The Statue of Liberty as a National Symbol

Lesson Overview

Overview: This lesson explores the Statue of Liberty as a national symbol and its sources of symbolism. With guiding questions of: What is a symbol? How can a symbol be used to communicate an idea? Students discover a sense of place for Ellis Island as point for immigrants entering the United States which resulted in the country we know today. Students will be exposed to “The New Colossus”, by Emma Lazarus.

Grade Range: 2-4

Objective: After completing the lessons in this unit, students will be able to:
- Identify and explain the significance of the Statue of Liberty as a patriotic symbol of the United States.
- List specific symbols in the design of the Statue of Liberty.
- Use a symbol in the design of the Statue of Liberty.
- Identify other symbols used to depict Americans’ shared values, principles and beliefs, and explain their meaning.

Time Required: Three class periods of 30-40 minutes.

Discipline/Subject: Language Arts/Social Studies

Topic/Subject: Architecture, Landscape, Culture, Folklife, Immigration, American Expansion

Era: Rise of Industrial America, 1876-1900, Great Depression World War II, 1929-1945

Standards

Illinois Learning Standards:
English Language Arts:
1-Read with understanding and fluency.
1.C-Comprehend a broad range of reading materials.
1.C.2b-Make and support inferences and form interpretations about main themes and topics.
1.C.2d-Summarize and make generalizations from content and relate to purpose of material.

Materials

Handouts: The New Colossus cut apart poem. Printed photos of Statue of Liberty from sources.

Analysis Tools: Put Yourself in the Picture Photo Analysis

Books: L is for Liberty by Wendy Cheyette Lewison

Other: Classroom world map, interactive whiteboard or projector, KWL chart

Library of Congress Items:
Title of Source: Statue of Liberty
Date of Creation: 1905
URL of Source: http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/det1994002368/PP/

Title of Source: The Statue of Liberty: Hand and torch of the statue
Date of Creation: 1944
URL of Source: http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2003689030/

Title of Source: Broken shackles, axe head and right foot at base, May 1984 (picture #54)
Date of Creation: May 1984
URL of Source: http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hh:@FIELD(DOCID+@BAND(@lit(NY1251)))
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure Step #</th>
<th>Resource or Material Used</th>
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<td>1. Use a map to show students where New York Harbor and France are in relationship to where they live. Explain that the statue was a gift to the U.S. from France that had to be built, taken apart, sent across the Atlantic ocean and reassembled in the United States. It was finished and dedicated in 1886. On the board, emphasize the age by subtracting the year 1886 from the current year. Explain how the Statue is a symbol of freedom and opportunity. Point out that it was the first thing millions of immigrants saw as they entered America at Ellis Island.</td>
<td>Classroom World Map</td>
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<td>2. Have students brainstorm what they know about the Statue of Liberty on a group KWL chart. Write all ideas on the interactive whiteboard or a large piece of paper in the KWL format.</td>
<td>KWL Chart</td>
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<td>3. Read the book <em>L is for Liberty</em> by Wendy Cheyette Lewison</td>
<td>Book</td>
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<td>4. The class is now ready to take a detailed look at the Statue, beginning with its symbol-packed design. With the brainstormed ideas displayed, encourage further discussion with these questions: a. Why does the statue face away from the U.S. if it is a symbol of liberty? Put the “Statue of Liberty” photograph on the interactive whiteboard or use a projector. (Note: The statue faces France as a symbol of the enduring friendship between the two countries. This positioning was fortuitous because the statue was subsequently viewed by more than 12 million immigrants as they entered the U.S. making it one of the first things they saw in America.</td>
<td>LOC Item #1</td>
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5. As a class, review what a symbol is and identify examples of symbols in the classroom. Explain that a symbol brings to mind an idea. Over the years, a symbol tends to take on a meaning related to its history, function or appearance. Discuss how ideas can also be gradually transferred to an object over time. Millions of immigrants found themselves welcomed to America by the Statue of Liberty. The statue became associated with immigrants struggle for freedom and their desire for a better life.

6. Study part of the famous poem engraved on the Statue of Liberty. Tell students that a poem, “The New Colossus”, by Emma Lazarus, is inscribed on the base of the statue. Place the partial text of the poem on the interactive whiteboard. Read the partial poem aloud to students and briefly discuss its meaning.

“Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

Give students the poem word puzzle in partners and have them use the text to arrange the words in the proper order. Have students read the poem again.

Cut Apart Poem

7. Divide the class into groups.
   a. Have each group look closely at one of the images of the statue listed below and record the details each group member observes on the Photo Analysis form.
   b. Have each group share its photo and observation.
   c. What details about the statue did the students note that were not mentioned during the brainstorming session in Procedure 4?
   d. Give students guidance such as the tablet, axe, broken chains, seven rays in the crown, 25 windows.
   e. Hypothesize about their meaning.

8. Display picture of “Jewish refugee children, enroute to Philadelphia aboard liner President Harding, waving at the Statue of Liberty”. Discuss what the children may be feeling and what their hopes and their ideas about entering America might be.

Evaluation

As an evaluation activity, assess students’ understanding of symbols and their use in depicting Americans’ shared values, principles and beliefs with a writing assignment. Ask students to list some American symbols and what they represent. Then have students select a symbol that they believe to be the symbol of the U.S. and explain their choice. This can be accomplished with a drawing and/or writing.

Extension

For independent time on the computer students should visit: America’s Story http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/gilded/jb_gilded_liberty_1.html to differentiate instruction students with higher ability should be asked to write more sentences and could also be asked to find the full poem “The New Colossus” by Emma Lazarus, read and discuss the full version.
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<tr>
<th><strong>Give me</strong></th>
<th><strong>your tired</strong></th>
<th><strong>your poor</strong></th>
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<td><strong>your</strong></td>
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<td><strong>the</strong></td>
<td><strong>wretched</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Send</strong></td>
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<td><strong>tempest-</strong></td>
<td><strong>tost</strong></td>
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<td><strong>to me I</strong></td>
<td><strong>lift my</strong></td>
<td><strong>lamp</strong></td>
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<td><strong>beside the</strong></td>
<td><strong>golden</strong></td>
<td><strong>door</strong></td>
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PUT YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE PHOTO ANALYSIS

Imagine yourself in the image provided and list three to five phrases describing what you see, hear, taste, touch and smell.

**Sight**  What do you see? People? Words? Buildings? Animals? Interesting Items? Do these things give you clues about this time and place?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

**Sound**  What do you hear? People? Animals? Nature? Sounds from inside or outside of buildings? Sounds can indicate something good, bad or sad.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

**Taste**  What do you taste? Are things edible or is there “something in the air”?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

**Smell**  What smells are around you? City or rural scents? People? Animals? Businesses? Do they make you think of something good or bad?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

**Touch**  How and what do you feel? What is the environment like? Hot? Cold? Wet? Are there “things” that you can touch? What do they feel like?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5.