

LESSON ONE: Patriotic Song – God Bless America

“GOD BLESS AMERICA”

*God bless America
Land that I love
Stand beside her
And guide her
Through the night with a light up above
From the mountains
To the Prairies
To the Oceans white with foam
God bless America
My home sweet home
God Bless America
My home sweet home.*

Written by Irving Berlin, 1918.

Notes:

- Berlin originally wrote the song in 1918 while serving in the US Army at Camp Upton in Yaphank, New York. He wrote it as a peace song.
- A revised version was introduced on an Armistice Day broadcast in 1938 and song by Kate Smith.
- It was so popular, that there was a movement to make it the national anthem of the U.S.
- Berlin's real name was Israel Baline, and he was born on May 11, 1888; his family was Jewish and resided in Tolochin, Byelorussia, in Siberia. To avoid the persecution of the Czar, they immigrated to the United States via New York in 1893. The family lived in the slums on New York's East Side. By the time he was 13, "Izzy's" father had passed away, and Israel was earning money as a

singing waiter. He also picked up the piano and was soon playing in saloons and "dives." Approaching adulthood, Israel Anglicized his name to the now familiar "Irving Berlin."

- Berlin was embarrassed to be drawing royalties on his unexpected patriotic hit. In response, he set up a trust fund to distribute all earnings of "God Bless America" to an appropriate organization. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., Gene Tunney, and Herbert Swope were selected to administer the fund. They were of diverse religious backgrounds; Roosevelt was Protestant, Tunney was Roman Catholic, and Swope was Jewish. It was first proposed that all royalties would go to the Red Cross, but on Swope's recommendation, the proceeds were assigned to the Boy and Girl Scouts of America.
- Berlin died at age 101 in 1989.

LESSON TWO:

Patriotic Song – America the Beautiful

*“America the Beautiful
O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
God shed his grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!
O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
And Crown they good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!*

O beautiful for pilgrim feet
Whose stern impassioned stress
A thoroughfare of freedom beat
Across the wilderness!
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm they soul in self-control,
They liberty in law!

O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife.
Who more than self their country loved
And mercy more than life!
America! America!
May God they gold refine
Till all success be nobleness
And every gain divine!

O beautiful for halcyon skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the enameled plain!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
Till souls was fair as earth and air

And Music-hearted sea!

Oh beautiful for pilgrims feet,
Whose stern impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat

Across the wilderness!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
Till paths we wrought through
Wilds of thought
By Pilgrim foot and knee!

O beautiful for glory-tale
Of liberating strife
When once and twice,
For man’s avail
Men lavished precious life!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
Till selfish gain no longer stain
The banner of the free!

On beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
Till nobler men keep once again
They whiter jubilee!

NOTES ABOUT THE SONG

- There are 8 stanzas to the song
- The lyrics were written by Katharine Lee Bates an instructor at Wellesley College, Massachusetts after an inspiring trip to Pikes Peak, Colorado.
- It first appeared as a poem in The Congregationalist weekly journal in 1895.
- The music was created by Samuel A. Ward for the revised poem in 1882 and the words and music were published together in 1910.
- Ms. Bates died in 1929.

LESSON THREE:

The Pledge of Allegiance

“I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.”

NOTES ABOUT THE PLEDGE:

- Written by a Baptist minister, Francis Bellamy (1855-1931).
- His brother, Edward Bellamy wrote many socialistic utopian novels such as *Looking Backward*, and *Equality*.
- Original pledge was written in 1892 and was published in the *Youth's Companion*, the leading magazine and the *Reader's Digest* of the day.
- In 1954, Congress, after a campaign by the Knights of Columbus, added the words “under God,” to the pledge.

LESSON FOUR:

The History of TAPS

*Day is done, gone the sun,
From the hills, from the lake,
From the skies.
All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.*

*Go to sleep, peaceful sleep,
May the soldier or sailor God keep.
On the land or the deep, Safe in sleep.*

*Love, good night, must thou go,
When the day, and the night
Need thee so?
All is well. Speedeth all
To their rest.*

*Fades the light; and afar
Goes the day, and the stars,
Shineth bright,
Fare thee well; Day has gone,
Night is on.*

*Thanks and praise, for our days,
'Neath the sun, neath the stars,
'neath the sky,
As we go, this we know,
God is nigh.*

NOTES ABOUT THE SONG:

- The song was written in about 1862 by General Daniel Butterfield who reworked the bugle song "Scott Tattoo."
- Butterfield felt the song for lights out was too formal and Taps was

adopted throughout the Army of the Potomac.

