

Project Overview

Sunday, July 20, 2014 8:46 AM

Created by Monica Crenshaw T.L. Marsalis Elementary School Dallas, TX

Project Title: Who am I? Who are We? Defining our American Identity

Grade Level -5-8

Themes: American History, American Symbols, American Identity, Patriotism, Culture, Identity

Driving Question: How/Who determines what it means to be American?

Essential Questions:

What is An American?

What are the features of American Symbols?

What are examples of "good" Americans?

What significant events are considered important to Americans?

Can a Person change what it means to be American?

In your opinion, what does being American mean to you?

Project Description: Many students struggle with defining their identity and understanding how they fit in to the American story. Students will engage in Project based Learning utilizing computers in a Blended Learning Classroom in which they drive their own research. Students will explore the concepts of identity, culture and symbols, and how anthems lend themselves to forming a sense of identity. Students will explore the process of why and how early American identity is formed and compare it to how Americans define their identity at pivotal points in American History (civil war, industrial revolution, WWI & WWII up until what we think it means to be American now. Students will complete activities throughout the project including an Interactive timeline, and reflective writing pieces. The final project will challenge students to apply their learning and decide for themselves what it means to be an American. Students will be given different options in which they can express their newfound understanding of American Identity. These final projects may take the form of a written assignment such as a poem, reflective writing, and future hopes for our country. Students may also redesign the American flag with personal meaning, create a new American Symbol or create a PowerPoint highlighting individuals events and symbols that represent America for them. Finally students may create a timeline or write a new song for America. Each project is intended to give the student complete artistic control so that the project is truly personalized to tell the story of their American experience.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills - (Adapted for the 5th Grade Social Studies Standards)

5.17 The student understands important symbols, customs, celebrations, and landmarks that represent American beliefs and principles and contribute to our national identity. The student is expected to:

5.17A explain various patriotic symbols, including Uncle Sam, and political symbols such as the donkey and elephant;

5.17B sing or recite "The Star-Spangled Banner" and explain its history

5.17E explain the significance of important landmarks, including the White House, the Statue of Liberty, and Mount Rushmore.

5.21The student understands the relationship between the arts and the times during which they were created. The student is expected to:

5.21A identify significant examples of art, music, and literature from various periods in U.S. history

such as the painting American Progress, "Yankee Doodle," and "Paul Revere's Ride"; and

5.21B explain how examples of art, music, and literature reflect the times during which they were created.

5.22 The student understands the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups to the United States. The student is expected to:

5.22C summarize the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups to our national identity.

5.24 The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to:

5.24A differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as computer software; interviews; biographies; oral, print, and visual material; documents; and artifacts to acquire information about the United States;

5.24B analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions;

5.24C organize and interpret information in outlines, reports, databases, and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps;

5.24D identify different points of view about an issue, topic, or current event; and

5.24E identify the historical context of an event.

5.25 The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:

5.25A use social studies terminology correctly;

5.25B incorporate main and supporting ideas in verbal and written communication;

5.25C express ideas orally based on research and experiences;

5.25D create written and visual material such as journal entries, reports, graphic organizers, outlines, and bibliographies; and

5.25E use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation.

Materials

Access to computers or computer lab with Microsoft OneNote & PowerPoint, if unable to use technology you may need to make handouts,

Colored pencils

Markers

construction paper

Partial List of Websites used:

www.dictionary.com

www.padlet.com

www.loc.gov

www.songs of america.net

www.starspangledmusic.org

www.britannica.com

www.worldbookonline.com

www.americaslibrary.gov

www.worldatlas.com

www.historyexplorer.si.edu

www.anthemforamerica.smithsonian.com

www.poets.org

www.biography.com

www.abc-clio.com

<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/>

<http://www.history.org/>

Key Vocabulary:

