LESSON PLAN

PART I

Lesson 1: The American Flag and Other Symbols
Instructor: Academic Instructor
Teaching Method: Informal Lecture
Visual Aids (VA): PowerPoint Presentation
Student Preparation:
   Reading Assignment: Leadership Education I: Citizenship, Character and Air Force
   Tradition, Chapter 6, Lesson 1
   Homework Assignment: Instructors may use any or all Student Workbook questions for
   this lesson as homework or in-class assignment.
Date of Lesson Development/Last Major Revision: 1998/July 2005

PART IA

Lesson Objectives:
1. Know the history and courtesies rendered to the flag of the United States and the
   National Anthem.
2. Know about the Great Seal of the United States and the Air Force Seal.
3. Know the Pledge of Allegiance and the American’s Creed.

Samples of Behavior/Main Points:
1. Outline the history of the flag of the United States.
2. Explain when to display the flag of the United States.
3. Explain how to display the flag of the United States.
4. Identify the courtesies rendered to the flag of the United States.
5. List the courtesies rendered to the National Anthem.
6. Describe the Pledge of Allegiance and the American’s Creed.
7. Describe the Great Seal of the United States and the Air Force Seal.

PART IB

Strategy: The American flag, the National Anthem, and other patriotic symbols reveal a lot about
our nation and the ideals that we uphold. This is a lesson that describes the history of those
symbols and the proper way to show them respect.

PowerPoint Presentation: Information points will appear on mouse clicks.
Lesson Outline:

1. Quick Write/Motivation (5 min.)

2. Topics (40 min.)
   a. What is the history of the American flag?
   b. What laws and regulations govern the flag?
   c. When should the flag be displayed?
   d. How should the flag be positioned and displayed?
   e. What is the proper way to show respect for the flag?
   f. What courtesies should be rendered to the flag and the National Anthem?
   g. What is the significance of the Pledge of Allegiance?
   h. What is the history of Flag Day?
   i. What is the significance of the Great Seal of the United States?
   j. What is the significance of the Air Force Seal?
   k. What is the American’s Creed?

3. Wrap-up (5 min.)
ATTENTION
Do you know that the American flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing? Do you know that when you salute the American flag and the National Anthem you’re saluting the United States as a nation? In this lesson, we will learn more about these and other patriotic symbols and the specific ways that we should show them respect.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW
In this chapter of Leadership Education I: Citizenship, Character and Air Force Tradition, we’ll cover the following topics (this lesson’s topics are in bold):

1. The American flag and other symbols
   a. What is the history and symbolism of the American flag?
   b. How should the flag be displayed and honored?
   c. What are the history and meaning of the National Anthem, the Pledge of Allegiance, and Flag Day?
   d. What are the uses of and symbols in the Great Seal of the United States and the Air Force Seal?
   e. What is the American’s Creed?

2. Civics
   a. What is civics?
   b. Why do people need government?
   c. What are the functions and levels of government?
   d. What is democratic government?
   e. What are the requirements and responsibilities of American citizens and people who live in America?
   f. How and why should citizens volunteer in their communities?
3. The Constitution of the United States
   a. What do the statements in the articles, sections, and amendments in the Constitution mean?
   b. What are the three main parts of the Constitution?
   c. How can the Constitution be amended?
   d. How is the Constitution interpreted by the Supreme Court, Congress, the president, and custom?

4. The Bill of Rights
   a. What freedoms does the First Amendment protect, and how are they limited?
   b. How are the rights of the accused protected by the Bill of Rights?
   c. What other rights are protected by the Bill of Rights?
   d. How did the Bill of Rights gradually come to protect all Americans equally?
   e. What is the history of the struggle for civil rights, and how does it affect us today?

5. U.S. national government
   a. What is Congress, and how is it organized?
   b. How does a bill become a law?
   c. What are the requirements to become a U.S. president?
   d. What is the job of the vice president, and who is in line to replace the president after the vice president?
   e. How does the Judicial Branch carry out equal justice?
   f. What is the federal court system, and what kinds of cases are tried in U.S. district courts and courts of appeals?
   g. What are the roles of federal judges and Supreme Court justices?

