



THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

INTRODUCTION

The American flag is the most important symbol of our country. When children see the flag it should remind them not only of how exceptional our country is but also of the men and women who fought for our freedoms. This story is about the most famous flag in our history and how it inspired our national anthem, whose soaring lyrics serve to remind us of, and connect us to, our heritage: “the land of the free and the home of the brave.”

Underlying the patriotic story of our flag is the empowering story of Caroline and her mother, Mary. At a time when it was rare for women to operate a business, these entrepreneurs successfully launched their Flags and Ensigns enterprise, sewing and selling flags to military and civilian customers. Teaching other young women how to support themselves as seamstresses, these women exemplified our free enterprise traditions, our work ethic, our encouragement of one another, equal opportunity for all, and the self-reliance at the foundation of our country.

The War of 1812 is also called the Second War for Independence. Once again, we are fighting the British, this time because British warships were capturing American sailors and forcing them to fight in the Napoleonic Wars against the French. Once again, we are fighting for “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

BOOK

Title: *Long May She Wave: The True Story of Caroline Pickersgill and Her Star-Spangled Creation*

Author: Kristen Fulton

Illustrator: Holly Berry

Year Published: 2017

Length: 40 pages



Activity	Time	Frequency	Preparation
American Heritage Songbook: The Star-Spangled Banner	5-10 minutes	daily	minimal
Arts & Crafts: Make Your Own Flag	30-60 minutes	once	10-15 minutes
Arts & Crafts: Make Your Own Star	20 minutes	once	5-10 minutes
Geography: New States & Stars	10 minutes	once	minimal
Famous American Texts: The Pledge of Allegiance	5 minutes	daily	minimal
Cooking: Graham Cracker Flag Snack	15 minutes	once	10-15 minutes
Science: Make Your Own Catapult	20-30 minutes	once	10-15 minutes



Historical Re-enactment: Build Your Own Fort	30-45 minutes	once	15-20 minutes
Supplemental Reading: <i>The Star-Spangled Banner</i>	10 minutes	once	minimal
Scripture: 2 Chronicles 20:15	10 minutes	once	minimal
Vocabulary	10 minutes	once	minimal
History: Interactive Flag Exhibit	10 minutes	once	minimal
Family History: Free Enterprise	10 minutes	once	minimal
Game: Find the American Flags	10 minutes	once	minimal

Below is one suggestion for your week with the book *Long May She Wave*. Please experiment with what works for your family! (Note: not all activities are included in the suggested sample week below).

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
American Heritage Songbook: The Star-Spangled Banner	Geography: New States & Stars	Vocabulary (before reading)	Historical Re-enactment: Build Your Own Fort	Science: Make Your Own Catapult
Famous American Texts: The Pledge of Allegiance	Arts & Crafts: Make Your Own Flag	Cooking: Graham Cracker Flag Snack	Game: Find the American Flags	Family History: Free Enterprise
Supplies: N/A	Supplies: U.S. Puzzle Construction paper, magazines, glue, ruler, pen	Supplies: N/A	Supplies: Pillows, blankets, bean bags, Nerf guns, flashlights	Supplies: Six craft sticks, three rubber bands, one plastic or wooden disposable spoon, foil

AMERICAN HERITAGE SONGBOOK: THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

*O say can you see, by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?*





This is a great opportunity to teach your child(ren) our National Anthem, *The Star-Spangled Banner*. You might want to find a YouTube video of the song so they can sing along with it ([here](#) are a [couple](#) of different versions - mixing it up each day will keep them interested). If you are musically inclined, you can play it for them on your preferred instrument. By the end of the week, the older children should be able to [sing the first verse all the way through](#).

Lawyer and amateur poet Francis Scott Key wrote the lyrics to *The Star-Spangled Banner* after witnessing the defence of Fort McHenry. His brother-in-law adapted the melody from an old British drinking song. It wasn't until 1931 that Congress approved it as our National Anthem in a somewhat controversial vote. Other strong contenders for our national anthem included, *My Country 'Tis of Thee* and *America the Beautiful*.

ARTS & CRAFTS: MAKE YOUR OWN FLAG

Roll, push.

She worked alongside her mother and grandmother.

But this flag was so large that all of the seamstresses in the house were called to help.