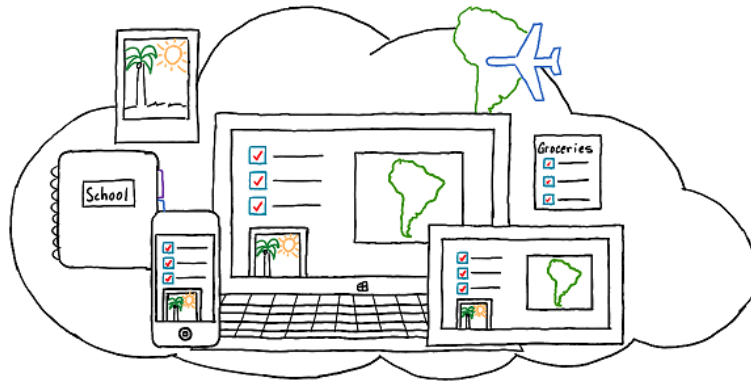
Identity

Culture
Patriotism
Loyalist
Symbol
American
Anthem
Emblem

Using OneNote

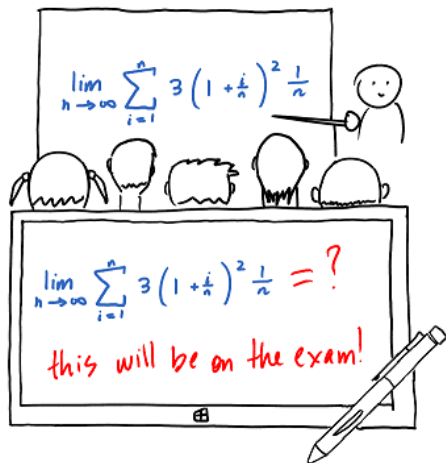
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OneNote: all your notes on all your devices



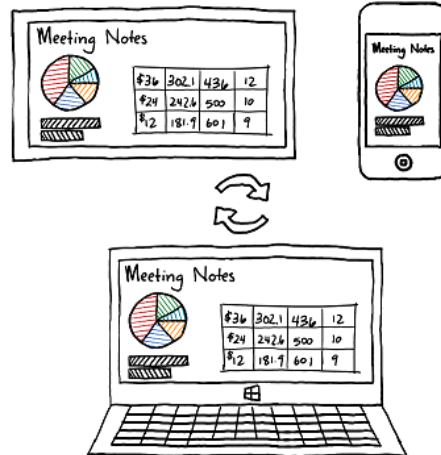
OneNote can help organize your life

[▶ Play video now!](#)



[▶ School](#)

Handwrite notes and clip from the web



[▶ Work](#)