6. Comparing systems of government
   a. What are authoritarian governments?
   b. What are the characteristics of the systems of government in the People’s Republic of China, Cuba, Iran, Iraq, and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea)?
   c. How and why did Soviet Communism collapse in Russia, and what is the outlook for Russia’s future?
   d. What types of governments are considered democratic?
MOTIVATION
Do you know what to do when the American flag is being hoisted, is being lowered, or is passing by in a parade or review? Do you know the appropriate times to salute as a courtesy to the American flag and the National Anthem? This lesson will answer these and many other questions about how to display, treat, and show respect to these American symbols.

LESSON OVERVIEW
Today, we’ll cover the following topics:
1. What is the history and symbolism of the American flag?
2. What laws and regulations govern the flag?
3. When should the flag be displayed?
4. How should the flag be positioned and displayed?
5. What is the proper way to show respect for the flag?
6. What is the proper way to show respect for the National Anthem?
7. What is the significance of the Pledge of Allegiance?
8. What is the history of Flag Day?
9. What is the significance of the Great Seal of the United States?
10. What is the significance of the Air Force Seal?
11. What is the American’s Creed?

QUICK WRITE
Make a quick list of everything you know about the design of the American flag. Then, write down what you know about how to display it, treat it, and show it respect. What do the American flag and other patriotic symbols mean to you?

Ask volunteers to share their lists. Write their ideas on the board. Then, tell students to look for facts about these topics as they read the chapter. After they read the chapter, ask students to reconsider their feelings about the significance of patriotic symbols.
What is the history of the American flag?

a. The Second Continental Congress officially adopted the American flag in Philadelphia on June 14, 1777.

1. The flag was also called the Stars and Stripes or Old Glory.

2. The adoption of the flag was the result of a resolution offered by the Congressional Marine Committee.

3. The resolution said that the flag should have 13 stripes (alternating red and white) and that the union should be 13 stars. The stars would be white in a blue field to represent a new constellation. The number 13 represents the original Thirteen Colonies.

4. The union is the upper left corner of the flag.

b. Strong evidence indicates that Francis Hopkinson of New Jersey, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was responsible for the stars in the American flag.
c. During the Revolutionary War, patriots made flags for our new nation. Among them were

(1) Cornelia Bridges

(2) Elizabeth (Betsy) Ross

(3) Rebecca Young

(4) John Shaw

d. Although Betsy Ross made flags for 50 years, the claim that she designed the first flag of the United States is based on family traditions.

e. The Grand Union Flag was the first flag of the colonists that looked like the present Stars and Stripes.

(1) It is sometimes referred to as the Congress Colors, the First Navy Ensign, or the Cambridge Flag.

(2) An ensign is a national flag displayed on ships and aircraft, often with the special insignia of a branch or unit of the Armed Forces.

(3) The elements of its design included

(a) 13 stripes, alternately red and white, representing the original Thirteen Colonies

(b) A blue field in the upper left corner, bearing the red cross of St. George of England and the white cross of St. Andrew of Scotland
(4) As a flag of the American Revolution, it was used on many occasions.

(5) It was our unofficial national flag and the ensign of the Navy until June 14, 1777, when the Continental Congress authorized the Stars and Stripes.

f. The first change in the flag’s design was in 1794, when Congress passed an act requiring that the flag consist of 15 white stars on a blue field and 15 stripes, alternating red and white.

(1) The change was due to Vermont and Kentucky being admitted into the Union as states in 1791 and 1792, respectively.

(2) This flag was the official flag from 1795 to 1818.

(3) It played a role in many historic events. For example, it inspired Francis Scott Key to write the “Star Spangled Banner” during an attack on Fort McHenry.

g. Capt Samuel C. Reid, USN, suggested to Congress that the stripes remain 13 in number to represent the Thirteen Colonies. He also suggested that a star be added to the blue field for each new state coming into the Union.
h. On April 4, 1818, President Monroe accepted a bill that reflected Reid’s ideas. It set the basic design of the flag while making sure that the growth of the nation would be properly symbolized. The bill stated the following:

(1) Each time a new state came into the Union, one star would be added to the union of the flag on the Fourth of July following the date of admission.

(2) The 13 alternating stripes would remain unchanged.

i. The growth of the country resulted in changes to the flag.

(1) The number of stars grew over the years to 48 in 1912, when Arizona and New Mexico were admitted to the Union.

(2) The 49th star was added to the flag in 1959 for Alaska.

(3) The 50th star was added in 1960 for Hawaii.

(4) With the 50-star flag came a new design and arrangement of the stars in the union. This was a requirement met by President Eisenhower in Executive Order 10834.