Many women worked together as a team over an extended period of time to create the enormous flag that flew over Fort McHenry. In this activity you can replicate that teamwork and time by creating a collage flag with multiple members of the family over a period of 2-3 days. This activity is adapted from the [meaningful mama website](#).

Supplies:

- Magazines that can be ripped
- Poster board or other thicker, larger paper
- Pencil/Pen
- Ruler
- Glue Stick

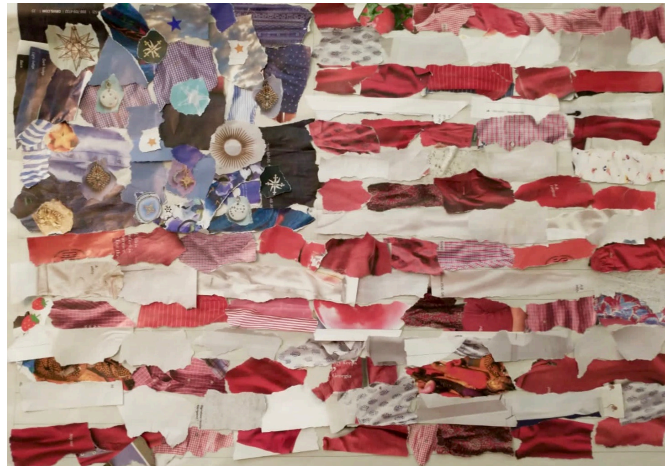
Directions:

1. Trace out a rectangle on the poster board/cardstock/newsprint as large as you'd like your flag to be. Use the ruler (or have your child use the ruler) to make lines for the stripes and rectangle for the blue and stars. You can make this a "Fort McHenry" flag by including 15 stripes (8 red, 7 white) and 15 stars or you can make the more standard 13 stripes (7 red, 6 white) and 50 stars.
2. Go through the magazines and rip out pieces that are red, white, and blue. Also rip out stars (or things that can serve as stars). Rip the pieces into suitable strips and shapes to fit in the outline of the flag you have traced out.
3. Use the glue stick to glue the pieces of paper onto the flag. Work together as a team - perhaps have different people be responsible for different stripes. Take a break and come back to it if it is too much in one day (Caroline worked on her flag over multiple days).
4. Finally glue the "stars" on. Alternatively, you could use star stickers or a star hole punch if you want more uniform stars.
5. Hang up your flag to show it off!



Notes:

Our flag was large enough that my kids and I worked as a team to complete it. We made it over the course of three days (taking breaks as the kids lost interest). My three-year-old daughter enjoys ripping paper and glue sticks so this seemed like her kind of activity. She also seemed to enjoy pretending to be Caroline and “designing” the flag by shaping the scraps of paper. We practiced counting and measured our progress by counting the stripes we completed.



ARTS & CRAFTS: MAKE YOUR OWN STAR

Press, lift.

Caroline's grandmother ironed fifteen stars, each more than two feet wide.

Make a five-pointed star two-feet wide to get an idea of the size of the flag (if you want to get the angles right, you can use a string to draw a circle with radius $12\frac{5}{8}$ inches, then use a slightly longer string to mark off the five points around the circle, each $14\frac{7}{8}$ inches apart). If you are ambitious, work with your child(ren) to make five of them. Then, set them on the ground to give them some idea of the size of Fort McHenry's flag and why the Pickersgill family needed so many people and so much room to make it.

For even more fun, we measured out the flag (30' x 42'!) in our backyard, and that is worth doing if you have the space! It is a good chance to practice using a measuring tape and rope. We put stakes in the corners and wrapped rope around them to see the full picture. We were all astonished at how big it was! We put our two-foot star in it too.

You can also try making a six-pointed star and see which “fits” better.

GEOGRAPHY: NEW STATES & STARS

After she stitched the last stitch, Caroline watched American soldiers raise her flag up the flagpole at Fort McHenry.





By the time of the War of 1812 our country had grown and we had added a handful of new states: Vermont, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana. The original flag of the United States of America had 13 stars and 13 stripes representing the thirteen original states. How many stars are on the flag during the War of 1812? (15) Why were there only 15 stars if there were 18 states? (Congress authorizes new flags. They authorized the 15 star version of the flag in 1794, after Vermont and Kentucky were admitted to the Union but before the other three were admitted). How many stripes did the flag have at that time? (15) How many do we have today? (13) What do they symbolize? (The original 13 colonies). The 1794 version of our flag was the only one where additional stripes were added to match the number of states. In 1818, Congress authorized a new version of the flag with 20 stars and 13 stripes (two more states had joined the union by then: Indiana and Mississippi).

