, approx. 1/4". On the center of the top back of the flag foam, 2" down from the top, insert the shorter ends of the paper clip into the foam, creating a hanger loop with the longer end. Hot glue to secure if needed.

REFERENCES

O, Say Can You See? America's Symbols, Landmarks, And Important Words by Sheila Keenan
F Is For Flag by Wendy Cheyette Lewison
U.S. Symbols by Ann-Marie Kishel
Celebrate America: A Guide To America's Greatest Symbols by Mary Firestone