(5) A national banner with 50 stars became the official American flag.
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j. The colors used in the American flag are white for purity and innocence; red for hardiness and valor; and blue for vigilance, perseverance, and justice.

k. An American flag with 50 stars was raised for the first time on July 4, 1960, at the Fort McHenry National Monument in Baltimore, Maryland.

l. The American flag is traditionally a symbol of liberty. It has carried the message of freedom to many parts of the world.

m. Among the elements in the design of today’s flag are

(1) 13 horizontal stripes—seven red and six white, alternating

(2) A union of white stars of five points on a blue field

(3) A blue field in the upper quarter of the flag next to the staff, extending to the lower edge of the fourth red stripe from the top

(4) An number of stars equal to the number of states in the Union

2. What laws and regulations govern the flag?

a. The United States Code contains the laws relating to the American flag.

(1) Title 4, Chapter 1 is about the flag and seal, seat of government, and states.
(2) Title 18, Chapter 33 is about crimes and criminal procedures.

(3) Title 36, Chapter 10 is about patriotic customs and observances.

b. Executive orders and presidential proclamations add to these laws.

3. When should the flag be displayed?

a. The American flag is usually displayed only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaffs in the open.

b. However, you can display the flag 24 hours a day for a patriotic effect. A law signed on July 7, 1976, permits the display of an all-weather American flag all day and night, if properly lit during hours of darkness.

c. The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.

d. The flag should not be displayed in bad weather, except when using an all-weather flag.

e. The flag can be displayed on all days, especially the following holidays:

(1) New Year’s Day

(2) Inauguration Day

(3) Birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
(4) Birthday of Abraham Lincoln

(5) President’s Day

(6) Easter Sunday

(7) Mother’s Day

(8) Armed Forces’ Day

(9) Memorial Day

(10) Flag Day

(11) Independence Day

(12) Labor Day

(13) Constitution Day

(14) Columbus Day

(15) Navy Day

(16) Veteran’s Day

(17) Thanksgiving Day

(18) Christmas Day
(19) Other days as proclaimed by the President of the United States

(20) State birthdays

f. The flag should be displayed daily on or near the main administration building of every public institution.

g. The flag should be displayed on election days in or near every polling place.

h. The flag should be displayed during school days in or near every schoolhouse.

4. How should the flag be positioned and displayed?

a. When carrying the flag in a procession with another flag or flags, make sure it is either on the marching right—that is the flag’s own right—or, if there is another line of flags, in the front and center of that line.

b. The flag should not be displayed on a float in a parade, except from a staff or suspended with folds falling free.

c. The flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides, or back of a vehicle, railroad train, or boat.

d. When displaying the flag on a motorcar, fix the staff firmly to the chassis or clamp it to the right fender.
e. No other flag or pennant should be placed above or, if on the same level, to the right of the American flag. The only exception is during church services conducted by Navy chaplains at sea.

f. No other flag or pennant should be flown above the American flag, except the United Nations flag at the United Nations headquarters.

g. When the national colors are used for ceremonies by motorized and mechanized organizations, they will be carried on vehicles specifically designed for color and color guards.

h. The American flag, when it is displayed with another flag against a wall forming crossed staffs, should be on the right—the flag’s own right—and its staff should be in the front of the staff of the other flag.

i. In general, the American flag will be displayed flat or hanging free.

j. The American flag should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of states, localities, or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.

k. The American flag should always be at the peak when flown on the same halyard with flags of states, cities, and localities (or pennants of societies). A halyard is a rope for hoisting and lowering things.

(1) When the flags are on adjacent staffs, hoist the American flag first and lower it last.
(2) Do not place any other flag or pennant above the American flag or to its right.

l. When displaying flags of two or more nations

(1) Fly them from separate staffs of the same height

(2) Make sure the flags are approximately equal in size

(3) Follow international usage, which forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace

m. When displaying the American flag from a staff that projects horizontally or at an angle from a windowsill, balcony, or front of a building, place the union of the flag at the peak of the staff, unless the flag is at half-staff.

n. When the flag is suspended over a sidewalk from a rope extending from a house to a pole at the edge of the sidewalk, hoist the flag out from the building, union first.

o. When displaying the flag horizontally or vertically against a wall, make sure the union is uppermost and to the flag’s own right, which is the observer’s left. The same applies when displaying the flag in a window.

p. When displaying the flag over the middle of the street, suspend it vertically with the union to the north in an east–west street, or to the east in a north–south street.
q. When using the flag displayed flat on a speaker’s platform, display it above and behind the speaker.

r. When displaying the flag from a staff in a church or public auditorium, make sure it holds the position of superior prominence.

