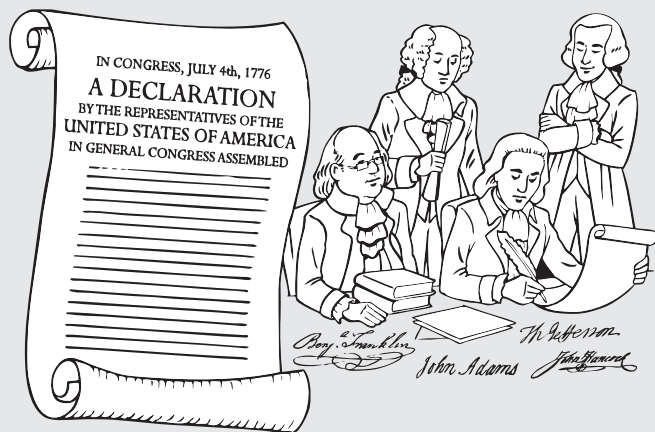


# Independence Day

July 4

On Independence Day, we celebrate the birth of our nation. The Continental Congress voted to declare independence from Great Britain on July 2, 1776. Delegates adopted the Declaration of Independence two days later. We also call this celebration the Fourth of July.

Many communities hold fireworks displays. People watch parades and listen to concerts. Often people celebrate with friends and family. They might have a barbecue. Flags are displayed, and the national anthem is played. We celebrate our freedom.



## Summary of Activities

### Reading: Literature

*Freedom*—poem and a drawing activity

### Reading: Informational Text

*Fourth of July Through the Years*—nonfiction passage with a sequencing activity

### Writing

*Symbols of Freedom*—activity in which students choose and write about why a particular symbol of freedom is important

### Speaking & Listening

*Celebrate Independence Day*—activity in which students participate in a parade and learn a patriotic song

**Vocabulary:** anthem, cannons, Continental Congress, Declaration of Independence, federal, military, muskets, proclaim, reenactments, Statue of Liberty, symbol



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Freedom

**Directions:** Read the poem. Then complete the activity.



Hoofbeats at midnight,  
 a distant rifle shot.  
 The sound of freedom  
 in the air.  
 Brilliant stripes of red and white,  
 Stars on a dazzling field of blue.  
 The sight of freedom  
 everywhere.  
 Cold snow on worn-out boots,  
 pride swells within each heart.  
 The feel of freedom  
 for those who care.  
 Hold your head high,  
 see the weary soldiers smile.  
 The price of freedom dearly paid,  
 We salute those who were there.



### Activity:

1. Circle words that help you visualize what is happening in the poem.
2. Draw a picture to illustrate one stanza of the poem.

3. On the back of the page, draw a picture to show what freedom means to you. Write a caption for your picture.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Fourth of July Through the Years

**Directions:** Read the passage. Then complete the activity.

On the Fourth of July, we celebrate our freedom from Great Britain. In 1776, a group of men from the colonies voted to declare their freedom. Two days later, on July 4, they agreed to sign the Declaration of Independence.

That first year, John Adams wrote a letter to his wife. He had ideas for how to celebrate freedom. He thought there should be ceremonies and parades. He said there should be bells and bonfires. People would play games and sports.

People didn't read John Adams' private letter. But they wanted to celebrate. They listened to leaders read the Declaration of Independence aloud. The people cheered. There were concerts and military parades. People had bonfires. Cannons and muskets were fired. In years to come, people lit candles. Bells rang from churches and meeting halls. Towns set off fireworks.

Fifty years later, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams died on July 4. They both had served as president. Many years later, Congress made July 4 a federal holiday.

Over the years, Fourth of July celebrations focused more on having fun. People watched baseball games and went on picnics. Families got together for barbecues. They ate foods such as watermelon and hot dogs. Many people feel apple pie is an all-American food.

Many towns have fireworks shows. Sometimes fireworks are set to music on the radio. Towns display flags. Some people hang a flag from their front porches. Cities where historic events took place put on dramas or reenactments. People act out what happened long ago. There are public readings.

We still do many of these things today to celebrate. Bands march and play music in parades. People listen to concerts in a park. Decorated military ships will dock in a harbor for people to see. When people hear the national anthem, they cheer. We are grateful for our independence, and we are glad we live in a free country.

