



# The Statue of Liberty: A Symbol of the United States

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3c08932/>

## Overview/Prior Knowledge

For many of our students, the Statue of Liberty may resonate as nothing more than a statue; however, she symbolizes some of the values that we value most as Americans – Freedom and Liberty. From the beginning, the Statue of Liberty was a symbol of hope for both immigrants coming to America and those living abroad who dreamed of a better life. By researching the origins of the Statue of Liberty, students learn about her historical significance and why she remains an important symbol of the United States of America.

## Objectives

- The students will be able to explain what a symbol is and what the Statue of Liberty symbolizes.
- The students will be able to identify basic information in regards to the Statue of Liberty such as appearance, origin, and construction.
- The students will analyze primary sources related to the Statue of Liberty. They will explain what they see and how that contributes to their understanding of that topic.
- The students will use their background knowledge as evidence to explain inferences they make about given primary sources.
- Students will integrate information from a variety of sources to write an essay that informs their reader about the Statue of Liberty.

## Time Required

Seven 40-minute sessions

## Recommended Grade Range

K-2; 3-5

## Subject/Sub-Subject

Social Studies; English Language Arts

## Standards

### *Social Studies*

*Mississippi: 3. Understand the historical circumstances and conditions of civil human rights struggles in local communities.*

a) Identify important beliefs commonly held by Americans about themselves and their government (e.g., Following individual rights and freedoms, common good, respect for law, importance of work education, volunteerism, conflict resolutions, etc.). (DOK 1)

### **English Language Arts**

#### **CCSS ELA WRITING STANDARDS:**

W.3.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

W.3.7: Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

W.3.8: Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

#### **CCSS ELA SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS:**

SL.3.2: Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

#### **CCSS ELA READING STANDARDS:**

RI.3.1: Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

RI.3.3: Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

RI.3.7: Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

## **Library of Congress – Teaching with Primary Sources Skills**

- Identify details when observing a primary source(s)
- Connect primary sources to self, family, and/or community
- Identify points of view with primary sources
- Categorize primary sources to show relationships between them
- Make comparisons with primary sources
- Articulate ideas or beliefs formed by observing primary sources
- Connect new knowledge from primary sources to other learning experiences

## **Highlighted Strategies**

- Visual Discovery
- Zoom In
- Bubble Map
- Observe-Reflect-Question (ORQ)

## Credits

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## Materials

- Primary Sources – See Resource Guide at the end of this document.
- Winkler, P. *The Light of Liberty*. <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/stories/history/statue-of-liberty/>
- Ritchhart, R., Church, M., & Morrison, K. (2011). Routines for introducing and exploring ideas. In, *Making thinking visible: How to promote engagement, understanding, and independence for all learners*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Nonfiction Passage for Statue of Liberty from <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/FREEBIE-Nonfiction-Passage-for-Statue-of-Liberty-1998633>

## Procedures

### Introduction

- TTW begin the lesson by telling students that today they are historians, which means they will need to collect and study information about the past. In order to do that, TTW facilitate a discussion with students where they brainstorm ideas about how historians get information about the past (books, newspapers, photographs, drawings/painting, etc.) The students need to understand that not all primary sources will be words on a page. This is important because the first primary sources they will use for this unit are photographs.
- Before giving the students the photographs that will be used during the lesson, TTW introduce the students to the concept of Visual Discovery, which is the examination of a photograph, picture, or other image where we use our eyes and background knowledge to infer about the content and context of the image. TTW will project a picture of a known object (strawberry) and ask the students to practice providing evidence that would prove to someone that this is in fact a picture of a strawberry. For information on Visual Discovery see
- TTW will present the students with primary sources 1, 2, 3 and 4. Each of these is a black and white close up a section of the Statue of Liberty and therefore can be used as an opportunity to assess the level of familiarity that students have with this historic symbol. By examining smaller quadrants of the statue, students can zoom in on the details that can be used as evidence to support their claims. TTW will encourage students to examine the photographs and ask: “What are these photographs of? What evidence do you have? What does this remind you of? How do you know?” Additionally, TTW will ask students to support their claims in regards to the subject of the photographs by using evidence from the photograph itself. Students will work in their groups to annotate the photographs by circling, labeling, marking, etc. Students will then write a claim and evidence statement that states what the photograph depicts and how the evidence supports their claims.
- TTW facilitate a discussion with the students where they are able to share the specific details that they used to help determine what was shown in their photograph. This discussion time is a

formative assessment opportunity to see what information the students already know about the Statue of Liberty. During this discussion students will probably mention her tablet, her crown, her torch, etc., which are all symbols. The discussion of symbols will continue on day two.