Syncs to PC, phone, & web



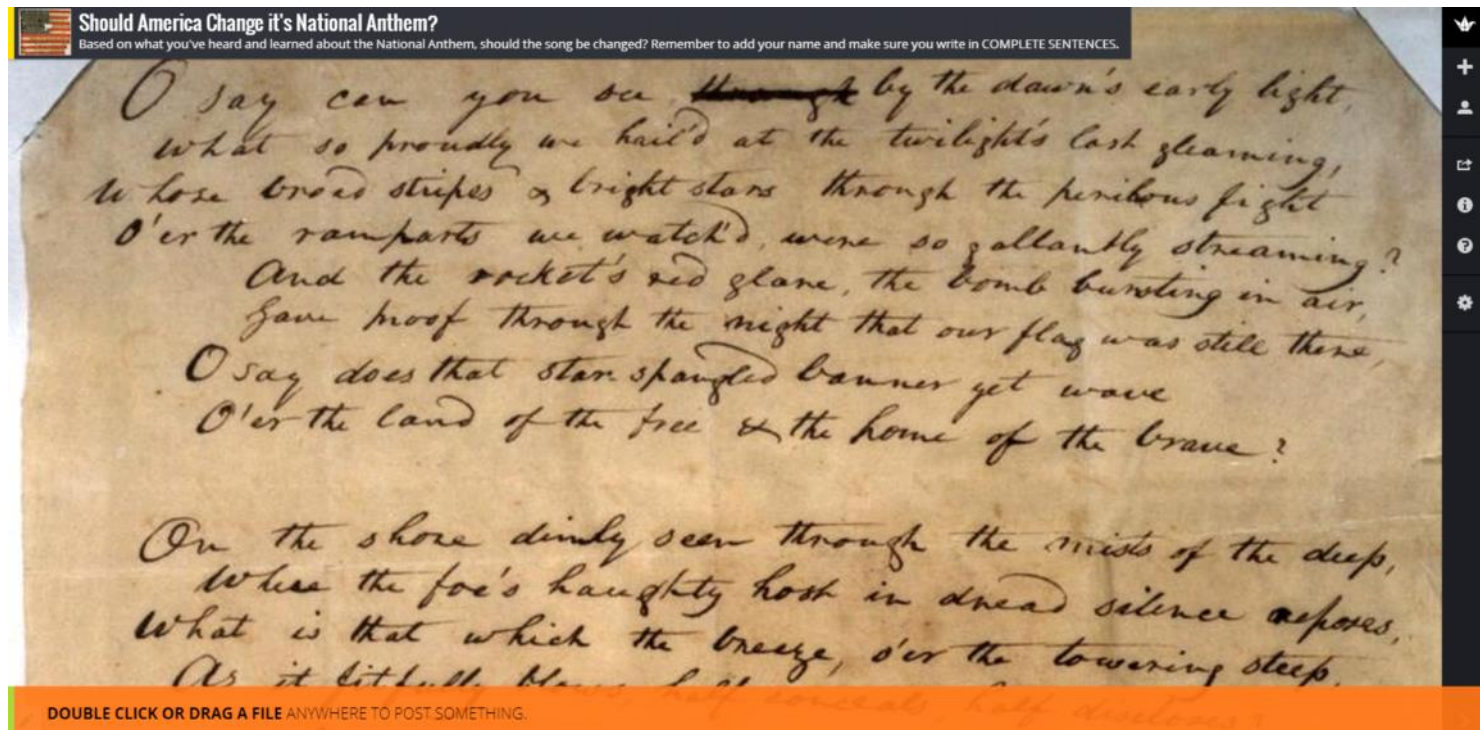
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