(1) The position should be in front of the audience and in the position of honor at the right of the clergyman or speaker as he or she faces the audience.

(2) Place any other flag to the left of the clergyman or speaker, or to the right of the audience.

s. The flag should be a distinctive feature of a ceremony for unveiling a statue or monument. Never use it as the covering for a statue or monument.

t. When flying the flag at half-staff, follow these guidelines.

(1) First, hoist it to the peak for an instant. Then, lower it to the half-staff position.

(2) Raise the flag to the peak again before it is lowered for the day.

(3) Half-staff means the position of the flag when it is at half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff.
(4) On Memorial Day, display the flag at half-staff until noon only, and then raise it to the top of the staff.

u. By order of the president, fly the flag at half-staff upon the death of

(1) Principal figures of the U.S. government

(2) The governor of a state, territory, or possession

v. In the event of the death of other officials or foreign dignitaries, the flag may be displayed at half-staff. Follow the instructions or orders set by the president, or follow customs or practices that are consistent with the law.

w. In the event of the death of a present or former official of the government of any state, territory, or possession of the United States, the governor of that state, territory, or possession may decide to fly the national flag at half-staff.

x. Fly the flag at half-staff in the following situations:

(1) For thirty days after the death of the president or a former president

(2) For ten days after the day of death of the vice president, the Chief Justice, a retired Chief Justice, or the Speaker of the House of Representatives

(3) From the day of death until interment of an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, a secretary of an executive or military department, a former vice president, or the governor of a state, territory, or possession
(a) Executive or military department means any agency listed under Sections 101 and 102 of Title 5, United States Code.

(4) On the day of death and the following day for a member of Congress

(a) A member of Congress is a senator, a representative, a delegate, or the resident commissioner from Puerto Rico.

y. When using the flag to cover a casket, place it with the union at the head and over the left shoulder. Do not lower the flag into the grave or let it touch the ground.

z. When the American flag and the United Nations flag are on display together

(1) The American flag is on the right—best identified as “the marching right.”

(2) The American flag will be equal in size or larger, in the position of honor on the right (observer’s left), and above the United Nations flag.

(3) The United Nations flag will be carried only for occasions honoring the United Nations or its high dignitaries.

(4) When so carried, the United Nations flag will be on “the marching left” and below the American flag.
5. What is the proper way to show respect for the flag?

a. Always show respect for the American flag.

b. Never dip the flag to any person or thing.

(1) Only regimental colors, state flags, and organization or institutional flags are dipped as a mark of honor.

(2) The only circumstance in which the American flag would be dipped is when a U.S. naval vessel receives this type of salute from a vessel registered by a nation formally recognized by the United States.

c. Never display the flag with the union down, except as a signal of dire distress when extreme danger to life or property exists.

d. Never let the flag touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water, or merchandise.

e. Never carry the flag flat or horizontally; always carry it aloft and free.

f. Never use the flag as apparel, bedding, or drapery. Always allow it to fall free. Never put things on it, pull it back or up, or drape it in folds.

g. When using the bunting of blue, white, and red, always arrange it with the blue above, the white in the middle, and the red below.
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(1) A bunting is a lightweight, loosely woven fabric used mainly for flags and festive decorations.

(2) Some common uses for bunting are for covering a speaker’s desk, for draping the front of a platform, and for decoration in general.

h. Never fasten, display, use, or store the flag a way in which it can be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.

i. Never use the flag as a ceiling covering.

j. Do not place or attach any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing on the flag.

k. Never use the flag as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.

l. Never use the flag for advertising purposes.

(1) Do not embroider it on cushions, handkerchiefs, and other personal items.

(2) Do not put it on paper napkins, boxes, or anything that is used temporarily and discarded.

(3) Do not fasten advertising signs to a staff or halyard from which the flag is flying.

m. Do not use any part of the flag as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen, and members of patriotic organizations.
n. The flag represents a living country and is considered a living thing. Because the lapel flag pin is a replica, wear it on the left lapel near the heart.

o. If a flag is worn out and is no longer fit for display, destroy it in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

   (1) First, cut the blue field from the flag. Then, cremate the two pieces.

   (2) Always perform this ceremony with respect and feeling.