- After the war, Taps became an official bugle call. It was first published in 1911.

LESSON FIVE:

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,
Thro’ the perilous fight;
O’er the ramparts we watched
were so gallantly streaming.
And the rockets 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?”*

NOTES ABOUT THE SONG:

- There are four stanzas but only the first one is generally sung.
- The song was written by Francis Scott Key during the War of 1812.
- Key visited the British fleet in Chesapeake Bay to secure the release of Dr. William Beanes who had been captured after the burning of Washington, D.C.
- The release was secured by the British held Key overnight at one of the forts defending Baltimore.
- After a 25 hour British bombardment of Fort McHenry,

Key peered through the clearing smoke and saw an enormous American flag proudly waving and he was inspired.

- He began the poem that became the National Anthem in 1931, by order of President Woodrow Wilson.

LESSON SIX:

The Statue of Liberty

“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-tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

Emma Lazarus
1849-1887

NOTES:

- The inscription on the statue was written by a Jewish poet, Emma Lazarus.
- The Statue of Liberty National Monument officially celebrated her 100th birthday on October 28, 1986.
- The people of France gave the Statue to the people of the United States over one hundred years ago in recognition of the friendship established during the American Revolution.
- The Statue was a joint effort between America and France and it was agreed upon that the American people were to build the pedestal, and the French people were responsible for the Statue and its assembly here in the United States. However, lack of funds was a problem on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. In France, public fees, various forms of entertainment, and a lottery were among the methods used to raise funds. In the United States, benefit theatrical events, art exhibitions, auctions and prize fights assisted in providing needed funds
- The Statue was completed in France in July, 1884 and arrived in New York Harbor in June of 1885 on board the French frigate "Isere" which transported the Statue of Liberty from France to the United States. In transit, the Statue was reduced to 350 individual pieces and packed in 214 crates. The Statue was re-assembled on her new pedestal in four months time. On October 28th 1886, the dedication of the Statue of Liberty took place in front of thousands of spectators.
- In May of 1982, President Ronald Reagan appointed Lee Iacocca to head up a private sector effort to restore the Statue of Liberty. Fundraising began for the \$87 million restoration under a public/private partnership between the National Park Service and the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc., to date the most successful such partnership in American history.
- From the base of the statue to the top of the torch, there are 151.1 feet.

LESSON Seven:

The Flag of the United States



- Prior to the Revolutionary War, the British Colonies of North American each had its own flag. On January 2, 1776, the first flag of the United States was raised at Cambridge, Mass. by George Washington.
- The first flag was known as the Grand Union flag and it consisted of 13 stripes, alternating red and white with a blue canton bearing the crosses of St. George and St. Andrews.
- On June 14, 1777, the Congress resolved that the flag should contain a blue field with 13 stars, each representing a colony.
- White signifies purity and innocence; red, hardiness and valor; and blue vigilance, perseverance and justice.
- Until 1818, an additional star and stripe was added as each new state was admitted to the Union. But since that was not practical as more and more states were added, so in 1816, stars were added for each

state and the flag contained 13 stripes alternating red and white.

- Do fly the flag on all national holidays from sunrise to sunset. It may be flown 24 hours a day if illuminated.
- The US Flag should be displayed daily on or near every public institution. Hoist is briskly but lower it ceremoniously.
- When carried in a procession with other flags, it should be displaced front and center of the line at the highest point of the group of flags.
- The flag should never be dipped to any person or thing.
- It should never touch anything beneath it, ground, floor, water, or merchandise.

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.
And to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all!

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Patriotic Lesson - Eight

You're a Grand Old Flag

by George M. Cohan

You're a grand old flag,
You're a high flying flag
And forever in peace may you wave.
You're the emblem of
The land I love.
The home of the free and the brave.
Ev'ry heart beats true
'neath the Red, White and Blue,
Where there's never a boast or brag.
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
Keep your eye on the grand old flag.

