



Flag Etiquette

Indiana 4-H Civic Engagement Activity

Flag Poem

Audience: Grades 3-12 **Duration:** 20 minutes

Overview: Poem celebrating the history of the United States flag.

Objectives: Participants in this session will:

- Reflect on the historical significance of the United States flag.

Materials:

- United States flag
- Poem to read
- Optional: method to show video (laptop, LCD projector, internet connection)

Instructions

- Ask the students these questions:
 1. Who knows someone who is serving in the military?
 2. Who knows someone who has been lost in the duty of protecting this country? Ask for members to share their story if they are comfortable doing so. *Note – This is serious and could be emotional. Make sure reverence and understanding are taken with this discussion.
 3. What do you think the United States flag means or represents to the people who are or who have served this country? Group discussion. Explain that today we are going to learn about the flag, what it may represent, how to fold it, history, and other flag information.
- Show the “Ragged Old Video” by Johnny Cash, if you have the option:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whmVGRSgAe8>
- Read the “I Am the Flag” poem together (written by Ruth Apperson Rous)

Discussion Questions

1. What does the United States flag mean to you?
2. What do the stars and stripes mean?
3. How do you take care of a flag?
4. How is a flag stored?

Because the U.S. Flag is the symbol of our country, it should always be displayed in the most prominent, most honored position. No other flag should ever appear more important.

"The flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing." *Section 8j FLAG CODE*

The Pledge of Allegiance

I Pledge Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

New April, 2019

PURDUE
UNIVERSITY

Extension
INDIANA 4-H

Agricultural Administration Building | 615 W State Street | West Lafayette, IN 47907-2053 | (765) 494-8422 | JoinIndiana4H.org

The Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service is an Affirmative Action, equal access/equal opportunity institution.

“I Am the Flag”

by Ruth Apperson Rous

I am the flag of the United States of America.

I was born on June 14, 1777, in Philadelphia.

There the Continental Congress adopted my stars and stripes as the national flag.

My thirteen stripes alternating red and white, with a union of thirteen white stars in a field of blue, represented a new constellation, a new nation dedicated to the personal and religious liberty of mankind.

Today fifty stars signal from my union, one for each of the fifty sovereign states in the greatest constitutional republic the world has ever known.

My colors symbolize the patriotic ideals and spiritual qualities of the citizens of my country.

My red stripes proclaim the fearless courage and integrity of American men and boys and the self-sacrifice and devotion of American mothers and daughters.

My white stripes stand for liberty and equality for all.

My blue is the blue of heaven, loyalty, and faith.

I represent these eternal principles: liberty, justice, and humanity.

I embody American freedom: freedom of speech, religion, assembly, the press, and the sanctity of the home.

I typify that indomitable spirit of determination brought to my land by Christopher Columbus and by all my forefathers - the Pilgrims, Puritans, settlers at James town and Plymouth.

I am as old as my nation.

I am a living symbol of my nation's law: the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights.

I voice Abraham Lincoln's philosophy: "A government of the people, by the people, for the people."

I stand guard over my nation's schools, the seedbed of good citizenship and true patriotism.

I am displayed in every schoolroom throughout my nation; every schoolyard has a flag pole for my display.

Daily thousands upon thousands of boys and girls pledge their allegiance to me and my country.

I have my own law—Public Law 829, "The Flag Code" - which definitely states my correct use and display for all occasions and situations.

I have my special day, Flag Day. June 14 is set aside to honor my birth.

Americans, I am the sacred emblem of your country. I symbolize your birthright, your heritage of liberty purchased with blood and sorrow.

I am your title deed of freedom, which is yours to enjoy and hold in trust for posterity.

If you fail to keep this sacred trust inviolate, if I am nullified and destroyed, you and your children will become slaves to dictators and despots.

Eternal vigilance is your price of freedom.

As you see me silhouetted against the peaceful skies of my country, remind yourself that I am the flag of your country, that I stand for what you are - no more, no less.

Guard me well, lest your freedom perish from the earth.

Dedicate your lives to those principles for which I stand: "One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

I was created in freedom. I made my first appearance in a battle for human liberty.

God grant that I may spend eternity in my "land of the free and the home of the brave" and that I shall ever be known as "Old Glory," the flag of the United States of America.

Source: <http://www.usflag.org/i.am.the.flag.html>