

Betsy & the Flag | Lesson Plan

How has the folktale of Betsy Ross and the first American Flag contributed to American history?

Students will learn how Betsy Ross's story exemplifies the use of personal talents in service to one's country, inspiring them to consider how they can contribute to their community and nation.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the story of Betsy Ross and the first American flag.
- Identify key characters and settings in the story.
- Reflect on and discuss how personal talents can be used for community and national service, as exemplified by Betsy Ross.

Key Vocabulary:

- **American flag:** A symbol of freedom and liberty.
- **Betsy Ross:** Credited with sewing the first United States flag.
- **Patriot:** A person who strongly supports their country and is willing to defend it.
- **Seamstress:** A woman who earns her living by sewing.
- **Talent:** Natural aptitude or skill.
- **Folktale:** An oral tradition handed down from generation to generation that may intertwine truth and legend.

Educational Standards: CCRA.R.1, CCRA.R.3, CCRA.R.7, CCRA.R.10

Academic Subject Areas: Life Lessons, American Values, Women of History

What You'll Need

- Video: *Otto's Tales: Betsy & the Flag* (Watch [Here](#))
- Coloring Page: *Otto's Tales: Betsy & the Flag* (Click [Here](#))
- Images of the first American flag
- Pre-cut paper stars and coloring supplies (crayons, markers, or colored pencils)

Lesson Plan (45 mins.)

Warm-Up: (5-10 mins.)

1. Start with a brief introduction to Betsy Ross and the American flag. Show images of the current flag as well as the Betsy Ross flag. Discuss its significance and meaning for Americans.
2. Ask them to observe and count the number of stars and stripes on the flag. Explain the meaning behind the stars and stripes.
 - The 13 stars and the 13 stripes represent the original 13 colonies that declared independence from Great Britain.



3. Introduce the concept of a folktale, which is a story handed down through oral tradition. Ask students about folktales (e.g., Paul Bunyan, John Henry, Casey Jones, etc.). Explain that the legend of Betsy Ross is an American folktale that may be partially true or legend.
4. Introduce the video *Otto's Tales: Betsy & the Flag* and ask students to pay special attention to the characters and setting.

Watch and Discuss: (10-15 mins.)

1. Play the video for the class.
2. While watching the video, pause briefly to highlight important moments and characters. After key scenes, ask simple questions to reinforce understanding and keep students engaged. Look for opportunities to cover key vocabulary.
3. After the video, assess comprehension with a few questions, for example:
 - Who was Betsy Ross, and what was her talent?
 - Would Betsy be considered a patriot?
 - Why is the American flag important?
 - What do the symbols of stars and stripes on the flag represent?
 - How did Betsy use her talent for God and her country?
 - What parts of the story might be true? What parts legend?

Wrap-Up: (20-25 mins.)

1. Provide each student with a pre-cut paper star and coloring supplies.
2. Guide students to decorate their star or write a talent or skill they have on it (e.g., artistic, problem-solving, leadership, outgoing, etc.)
3. Ask them how they can use their talents to help others in their community. Consider displaying the completed stars in the classroom.
4. Conclude by brainstorming with the class ways they might use their talents to help in the classroom or at school. Evaluation criteria for formative assessment:
 - Can students correctly explain the significance of the 13 stars and stripes?
 - Did students participate actively in the star activity and discussions?
 - Can students connect the historical story and the concept of using personal talents for the greater good?

Don't have time for the complete lesson? Quick Activity (15-20 mins.)

After watching the video, distribute the coloring page and allow students to discuss their favorite character or part of the story.