- *You're a Grand Old Flag* - with music and lyrics by [George M. Cohan](#), became an instant sentimental U.S. favorite following America's decision to [enter the war against Germany in April 1917](#).
- The song was first publicly performed on [February 6](#), the play's opening night, at Herald Square Theater in [New York City](#). "You're a Grand Old Flag" quickly became the first song from a musical to sell over a million copies of [sheet music](#).
- The original lyric for this perennial George M. Cohan favorite came, as Cohan later explained, from an encounter he had with a [Civil War](#) veteran who fought at [Gettysburg](#). The two men found themselves next to each other and Cohan noticed the

vet held a carefully folded but ragged old flag. The man reportedly then turned to Cohan and said, "She's a grand old rag." Cohan thought it was a great line and originally named his tune "You're a Grand Old Rag." So many groups and individuals objected to calling the flag a "rag," however, that he "gave 'em what they wanted" and switched words, renaming the song "You're a Grand Old Flag."

- The song was a major set piece in Cohan's 1942 film biography, [Yankee Doodle Dandy](#).

Patriotic Lesson Nine

Veteran's Day November 11, and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

- November 11, is the anniversary of the Armistice which was signed in the Forest of Compiègne by the Allies and the Germans in 1918, ending World War I, after four years of conflict. This day began with the laying down of arms, blowing of whistles, impromptu parades, closing of places of business. All over the globe there were many demonstrations; no doubt the world has never before witnessed such rejoicing.
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- In November of 1919, President Woodrow Wilson issued his Armistice Day proclamation. The last paragraph set the tone for future observances:
“To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nation.”
- In 1927 Congress issued a resolution requesting President Calvin Coolidge to issue a proclamation calling upon officials to display the Flag of the United States on all government buildings on November 11, and inviting the people to observe the day in schools and churches...But it was not until 1938

that Congress passed a bill that each November 11 "shall be dedicated to the cause of world peace and ...hereafter celebrated and known as Armistice Day."

- That same year President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a bill making the day a legal holiday in the District of Columbia. For sixteen years the United States formally observed Armistice Day, with impressive ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, where the Chief Executive or his representative placed a wreath.
- In 1921, the American Unknown Soldier, symbolizing all the unknown dead, was chosen in an unusual way. Six soldiers of the American Army of Occupation in Germany were selected from different sectors to act as pallbearers. They met at Chalons-sur-Marne, and were interviewed by General Rogers. Next day, Sergeant Edward F. Younger of the 59th Infantry was asked to make a choice among four caskets, with unidentified bodies disinterred from American cemeteries at Bony, Belleau Wood, Romagne, and Thiaucourt. When the sergeant was ready to perform his solemn duty, he received a bouquet of white roses, with instructions to proceed into the City Hall at Chalons, where the four caskets stood. Sergeant Younger realized fully the grave importance of his action; and after bowing his head, he walked around the coffins three times.

Patriotic Lesson 10 – Fourth of July

- In the [United States](#), **Independence Day** (commonly known as "the **Fourth of July**" or simply "the **Fourth**") is a [federal holiday](#) celebrating the adoption of the [Declaration of Independence](#) on [4 July 1776](#), declaring independence from the [Kingdom of Great Britain](#).
- Independence Day is commonly associated with [parades](#), [barbecues](#), [beer](#), [picnics](#), [baseball](#) games, and various other public and private events celebrating the history, government, and traditions of the United States. [Fireworks](#) have been associated with the Fourth of July since [1777](#).
- In [1778](#), General [George Washington](#) marked the Fourth of July with a double ration of [rum](#) for his soldiers and an artillery salute. Across the [Atlantic Ocean](#), [ambassadors](#) John Adams and [Benjamin Franklin](#) held a dinner for their fellow Americans in [Paris, France](#).

The Continental Congress reworked the text of the Declaration until a little after eleven o'clock, July 4, when twelve [colonies](#) voted for adoption and released a copy signed by [John Hancock](#), President of the Congress, to the printers

- Tom Adams and Thomas Jefferson were the only two signers of the [Declaration of Independence](#) to become [President](#) passed away on the same day: [July 4, 1826](#), which was the United States' 50th anniversary.
- In [2006](#), the first Space Shuttle launch on Independence Day occurred at 2:37:55 EDT for mission [STS-121](#) using the [Space Shuttle Discovery](#).
- In [1870](#), the [U.S. Congress](#) made Independence Day an unpaid holiday for federal employees.