**Activity:** In each box, write ways people have celebrated the Fourth of July through history.

Early Years	Over Time	Today



Name \_\_\_\_\_

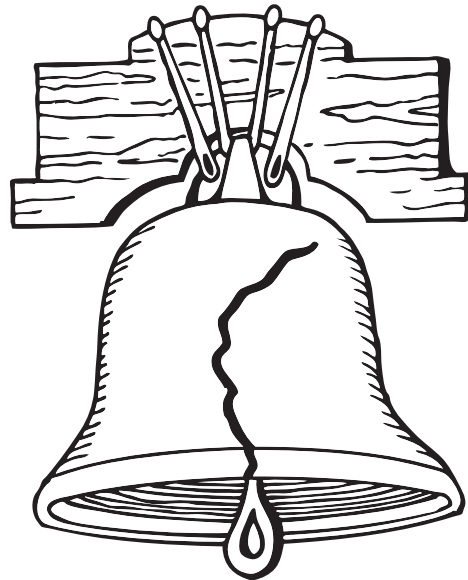
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## Symbols of Freedom

**Directions:** Read the passage. Then complete the activity.

The Statue of Liberty stands in New York Harbor. The people of France gave it to us. It is a symbol of freedom. Many people come from other countries. They want to live here because it is a free country. Often, they sail by the Statue of Liberty. It is close to a place called Ellis Island. This is a place where new people can come into our country. Today, people come to America from all over the world. They don't always come in to our country through the New York Harbor. But the statue still stands for freedom.

Another symbol of freedom is the Liberty Bell. The bell first rang in the State House of Pennsylvania. This building is now called Independence Hall. The bell has writing on it. In simple words, it says, "Proclaim freedom over the land to everyone who lives in the land." Over time, the bell cracked from years of hard use. To repair it, metal workers created a wider crack. This would stop the bell from breaking. However, another crack developed. They stopped ringing the bell. It did not become known as the Liberty Bell until after the Civil War. The bell traveled around the country as part of a display. It reminded people of the time when the whole country fought together for freedom from Great Britain.



**Activity:** On the back of the page, write a paragraph about a symbol of freedom. Read these questions to help you think of ideas:

- What other symbols of freedom can you think of?
- Which symbol of freedom stands out to you?
- Why is it important?
- How does it remind people what freedom means?
- What do you think would make a good symbol of freedom? Why?



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Celebrate Independence Day

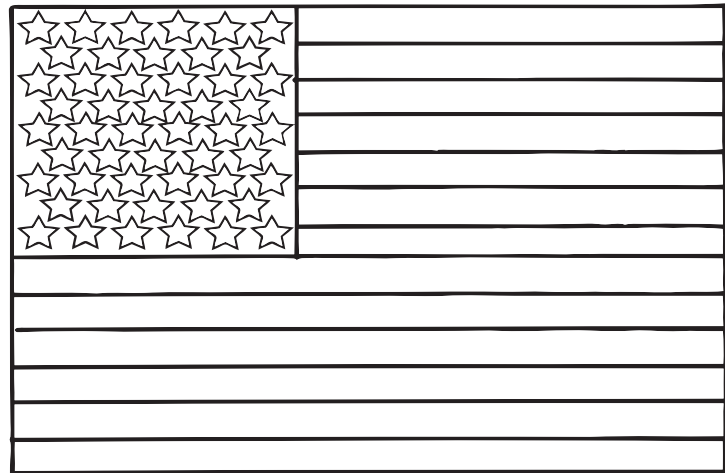
**Directions:** Get ready to celebrate our country's freedom with your classmates! Decorate and cut out the flag below. Then listen to a recording of the patriotic song printed on this page. Practice saying the words out loud.

## What You Will Need

- crayons or colored pencils
- scissors
- tape
- a pencil or stick

## What You Will Do

1. Color the flag.
2. Cut out the flag.
3. Tape the flag to a pencil or stick.
4. Wave your flag and sing the song below.



## The Star-Spangled Banner

Oh, say can you see by the dawn's early light  
 What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?  
 Whose broad stripes and bright stars thru the perilous fight,  
 O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?  
 And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,  
 Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.  
 Oh, say does that star-spangled banner yet wave  
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

—Francis Scott Key, 1814