



Maggie's Civics Corner

Lesson 28 – Understanding National Symbols

Maggie Says...

In these difficult times, as our nation and the world pull together, it is more important than ever to understand our role as a citizen.

Today's lesson is about understanding national symbols: National symbols are things that nations use to represent their national values, history, goals, and peoples. The United States of America has many national symbols such as our flag, our nation's seal, and our national anthem, the Star-Spangled Banner. Monuments and statues can also be national symbols. The Statue of Liberty is an American national symbol that is located on Liberty Island in

New York City's harbor.

About the Statue of Liberty: The Statue of Liberty was given as a gift in 1886 to the people of the United States from the people of France and depicts Libertas, the Roman goddess of liberty. She holds a torch above her head in her right hand and carries a stone tablet in her left hand inscribed with July 4, 1776 in roman numerals commemorating the date of the United States Declaration of Independence. She has a broken chain and shackle around her feet to signify the abolition of slavery. The statue is made of copper and stands 151 feet tall from its base to the top of its torch. The statue was originally a dull brown copper color, but because of copper oxidation over time, it has turned into the green color it is today.



The Statue of Liberty is an American national symbol that is recognized all over the world. Between 1892 and 1954, 12 million immigrants coming to the United States were greeted by the Statue of Liberty when they arrived at the immigration station on the neighboring Ellis Island. Since then, the statue has become a symbol of hope and opportunity for those seeking a better life in America.

As a national symbol, the Statue of Liberty represents many of our values as Americans such as liberty, freedom, and democracy. As Americans, these are values that we care about and national symbols like the Statue of Liberty help us exemplify these principles and the pride that we all share in them.

Activity: Time to practice your artistic abilities! Look at the photo of the Statue of Liberty on the next page of this lesson. Take a blank piece of paper and try to draw the Statue of Liberty on your own while looking at the photo. When you finishing drawing, color your Statue of Liberty. You can color your statue green like it is today, or you can choose to color it a copper color to show how the statue looked back in 1886.

Imagine that a new child from a different country has moved into your neighborhood. This child asks you about the Statue of Liberty as a national symbol and its meaning. Think about the values that the Statue of Liberty stands for. Next to your Statue of Liberty, write down three values that you thought of. Finally, imagine what you would say to your new friend to explain to them what national symbols are and what they represent.

Civic Resources: Check out this e-tour of the Statue of Liberty:

<https://www.nps.gov/featurecontent/stli/eTour.htm>