### During

- (Day 2)
- A main objective of this unit is for the students to realize that the Statue of Liberty is a symbol. The teacher will begin the lesson for today by showing students some basic symbols (heart, clover, etc.) and discussing the fact that these concrete images represent something. The students will work with their table groups to answer the question, “What is a symbol?” TTW frame the purpose of the unit by telling students that over the next two weeks, we will be learning about the Statue of Liberty, which is a symbol of the United States. It will be our job to determine what exactly the Statue of Liberty symbolizes.
- Today students will begin to learn some basic information about the Statue of Liberty (appearance, origins, construction, etc.), which is one of the key objectives of this unit. TTW will begin by telling the students that they have a job to accomplish as historians, “Your first job as historians will be to learn some basic facts about the Statue of Liberty.” TTW give students a blank sheet of paper to collect information *describing* the Statue of Liberty. Students could practice this skill by describing one of their classmates based on things that they can see. In addition to what the Statue of Liberty looks like, students will also examine their source for any other interesting facts, which may include where she came from, how she was built or what she represents. The goal of today is to collect as much information as possible so that later, the students can separate that information into categories. Students may want to jump straight to those bigger, deeper questions (what does she represent), but it is important to have a grasp on some of the more basic facts. These facts will help students defend their ideas and claims when they get to those bigger questions.
- After the students have received source 5 (The Light of Liberty), TTW model how to use the informational text features in the article to go straight to some basic facts about the Statue of Liberty. Those facts will be added to their graphic organizer, which can be a bubble map, a web, a bullet pointed list, etc. TSW will work in groups to identify facts about the Statue of Liberty while the teacher goes from group to group to help clarify information. Many students will find the facts that describe the meaning behind her torch, the broken chains at her feet, or the date inscribed on her tablet, which is information that will be used during day four. TTW close the session by having students share what they learned about the Statue of Liberty. Finally, TTW conclude the lesson by having students restate the fact that the Statue of Liberty is a symbol that represents the United States. Day 3 will focus on defining exactly what the Statue of Liberty represents.
- (Day 3)
- Today we will move beyond the fact that the Statue of Liberty is a symbol and begin to answer some of those deeper questions students may have been thinking about as they researched during day two. After reviewing what a symbol is, TTW introduce the students to our essential questions they will be exploring over the remainder of the unit: 1) What does the Statue of Liberty represent? 2) How does the Statue of Liberty represent the values of the United States? and 3) What proof do we have that the Statue of Liberty is a symbol? All of these questions will be displayed on chart paper

for the remainder of the unit, which will help give students a purpose as they continue to research and learn about the Statue of Liberty.

- TTW ask for volunteers to share some of the facts that they gathered yesterday from their first print source and some of the facts they learned by examining the photographs of the Statue of Liberty (the students have their folders with their fact collection graphic organizer in front of them to use as a resource). TTW explain to students that historians examine multiple sources in order to create the best picture possible of the past. Today students will be examining an additional text, “Liberty Enlightening the World,” (Source 6). This text is an older text and as a result the language may be difficult for some students, which means that the teacher will be responsible for a greater amount of scaffolding. Additionally students will need direction as to the format of the text because it doesn’t have traditional line breaks. TTW will set the purpose for reading today by reminding them of the four categories of information they will be looking for (appearance, where she came from, building the statue and the statue as a symbol). The teacher can use a graphic organizer of their choice to help the students categorize their facts (tree map, bullet points, four quadrants, etc.). As the teacher explains the categories, she is constantly modeling how examples of facts would fit into certain categories and how they could serve as evidence to answer one of the essential questions.
- Looking for four categories of information might be overwhelming for students, so each category is assigned a color. As students find facts they will color code them to help keep their information organized. TSW return to their groups and work together to identify facts and then color code them based on the category to which they belong. TTW give each student four sticky notes (four different colors to match the four categories of information). After they have collected their information, they will choose one fact from each category to place on the sticky note and add to the whole class graphic organizer that is displayed on the board. After all students have placed their sticky notes on the board, it is time to debrief and discuss their findings. At this point, the students should be familiar with the facts in regards to her appearance, so the bulk of the discussion should focus on where she came from and what she represents. Today students had a source that clearly explained that the Statue of Liberty was a gift from France. Additionally, the source discussed the admiration that the designers of the statue had for the United States in regards to freedom and liberty. As a closing thought today, students need to understand that the Statue of Liberty represents both freedom and liberty in the United States. Tomorrow will focus on proving that she is in fact a symbol of freedom and liberty in the United States.
- (Day 4)
- Now that students have a solid understanding of what the Statue of Liberty looks like and where she came from, the focus today will be on demonstrating that she is a symbol of freedom and liberty in the United States. TTW begin by reviewing the three essential questions for the unit and giving table groups time to discuss their answers to the questions. Groups will also decide if they have enough information to answer the questions or if they need to do more research. At this point, the discussion shifts to the statue as a symbol of freedom and liberty. Depending on the background knowledge of your class, there may need to be significant discussion of the similarities and differences between these words. This would also be a good time to make a connection to immigrants that came to the United States looking for a new or better life and the fact that the Statue of Liberty was often the first thing they saw when arriving by boat in New York. The depth of this discussion is up to you based on the needs of your students and their historical background knowledge.