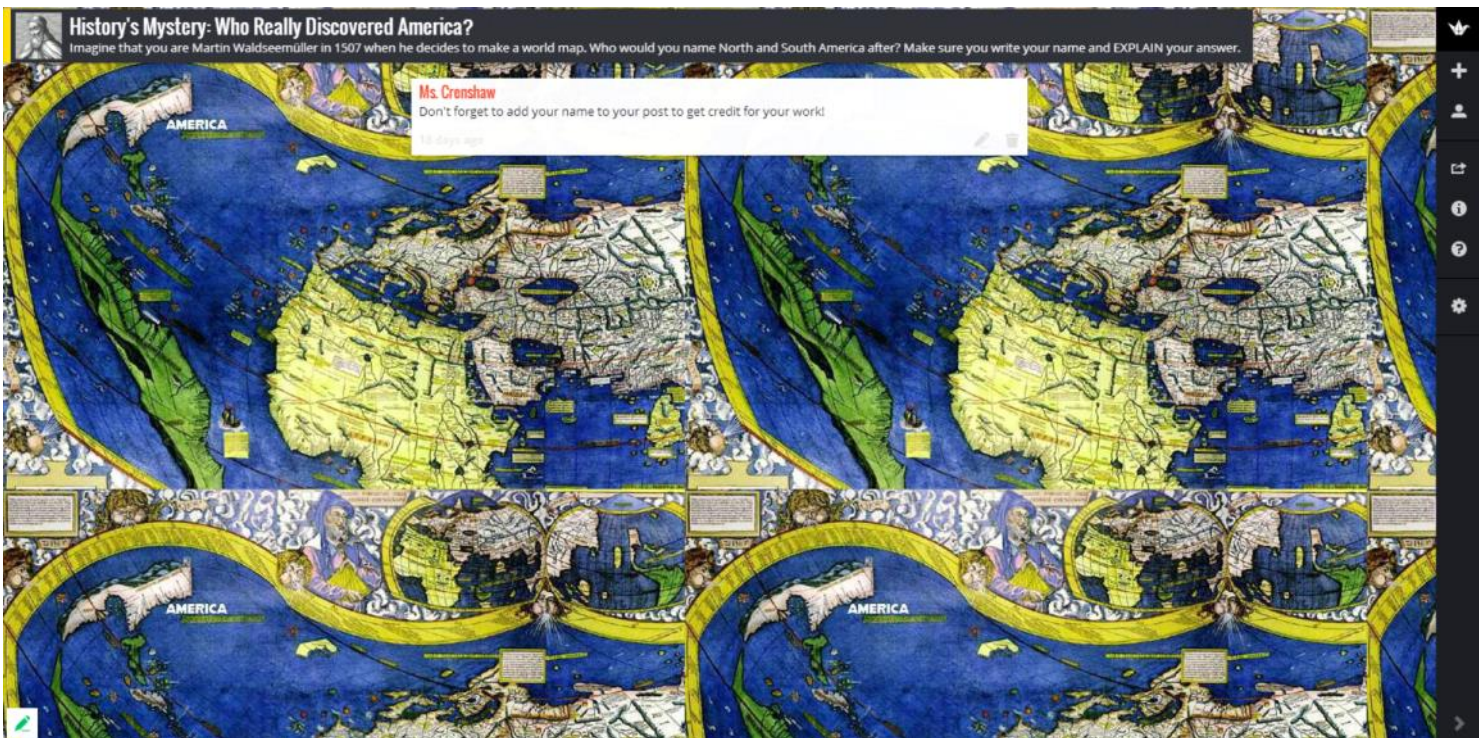
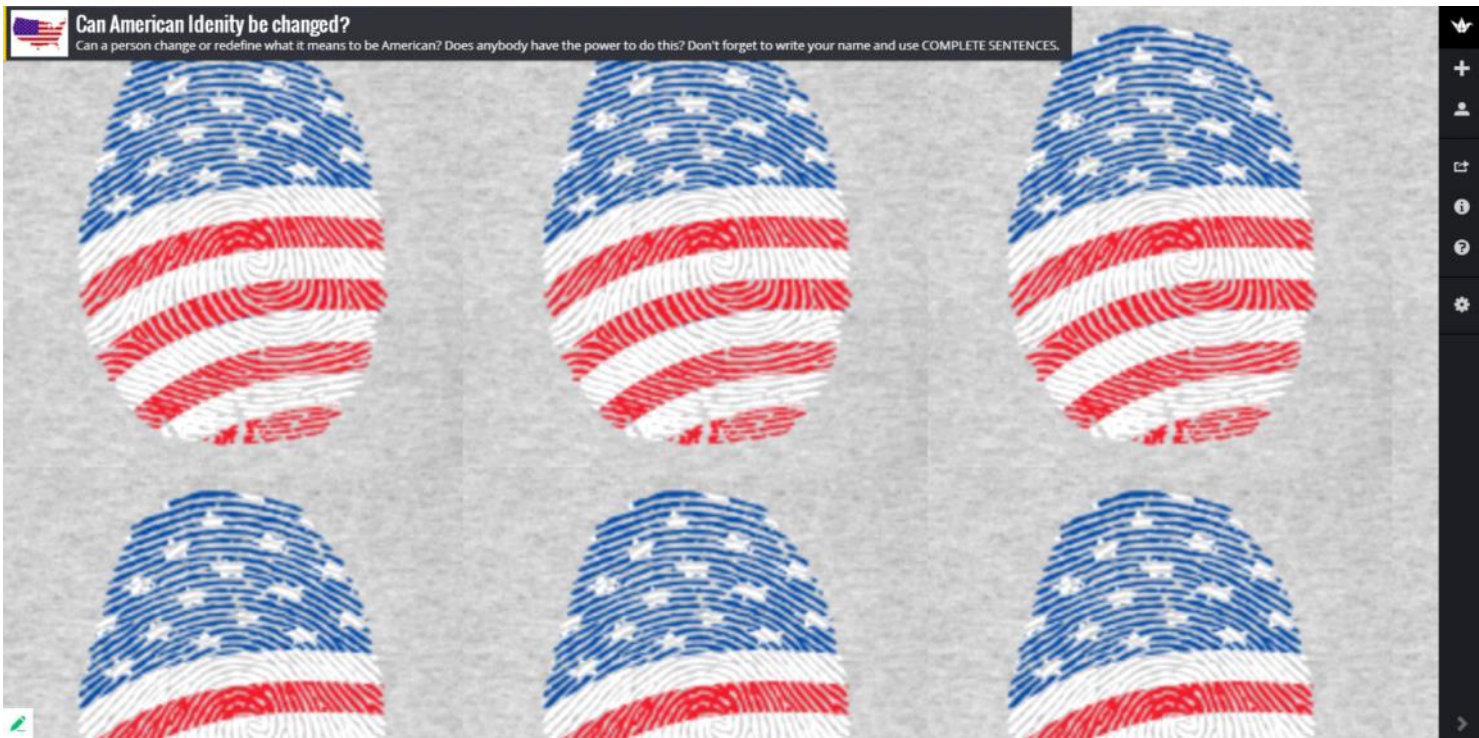
Share plans with family and friends