Show how our country grew from the founding in 1776 to the time of the story in 1814. Use a puzzle of the United States and start with having your child(ren) place the pieces representing the original 13 colonies (or use a map where they can color in the states with crayons or markers). Then, fit the pieces of the five new states into the puzzle (or color them in, using a different color).

FAMOUS AMERICAN TEXTS: THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

What better module to introduce your child(ren) to *The Pledge of Allegiance*? According to the United States Flag Code, the pledge should be recited by standing and facing the flag while placing your right hand over your heart:

*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.*

The original Pledge of Allegiance was written in 1892 by Francis Bellamy to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' arrival in America. Bellamy, a Baptist minister, published it in *Youth's Companion*, a popular national magazine. The publisher and editors of *Youth's Companion* believed that part of their mission was to promote national pride and the egalitarian ideals at the heart of American exceptionalism. They were also responsible for an earlier campaign that made flying the American flag part of every public school.

Bellamy's original version was tweaked over the years, first by Bellamy, then the National Flag Conference (in 1923 and 1924) and finally by Congress. Congress officially adopted the Pledge in 1942; in 1954, Congress made the fourth and (so far) final change, adding the words "under God."

The pledge includes some words that are probably new to youngsters. See the [Vocabulary](#) section below for some definitions. The Pledge of Allegiance is a standard part of our naturalization ceremony, where people born in other countries declare their intention to become American citizens. Have your child(ren) practice reciting the pledge after each reading of *Long May She Wave*.

COOKING: GRAHAM CRACKER FLAG SNACK

*But Caroline stayed. The flag that she sewed was more than red,
white, and blue. It was a symbol of this new nation, the United States.*



Ingredients:

- Graham crackers
- cream cheese
- blueberries
- strawberries (or raspberries)

Directions:

1. Lay out graham crackers in the shape of a flag and apply cream cheese to the top.
2. Put blueberries in the upper left corner.
3. Make stripes using the strawberries leaving spaces of cream cheese only.
4. Enjoy eating the berry flag!

Alternatively, one can spread plain yogurt on a plate or pan and then apply berries (but one must use a spoon to eat this version).



SCIENCE: MAKE YOUR OWN CATAPULT

*Bombs bursting in air rained over the British fleet...
After twenty-five hours the last cannon fired, and silence returned.*

By the War of 1812, catapults were long obsolete. The cannons they used were much more advanced, but still operated under the same basic premise of hurling a heavy object at high speeds toward a distant target. Our activity uses catapults instead of cannon because they are much more accessible.

The following catapult is based on a design from [stlmotherhood](http://stlmotherhood.com).

Supplies:

- Six craft sticks (can use colored craft sticks or plain and decorate them with markers)
- Three rubber bands
- One plastic or wooden disposable spoon (wooden preferred)
- Aluminum foil (small pieces, rolled into balls), pompoms or other small "cannon" balls





Directions:

1. Stack five craft sticks together and tightly wrap a rubber band around one end to secure them together.
2. Take the sixth craft stick and slide it in between the last and second-to-last stacked craft sticks so it lies perpendicular to the other five sticks. Have portions of the stick come out either side of the stack.
3. Secure other end of stack of five sticks with a rubber band.
4. Place the spoon on top of the stack and line the end of the spoon up with the end of the single craft stick. Secure these ends together with a rubber band.
5. Place an aluminum foil ball in the bowl of the spoon. Hold the stack of craft sticks with one hand and pull the bowl of the spoon back toward the end of the perpendicular craft stick. Release and watch your foil ball fly!
6. This is the basic craft stick catapult, but there are several other designs. For example, see [this version](#).

Optional: Make a mini-Fort McHenry and bomb it with your catapult! Remove the top half of a paper grocery bag. Spread out the bag and stand the bottom half up. The top can be further cut to make additional portions of the Fort (see photo below). Label the bag Fort McHenry. Don't forget to draw a flag for your Fort! Catapult some aluminum foil balls and see if you can get them to land in the bag (Fort). It is more fun to have a target(s) for your catapults!

