The History of the National Anthem

Lesson Submitted: Angella Kile, Madison Morgan & Maureen Baxter, St. Mary's County

Topic: History of the National Anthem

Grade levels: Grades 2 - 4

Duration: Five days

Lesson Objective: Students will use historical fiction and primary documents to discover the history behind Our National Anthem.

Focus Question: Why did Francis Scott Key write the Star Spangled Banner?

CCSC: [Grade 3]

[1] Key Ideas and Details

R11 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it, cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

R11 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

R12 Determine the main idea of a text, recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.

R10 Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

R10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in grades 2-3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
W2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

**Vocabulary:**
Spangled, Lyrics, Melody, Inspired, National, Anthem, Witnessess, Bombard/bombardment, Gaze, Surrender, Cease

**Materials:**
- modern version of Star Spangled Banner with vocals
- Authentic picture of the 1813 flag (15 stripes and 15 stars)
- Leveled Text
  - The Star-Spangled Banner, by Eva March Tappan
Available at: [http://www.apples4theteacher.com/holidays/flag-day/short-stories/the-star-spangled-banner.html](http://www.apples4theteacher.com/holidays/flag-day/short-stories/the-star-spangled-banner.html)
  - Great American for Little Americans: The Star-Spangled Banner, by Edward Eggleston
  - The Story of the Star Spangled Banner Worksheets by Elizabeth Claire
Available at: [http://www.southbendsymphony.com/Story%20of%20the%20Star-Spangled%20Banner.pdf](http://www.southbendsymphony.com/Story%20of%20the%20Star-Spangled%20Banner.pdf)
  - About the Flag that Inspired the Song, by The Department of Education
Available at: [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/os/september11/ssbfacts.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/os/september11/ssbfacts.html)
  - Sheet Music for The Star-Spangled Banner from Smithsonian American History Museum
Available at: [http://amhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner/the-lyrics.aspx](http://amhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner/the-lyrics.aspx)
Lesson 1: Find Clues in Primary Resources

Activity: Unpacking the lyrics to the Star Spangled Banner

1. Play the Star Spangled Banner with vocals for the students
2. Ask the students to share what they know about the song?
   a. create a list of background knowledge
3. Explain we will be discovering the history of Our National Anthem this week
4. Show the students the writing prompt they will complete by Friday.
   a. Read the prompt together, let students ask questions but do not provide answers or clues to history.
5. Have the students create a list of questions they will need to learn/answer in order to answer the writing prompt?
6. Discuss where we might find the answer? What kind of resources will we need?
7. Pass out copies of the sheet music for the Star Spangled Banner (for differentiation use paragraph version of the words)
   a. Ask why was this song written?
b. Model finding clues to the history in the first verse of the song

c. Group students to examine the other verse for more clues independently and record their findings

d. Have groups share what they found

8. Pass out the original manuscript of the poem written by Francis Scott Key that was adapted in the National Anthem.

   a. Have the students examine the document and make connections to the sheet music.

   b. Examine the manuscripts for differences to the National Anthem lyrics.

9. Open interactive program from DVD (see DVD for instruction to access interactive materials) called Explore the Star Spangled Banner Lyrics

10. Explore verse 1 of the lyrics.

    a. Click of bolded words to discuss the vocabulary and historical content

11. Students should independently write a summary of what they learned about the history of the Star Spangled Banner from the lyrics.

Lesson 2: Read Nonfiction Texts to Gain New Information

Activity: Create a Timeline

1. Show an authentic picture (primary source) of the 1814 flag, 15 stars and 15 stripes. (i.e. from the Smithsonian American History Museum website)

   a. Ask students what they notice about the flag and compare it to today's flag

2. Pass out leveled reading texts for students

   a. In small groups, read through the texts and track thinking with connections and questions
b. Summarize what they read about the War of 1812 and why the Star Spangled Banner was written

3. Create a class timeline/poster of the events leading to the writing of the Star Spangled Banner and it becoming Our Nation Anthem in 1931

Lesson 3: Explore the Web for More Information

Activity: Conduct Research on a Smithsonian Website

1. Reread the writing prompt assessment for the week. Explain to the students they will take notes while exploring the website to gather information to use in their assignment.

2. Have the students explore the Smithsonian Website The Star-Spangled Banner: The Flag that Inspired the National Anthem Homepage, then click on the Song Tab at the top
   
   a. As a class explore and examine the primary sources on the left side of the screen.
   
   b. Students work in groups to read the rest of the webpage and answer a teacher-generated question about the reading.
   
   c. As a class move to the next section and repeat steps a and b until all 4 sections have been examined. (Section 1 and 3 will need a teacher created question. Sections 2 and 4 are part of the collecting stars activity, where a question is provided. If the student answers correctly, he/she earns a star)
   
   d. Once the groups have finished the Song tab they can independently work through the other tabs for more background knowledge.

3. Allow students to share some of the most interesting things that they learned while exploring the website.
Lesson 4: Writing Assessment

Activity: Report Our Findings

1. Reread the writing prompt

2. Brainstorm and review information they have obtained from reading

3. Isolate the important ideas from their notes.

4. Write a first draft

5. Revise/Edit

6. Publish

7. *To make the assignment more authentic, the teacher could make this a writing contest. A student could read his/her broadcast on the school’s morning news in celebration of a patriotic holiday.

Name: ____________________________ Date: ________________________

Integrated Social Studies/Language Arts Writing Prompt

Focus/Essential Question: Why did Francis Scott Key write The Star-Spangled Banner?

Channel 4 News Team needs your help! They contacted St. Mary’s County and asked if their students would want to be part of a special broadcast regarding our National Anthem. This is an excellent opportunity for all of you as you will need to write a presentation informing your audience about what you know about the history of our National Anthem.