6. What courtesies should be rendered to the flag and the National Anthem?

   a. Flag ceremonies occur during parades, reveille, retreat, and prior to special events.

      (1) Reveille is the signal for the start of the official duty day.

      (2) Retreat signals the end of the official duty day and also serves as a ceremony for paying respect to the flag.

      (3) The National Anthem is played at most flag ceremonies.

      (4) Sometimes, “To the Colors,” a bugle call, is used instead. It is given the same respect as the National Anthem.

      (a) It is given the same respect as the National Anthem.
(b) It can be used during bad weather or if a band is unavailable.

b. During flag ceremonies, all military and civilian personnel render the proper courtesies.

c. When in uniform and in formation but not part of the ceremony, the unit commander commands “present arms” during the National Anthem or “To the Colors.” The unit should be facing the flag before being given “present arms.”

d. When in uniform but not in formation

1. At any outdoor ceremony that uses the American flag, come to attention, face the flag in the ceremony, and salute.

2. At sporting events, if the flag is visible, face the flag and salute. If the flag is not visible, face the band and salute in its direction. If the music is recorded, face front and salute.

3. At all other outdoor occasions, follow the same general principle: come to attention, face the flag if it is visible, and salute. If it is not visible, face the music and do the same.

e. When indoors while the National Anthem or “To the Colors” is played

1. Face the flag (if it is present) and assume the position of attention.
(2) If no flag is present, assume the position of attention while facing the music. Do not salute unless under arms.

f. When outdoors in uniform while the National Anthem or “To the Colors” is played

(1) Stand at attention, face the flag, and render the military salute.

(2) If the flag is not visible, face the music.

(3) Salute on the first note of music and hold the salute until the last note.

g. When outdoors in civilian clothes while the National Anthem or “To the Colors” is played

(1) Stand at attention, face the flag, and place your right hand over your heart.

(2) If the flag is not visible, face the music and do the same.

(3) A male cadet removes his headdress with his right hand and holds it at his left shoulder with his right hand over his heart.

(4) A female cadet salutes by standing at attention and placing her right hand over her heart.

(5) Male cadets without hats salute in the same way as female cadets.
h. **When you are at an outdoor event and an uncased flag is escorted past you**

1. Stand at attention, face the front, and render the appropriate salute.

2. Render the salute approximately six paces before the flag is even with you, and hold the salute until the flag is approximately six paces past you.

i. **Salute flags on stationary flagstaffs only at reveille, retreat, and special occasions.**

j. **Do not salute small flags, flags at half-staff, or cased and folded flags.**

k. **When in civilian clothing indoors, render the civilian salute by standing at attention and placing the right hand over the heart.**

l. **During indoor ceremonies when the National Anthem or “To the Colors” is played**

1. Face the flag and come to attention.

2. If the flag is not visible, come to attention and face the music or the front.

3. Do not salute unless under arms.

m. **When you are indoors and the ceremony is outdoors, you do not need to face the flag or salute. The same rule applies during ceremonies that are broadcast over radio or on television.**
n. At the first sound of the music, all vehicles come to a complete stop. Occupants of a civilian or military vehicle, including the driver, should sit quietly until the music ends.

o. When the flag is at half-staff

1. It is to honor and pay respect to deceased people of national importance.

2. The Chief of Staff of the Air Force sets the number of days or periods to keep the flag at half-staff.

3. The flag is flown at half-staff on all bases that make up the command of the deceased commander.

4. Deceased cadets may also be honored in the same way.

p. Do not salute miniature flags.

q. When the flag is hoisted, is lowered, or passes by

1. Everyone except those in uniform should face the flag and stand at attention with the right hand over the heart.

2. Those in uniform should render the military salute.

3. Cadets who are not in uniform should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder with the hand over the heart.
(4) When the flag is in a moving column, salute at the moment the flag passes.

**r. When the flag is displayed during the National Anthem**

(1) All present except those in uniform should stand at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart.

(2) Cadets not in uniform should remove their headdress with the right hand and hold it at the left shoulder with the hand over the heart.

(3) People in uniform should render the military salute at the first note of the anthem and stay in this position until the last note.

**s. When the flag is not displayed during the National Anthem, those present should face toward the music and act in the same way they would if the flag were displayed.**

**t. The National Anthem was written by Francis Scott Key, a lawyer and poet.**

(1) During the night of September 13, 1814, the British fleet bombarded Fort McHenry in the harbor at Baltimore, Maryland.