- TTW give students source 7, which goes into more detail about what different parts of the Statue of Liberty stand for. Students need these facts to answer the third essential question for the unit, which asks them to prove how they know she is a symbol. By learning about the meaning behind the broken chains at her feet, the inscription on her tablet, and the spikes on her crown, they are able to prove and defend their claim that the Statue of Liberty represents the values of the United States. TSW work in groups to annotate the text looking for specific evidence to answer the final essential question. TTW stop and talk with each group to help clarify information and push their thinking further.
- After students have gathered their facts, TTW call the whole group together to discuss their findings. This discussion serves two purposes. First, it helps clarify any questions and also gives students the chance to share their findings. Secondly, it allows the teacher to come full circle back to the first day of this unit when students were examining photographs of the Statue of Liberty. They might not have known it at the time, but the parts of the Statue of Liberty (crown, tablet, broken chains) in those photographs would eventually be used as evidence to supporting that she is a symbol of the United States representing the values of American citizens, such as freedom and liberty. Students will complete an exit ticket to conclude the research portion of this unit and answer the following question, “If someone asked you why the Statue of Liberty was important, what would you say?”
- (Days 5-7) The remaining days of this unit will take place during Writer’s Workshop. Students will take their research (that has already been categorized into four categories) and write an informational essay that teaches about the Statue of Liberty. They will include information from all four categories to prove that they not only understand what the Statue of Liberty looks like, but the significance of where she came from and what she represents as well.
- The level of support needed will depend on the amount of informational writing that has already occurred during the year. Students may already know that they should separate their information into paragraphs by category, but they may need help adding in headings, photographs and captions – it all depends on their prior experience with informational writing.
- TTW help students revise and edit for clarity, but should also utilize peer editing during the writing process. When a fact needs clarifying, students should be encouraged to return to their sources, or to the graphic organizers that they completed when annotating those sources. This essay will be a summative assessment for this unit due to the fact that it allows them to share their learning in an authentic way that can be shared with peers, parents or other adults.
- To provide a sense of closure to this unit, students will share their essays with another 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class. They will use their essays to explain the significance of the Statue of Liberty and how she represents the values of the United States.

## Assessment

**Formative:** Students’ annotations and notes in their research folders serve as formative assessment of this unit. Those annotations and notes help the teacher to see if they can categorize facts and then use those facts to answer questions about that topic.

**Summative:** Students’ research essays will serve as the summative assessment for this unit. The essay can be used to assess content knowledge about the Statue of Liberty, but most importantly can be used to assess their ability to support historical claims using evidence from a variety of sources, including primary sources. The research paper will be graded with a rubric with areas on:

- a. Overall information about the statue of liberty (facts, observations, and questions).
- b. Introduction that hooked reader.
- c. Elaboration of facts, definitions, and details from four research categories (appearance, construction, came from, symbolizes).
- d. Organization of information, grouped into paragraphs.
- e. Ending that drew conclusions, asked the reader questions, or made the reader think about how they might respond.