Discuss with your child(ren):

- An important aspect of any weapon is its range: how far away can you be and still hit your target? If one side has longer range, they have an advantage because they can shoot from a position of safety, without being hit themselves (the British anchored their warships out of range of Fort McHenry because their cannon had longer range). Try shooting your catapults in different directions and from different positions. What configuration gives the longest range? You may notice that it helps to start from higher up: this is one reason that the "high ground" is a favored position.
- Look at what shape the projectiles make as they curve through the air. This shape is called the "trajectory". Try shooting a dense object (like a coin) and a light object (like a cotton ball) in the same direction and with the same strength. Do they fly along the same path? The heavy object is dominated by gravity, forming a curve called a parabola, whereas the lighter object is more affected by air resistance and will slow down prematurely. While cannon balls are much heavier, air resistance can still matter when doing extremely precise aiming.
- Think about the flow of energy throughout the process of firing a catapult. Human energy is spent bending back the spoon, transferring the energy into "potential energy" in the stretched rubber bands. Upon release, the potential energy is transferred to "kinetic energy" - the speed of the flying projectile. Finally, the kinetic energy is delivered destructively to its target, breaking holes in things or knocking things over. Cannons use combustion, instead of elasticity, to convert their fuel's potential energy into kinetic energy.
- If you made more than one style catapult, which one worked best? Did they have different strengths and weaknesses?



My children (especially my son) really enjoyed using their catapults on the Fort. They set the catapults on “British Boats” (cardboard boxes, plastic lids, etc.) and sailed them toward the Fort. They then tried to land their “cannon balls” inside the Fort or behind the Fort walls. They then decided the Fort needed defending. They all went behind the Fort and started trying to land their aluminum foil cannonballs in the British boats. Eventually, the British boats sailed away. It was great fun!



HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT: BUILD YOUR OWN FORT

Fort McHenry prepared for their perilous fight.

This activity starts by building your own Fort McHenry. You and your kids can make the traditional indoor fort, using blankets, chairs, pillows, and other furniture. Or strive for something more elaborate with empty boxes. Don't forget your flag! You can use one you've made in one of the other exercises or something less elaborate like patriotic pajama bottoms on a pole.

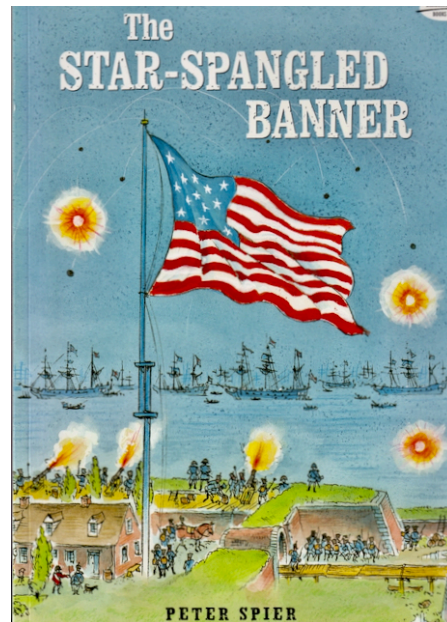
Once your Fort McHenry is built, it's time for the British assault. Place 3-6 “ships” in the “harbor” (carpet for indoors, lawn for outdoors). Arm your Fort McHenry defenders with appropriate pretend firearms (we used Nerf weapons, but rubber bands are also fun) and begin the assault (we used bean bags for bombs bursting in air and popped bubble wrap to simulate explosions; other families used dryer balls and glow sticks for bombs). For additional fun, try this at night with the lights out, using flashlights as strobes to illuminate the action. For best results, include grandparents or



another family – the more attackers/defenders, the more fun will be had by all!

SUPPLEMENTAL READING: THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

*O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?*



Title: *The Star-Spangled Banner*

Author: Francis Scott Key

Illustrator: Peter Spier

Year Published: 1973, new edition 2014

Length: 56 pages

This book is gorgeously illustrated by Caldecott Medal artist Peter Spier. Each line of all four verses of Francis Scott Key's lyrics is intricately drawn on full and double-page spreads. Just over half the pages are devoted to the battle of Fort McHenry before Spier moves forward in time to more modern depictions of our flag and country. You and your children will lose yourselves in all of Spier's splendid details. This book is not only an excellent supplement to *Long May She Wave* but also to the American Heritage Songbook activity. Consider singing or humming along as you turn the pages.