(2) Key watched the attack from the deck of a ship.

(3) As the battle stopped on the following morning, Key turned his telescope to the fort and saw that the American flag was still waving.
7. What is the significance of the Pledge of Allegiance?

a. The Pledge of Allegiance recited today was developed from the original.

b. The original was written in the office of *Youth’s Companion* magazine in Boston, Massachusetts, and was intended to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America.

c. It was first published in the September 8, 1892, issue of the magazine. Public schools first used it to celebrate Columbus Day on October 12, 1892.

d. Two people claimed to be the author of the first draft, James B. Upham and Francis M. Bellamy. The 79th Congress recognized Mr. Bellamy as the author in December 1945.

e. At that time, Public Law 287 officially designated his work as the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. The 77th Congress had granted the Pledge of Allegiance official recognition in 1942.

f. In its original version, the pledge read “my flag” instead of the “flag of the United States.”

(1) The National Flag Conference in 1923 adopted the change in wording.
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(2) The change was meant to help foreign-born children and adults to think of the American flag when reciting the pledge.

g. The final change, authorized by an Act of Congress on June 14, 1954, added the words “under God.” The act was signed by President Eisenhower.

h. The Pledge serves many purposes.

(1) It is a vital, thrilling expression of every American’s patriotism and loyalty to the flag.

(2) It is an expression of the free nation it represents—a nation that recognizes God as its superior and the source of its strength.

(3) It should keep us mindful of our solemn duty to preserve our heritage of liberty and justice for all citizens.

i. It should be recited daily in classrooms and at all meetings and ceremonies at which the flag is displayed.

j. The stance for reciting the Pledge of Allegiance is to come to attention and face the flag.

(1) When not in uniform, cadets should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder.

(2) Cadets in uniform should remain silent, stand at attention, face the flag, and salute if outdoors. If indoors, they should stand at attention.
8. What is the history of Flag Day?

a. Each year, on June 14, we celebrate the birthday of the Stars and Stripes, which came into being on June 14, 1777.

b. The first national observance of Flag Day was June 14, 1877, the centennial of the original flag resolution.

c. In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation calling for a nationwide observance of Flag Day on June 14.

d. In 1949, Congress made this day a permanent observance. President Harry Truman signed the measure into law.

9. What is the significance of the Great Seal of the United States?

a. On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress passed a resolution authorizing a committee to devise a seal for the United States of America.

b. It was designed to reflect the Founding Fathers’ beliefs, values, and sovereignty of the new Nation.

c. The seal was completed on June 20, 1782.

d. The colors in the Great Seal have specific meanings. The colors of the pales (the vertical stripes) are those used in the flag of the United States of America.
(1) White signifies purity and innocence.

(2) Red signifies hardiness and valor.

(3) Blue (the color of the chief—the broad band above the stripes) signifies vigilance, perseverance, and justice.

e. The obverse of the Great Seal, which is used 2,000 to 3,000 times each year, authenticates the president’s signature on many official documents.

(1) Obverse means the front of an official seal or insignia.

(2) Authenticate means to establish or prove as real or true.

(3) Examples of documents on which the obverse of the Great Seal appears are

(a) Treaty ratifications

(b) International agreements

(c) Appointments of ambassadors and civil officers

(d) Communications from the president to heads of foreign governments
(4) Ratification is an approval or sanction.

f. **Features of the obverse of the Great Seal**

(1) The American bald eagle supports a shield composed of 13 red and white stripes representing the Thirteen Original States. A blue bar unites the shield and represents Congress.

(2) The motto of the United States, *E Pluribus Unum* (meaning “out of many, one”) refers to the Union.

(3) An olive branch and 13 arrows grasped by the eagle symbolize peace and war and the powers solely vested in Congress.

(4) A constellation of stars symbolizes the new nation taking its place among the sovereign powers.

g. **The design of the obverse of the Great Seal, which is the U.S. coat of arms, can be shown on coins, postage stamps, passports, monuments, flags, and in many other ways.**

h. **Both the obverse and reverse of the Great Seal appear on the one-dollar bill.**

i. **The reverse is never used as a seal.**
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j. The design of the reverse has special meaning.

(1) The pyramid signifies strength and duration.

(2) The eye over the pyramid and the motto *Annuit Coeptis* (meaning “he [God] has favored our undertakings”) allude to the many interventions of Providence in favor of the American cause.

(3) The Roman numerals below that are the date of the Declaration of Independence.