Using Padlet

Sunday, July 20, 2014 11:19 AM

*****Teacher Note:** For a crash course on Padlet and how to use it please click [here](#). The possibilities of padlet are many! I plan to use them as a way to engage students with the use of technology and as a way to track student participation through written response. Below are examples of the padlets I've created for my students.





Screen clipping taken: 7/20/2014 11:36 AM

Bell Ringer

Sunday, July 20, 2014 8:52 AM

Bell Ringer-Click on this link to Padlet and answer the question " What is an American?" and follow the directions on the page.



KWL

Sunday, July 20, 2014 8:56 AM

What do you Know? In your own notebook copy down this chart. With a partner, answer the following questions about what you think an American is?

What Do You Know?	What Do You Want to Know?	What Do You Want to Learn?

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- American
- Identity
- Culture



1. **Geography**- Where in the world is America?

Use the [atlas](#) to locate the United States of America. Answer the following questions. Answer the Following Questions in your own Notebook. Work with a partner to answer the following questions:

- a. What Continent is the United States of located on?
- b. What country borders the United States to the North?
- c. What country borders the United States to the South?
- d. What is the name of the body of water that borders the Eastern coast of United States?
- e. What is the name of the body of water that borders the Western Coast the United States?
- f. What is the name of the mountain range on the eastern coast of the United States?
- g. Label all of these items on your map of the United States.



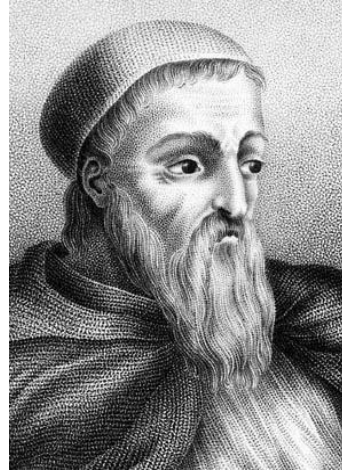
1. History Mystery-Where did America get its name?

Read the following resources to determine exactly who discovered America, then answer

The questions below.

1. Britannica
2. Worldbook Online Kids

1. Who discovered America *first*?
2. Is America named after the person who discovered it first? If not what is the name of that person?
3. Who decided to name America & Why?
4. Consider that you were the map maker who created the world map. Who would you name America after? Submit your answer using Padlet. Remember to add your name to your posts to receive credit.



Voices from The Colonies

Sunday, July 20, 2014 9:26 AM

Voices from the Colonies- How did people feel about living in the colonies?

Read this [Diary](#) to get a general idea of how this 15 year old girl felt.

Get an idea of what life was like for slaves in [Colonial Virginia](#)



Bell Ringer

Sunday, July 20, 2014 9:29 AM

What is a symbol? How are they used? Using Padlet. Please answer your question using complete sentences and correct punctuation.

Vocabulary

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Vocabulary- Using the following www.dictionary.com, www.merriam-webster.com, or <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us> define the following words using your own words.

- **Anthem**
- **Symbol**
- **Landmark**
- **Monument**

Name That Symbol

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Name that Symbol - Watch this video about [U.S. Symbols](#) then identify the following symbols then learn about the story behind the symbol

1.



[Learn More](#)

2.



[Learn More](#)

3.



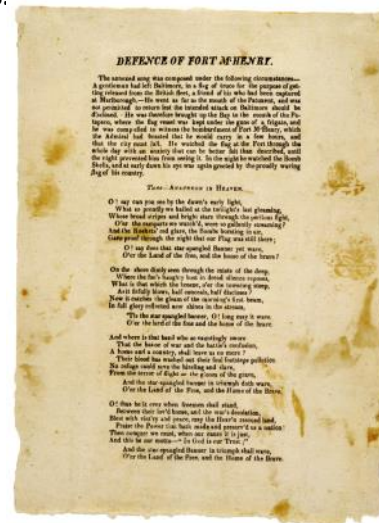
[Learn More](#)

4.



[Learn More](#)
[And Even More!](#)

5.



[Listen](#)
[Learn More](#)



6. [Learn More](#)

After you have identified All of these symbols, take some time and learn more about how [symbols](#) were used in early America.