## Differentiation

- The teacher will choose text on a variety of levels in order to meet the needs of all learners in the classroom.
- Discussion will be used to help struggling students express their thoughts orally before writing them down.
- Smaller research sessions will be used to scaffold the research process.
- The teacher will use spiral review at the end of the day to review previous learning.
- To enrich students, the teacher will help students transform the informational writing piece into an opinion piece that argues why the Statue of Liberty is important to the United States.

## Supplementary Materials

Internet Source: The Light of Liberty (National Geographic Kids)

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/stories/history/statue-of-liberty/>

Text: Statue of Liberty (The Speech Owl, TpT)

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/FREEBIE-Nonfiction-Passage-for-Statue-of-Liberty-1998633>

## Teaching with Primary Sources Resource Guide

**Title:** Statue of Liberty

**Historical Background:**

For many of our students the Statue of Liberty may resonate as nothing more than a statue; however, she symbolizes some of the values that we value most as Americans – Freedom and Liberty. From the beginning, the Statue of Liberty was a symbol of hope for both immigrants coming to America and those living abroad who dreamed of a better life. By researching the origins of the Statue of Liberty students learn about her historical significance and why she remains an important symbol of the United States of America.

**Primary Source 1:**



**Title:** Detail of Fingers on Tablet

**Link:**

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/hhh.ny1251.photos.120420p/>

**Purpose:** This image is used as a way of introducing students to the Statue of Liberty. This will be their first exposure to primary sources and the idea of visual discovery. The goal is for students to zoom in on specific details and try to make connections between those details and their background knowledge. Hopefully this will result in students being able to determine that the subject of this photograph is the Statue of Liberty.

**Primary Source 2:**



Title: View from Base of the Statue Looking Straight Up Toga at Left Elbow and Arm Holding Tablet

Link: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/hhh.ny1251.photos.120311p/>

Purpose: This image is used as a way of introducing students to the Statue of Liberty. This will be their first exposure to primary sources and the idea of visual discovery. The goal is for students to zoom in on specific details and try to make connections between those details and

their background knowledge. Hopefully this will result in students being able to determine that the subject of this photograph is the Statue of Liberty.

**Primary Source 3:**

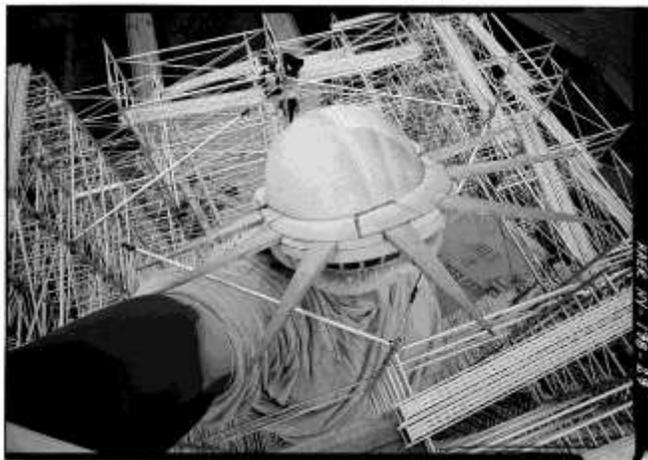


Title: Detail of Neck and Shoulder Connection Showing Toga Clasp and Shoulder Lights

Link: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/hhh.ny1251.photos.120292p/>

Purpose: This image is used as a way of introducing students to the Statue of Liberty. This will be their first exposure to primary sources and the idea of visual discovery. The goal is for students to zoom in on specific details and try to make connections between those details and their background knowledge. Hopefully this will result in students being able to determine that the subject of this photograph is the Statue of Liberty.

**Primary Source 4:**



Title: View Looking Down on Top of Head Showing Body Enclosed in Scaffolding.

Link: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/hhh.ny1251.photos.120281p/>

Purpose: This image is used as a way of introducing students to the Statue of Liberty. This will be their first exposure to primary sources and the idea of visual discovery. The goal is for students to zoom in on specific details and try to make connections between those details and their background knowledge. Hopefully this will result in students being able

to determine that the subject of this photograph is the Statue of Liberty.

**Primary Source 5:**



Title: Liberty Enlightening the World

Link: <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=loc.ark:/13960/t7br8z921;view=1up;seq=11;size=50>

Purpose: This text serves to provide background knowledge in regards to the Statue of Liberty. In addition to basic facts, it also discusses the designer of the statue and the motivations for France to offer the statue to the United States as a gift.