SCRIPTURE: 2 CHRONICLES 20:15



*This is what the LORD says to you:
"Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army.
For the battle is not yours, but God's."*

The soldiers defending Fort McHenry faced an entire British fleet, "a battery of cannon pointing toward the fort." This scripture exhorts us not to be afraid or discouraged because the battle is in God's hands, not ours. This is an opportunity to remind our children that they will face situations where they are afraid or discouraged – and that the Lord will be with them when those times come. Ask your child(ren) if they have ever been in a situation that made them fearful, nervous, or apprehensive? Bravery is continuing to act despite those fears – and the Lord is with us when we do. America is the home of the brave.

VOCABULARY

Kristen Fulton borrows phrases from Francis Scott Key's *Star-Spangled Banner* in several places. His lyrics include several words that may be unfamiliar to younger children:

Spangled	decorated with small, bright objects
Perilous	dangerous, hazardous
Gleaming	momentary bright shining
Ramparts	a wall of dirt for protection, defense
Gallantly	bravely or courageously
Twilight	the time between sunset and nightfall

The *Pledge of Allegiance* also includes some words that may be challenging or new:

Allegiance	loyalty, devotion
Republic	a government where decisions are made by representatives selected by the citizens
Indivisible	not capable of being divided

HISTORY: INTERACTIVE FLAG EXHIBIT

The original Fort McHenry flag is on permanent exhibit at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. But it wasn't always there - in fact, the Smithsonian didn't acquire it until 1912, almost 100 years after the Battle of Baltimore. The history behind the flag's ownership and preservation is fascinating. You can explore it online with this [NMAH interactive flag exhibit](#). The full online *Star-Spangled Banner* exhibit from the NMAH (including the story of the Pickersgill family) [can be found here](#).

FAMILY HISTORY: FREE ENTERPRISE

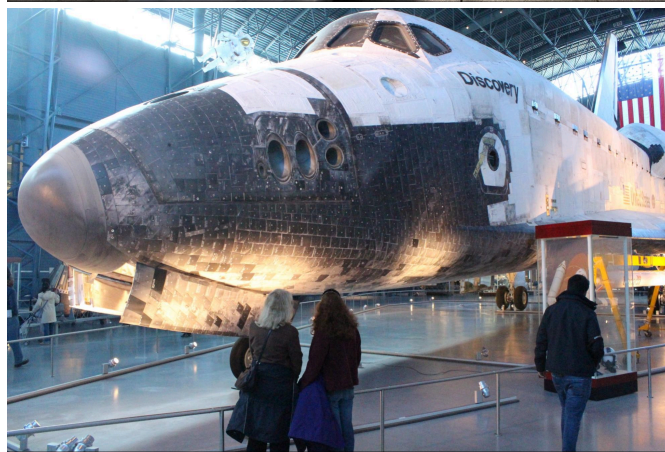




The Pickersgill family supported themselves by using their talents as seamstresses to create a variety of “flags and ensigns” that they could sell to both military and civilian customers. Tell your children stories about entrepreneurs in your family. Did you ever operate a lemonade stand when you were growing up? Mow lawns for your neighbors? What was your very first job? Share these examples with your child(ren) to connect them to the story, your family history, and the free enterprise traditions woven into our national DNA.

GAME: FIND THE AMERICAN FLAGS

This is a fun activity for younger children; both our three-year-old and our five-year-old loved it. We gathered a variety of digital photos that contained one or more American flags. Then we displayed the photos on the screen and asked the kids to find and count the flags. You can make this exercise more interesting and challenging by selecting photos where all the flags in the photo are not immediately obvious. Kids enjoyed the hunt! A few samples:





1. There are seven flags, six obvious ones and one tiny one way down the mall (look underneath the fifth flag)
2. There are two flags, one painted on the side of Discovery and the big one behind her.
3. This one's tricky. One big flag to the left, four big ones to the right, and a little one above the last flag on the right. Total: 6.
4. Just one, the arm patch on Jack Swigert's left shoulder.
5. Another tricky one. There are seven big flags and there is one tiny one flying in front of the Capitol. Total: 8.
6. Just one flag - the background.