Anthems

Sunday, July 20, 2014 9:34 AM

Why the Star Spangled Banner?- Did you know that our National Anthem The Star Spangled Banner did not become the national song until 1931. Before that a number of songs were considered as Anthems for the United States. Below are songs that were at some point in history considered as the National Anthem. Decide for yourself if the right choice was made.

[Hail Columbia](#)

[My Country Tis of Thee](#)

[The Star Spangled Banner](#)

[Yankee Doodle](#)

[God Bless America](#)

[Lift Every Voice and Sing](#)



You Decide

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You Decide- Based on what you've heard and learned which song do you think should be our National Anthem? Explain your answer and post it on padlet.



Vocabulary

Sunday, July 20, 2014 10:02 AM

Vocabulary-Using the following www.dictionary.com, www.merriam-webster.com, or <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us> define the following words using your own words.

- Patriotism
- Loyalist
- Citizen



What's a "Good" American?

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What makes a Someone a "Good" American? Answer this question using padlet. Don't forget to use complete sentences and to write your name to receive full credit.



Sunday, July 20, 2014 10:04 AM

Follow the link to the [American Library](#) and choose one of the individuals listed on the page. Answer the following questions about the individual you choose.

-

Slide 4- Was He/ She a "Good American? (Based on your research was this person a good American? Would you consider them to be a patriot? Explain your answers.)

Worldbook Online

Key Points in Time

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Key Points in Time- There are times in history that have required the American people to come together and share a common cause. Each group will be assigned one event below. As a group you will look through your assigned timeline and Identify the use of symbols (American Flag,Bald Eagle etc) and specific events that brought Americans together.

[Pre Colonial](#) (Scroll to the 1600's)

[American Revolution](#)

[Constitutional Convention](#)

[War of 1812](#)

[Civil War/ Reconstruction](#)



Interactive

Industrial ...

[WWI](#)

[Great Depression](#)

[WWII](#)

[1960's](#)

[Civil Rights](#)



Bell Ringer

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Can American Identity Change? Using padlet explain whether or not you believe that people can redefine what it means to be American.

Can people change what it means to be American?

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Who creates the American Experience?

We've been learning a lot about what it means to be an American. You've had opportunities to explore all the different ways in which people show that they are a part of our nation. But who **decides** what it means to be American? Take a look at these examples and decide for yourself if the definition of what it means to be an American was changed, and who changed it?

Government- Look at these examples of how government can redefine what it means to be Government.

[Declaration of Independence](#)

[Dred Scott Decision](#)

[14th Amendment](#)

[19th Amendment](#)

[Civil Rights Act of 1964](#)



People- Read the works of these five poets and describe how each of them defines their American identity.

[Walt Whitman - I Hear America Singing \(Learn more about Walt\)](#)

[Emma Lazarus - The New Colossus \(Learn more about Emma\)](#)

[Woody Guthrie - This Land is Your Land \(Learn more about Woody\)](#)

[Langston Hughes I Too Sing America \(Learn more about Langston\)](#)

[Julia Alvarez \(Learn more about Julia\)](#)



What Does it All Mean to You?

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What Does it All Mean to You?

Over the past few _____ We've learned about symbols, and how America formed its identity from young rebellious colonists to the America we know today, but what does it mean to be American to you? Is it a symbol? A song? Being born in a specific area? A specific event? Taking what you've learned over the past _____ I want you to create a project that represents what being an American means to you:

Project Options:

A Poem- that expresses how you feel about being an American

A PowerPoint- complete with at least 3 individuals, 3 events, and 3 symbols that represent what it means to be American to you

A Flag Design- Using what you've learned create a design for the American Flag that you feel represents America today

A Song- Rewrite the National Anthem using today's language or write a new song.

Your American Story - Write a story about what it means to be American to you and your family

A Timeline- Create a timeline with at least 10 events that you feel helped form the identity of America

A New Symbol- Create a new symbol that represents the United States of America. Be sure to use color and do your best work.

A New Vision- Write an essay no more than 1 page explaining your ideas about how you think Americans should behave, what symbols and songs they should sing in the future.

A Short Play - Write a short play that tells the story of American Identity. Be sure to include symbols, songs, landmarks, important people, and events. You may include up to 2 other people in your play.

Presentation:

You will present your project to the class and explain what it means to be American to you. Please keep in mind that there is no right or wrong answer, however it is extremely important that you put effort in to your work. Be creative! Use your imagination! If you need help exploring the options for this project please ask me!