(4) The words under the pyramid, *Novus Ordo Seclorum* (meaning “a new order of the ages”), signify the beginning of the new American era in 1776.

10. What is the significance of the Air Force Seal?

a. Like the American flag, the design of the Air Force seal is based on historic tradition and symbolism.

b. The circular background of the seal is ultramarine blue; the trim is Air Force yellow.

c. The coat of arms in the center of the seal has two parts.

(1) The crest consists of the eagle, wreath, and cloud formation.

(a) The American bald eagle, which symbolizes the United States and its air power, appears in its natural colors.
(b) The wreath under the eagle is made up of six alternate folds of metal, in white (representing silver) and light blue.

(c) The white clouds behind the eagle show the start of a new sky—the Department of the Air Force.

(2) The shield below the eagle is divided horizontally into two parts by a nebulous line representing clouds. The top part bears an Air Force yellow thunderbolt with flames in natural color that shows striking power through the use of aerospace.

d. The 13 white encircling stars represent the original Thirteen Colonies.

e. The Air Force yellow numerals under the shield stand for 1947, the year the Department of the Air Force was established.

f. The band encircling the whole design is white-edged in Air Force yellow with black lettering.

g. The inscriptions read “Department of the Air Force” on the top part and “United States of America” on the lower part.

11. What is the American’s Creed?

a. The American’s Creed is a statement about the type of government in the United States and the principles on which it is based, followed by a personal statement of commitment to the country.
b. William Tyler Page of Friendship Heights, Maryland, wrote the American’s Creed in 1918.

c. Page was a descendant of President John Tyler and Representative John Page, who served in Congress from 1789 to 1797.

REVIEW

- The Second Continental Congress officially adopted the American flag in Philadelphia on June 14, 1777. It was also called the Stars and Stripes and Old Glory.
- This action was the result of a resolution offered by the Congressional Marine Committee.
- During the Revolutionary War, several patriots made flags for our new nation. Among them were Cornelia Bridges, Elizabeth (Betsy) Ross, Rebecca Young, and John Shaw.
- Betsy Ross made flags for 50 years. The claim that she designed the first flag of the United States is based on family traditions.
- The colonists’ first flag was the Grand Union Flag. As the flag of the revolution, it was used on many occasions. It was the unofficial national flag and ensign of the Navy until June 14, 1777.
- The first change in the flag’s design was in 1794, when Congress passed an act requiring that the flag consist of 15 white stars on a blue field and 15 stripes, alternating red and white.
- This change was due to Vermont and Kentucky being admitted to the Union.
- This flag was the official flag from 1795 to 1818, and it played a role in many historic events. It inspired the writing of the “Star-Spangled Banner.”
In 1818, President Monroe signed a bill requiring that the flag of the United States have a union of 20 stars, white on a blue field. The bill also established a process for adding stars to the flag. For each new state in the Union, one star would be added to the union of the flag on the Fourth of July following that state’s date of admission.

With the 50-star flag came a new design and arrangement of stars in the union, a requirement met by President Eisenhower in Executive Order 10834.

A national banner with 50 stars became the official American flag.

The colors used in the flag are white for purity and innocence; red for hardiness and valor; and blue for vigilance, perseverance, and justice.

The American flag is traditionally a symbol of liberty, and it has carried a message of freedom to many parts of the world.

The current American flag features 13 horizontal stripes, red and white alternating, and a union of five-pointed white stars on a blue field.

Laws that govern the flag can be found in the United States Code. Executive orders and presidential proclamations add to these laws.

The flag is usually displayed only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaffs in the open.

However, a law signed on July 7, 1976, permits the display of an all-weather American flag all day and night if properly lit during hours of darkness.
The flag can be displayed on all days and especially on holidays such as Memorial Day and Veteran’s Day.

The flag should be displayed daily on or near the main administration building of every public institution. It should be displayed in or near every polling place on election days and in or near every schoolhouse during school days.

When carrying the American flag in a procession with another flag or flags, make sure it is either on the marching right—the flag’s own right—or, if there is another line of flags, in the front and center of that line.

Air Force personnel should follow other specific guidelines for positioning and displaying the American flag.

In general, no other flag or pennant should be placed above, or, if on the same level, to the right of the American flag. No other flag or pennant should be flown above the American flag.

In general, the American flag should be displayed flat or hanging free.

When a flag is flown at half-staff, the position of the flag is one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff.

In general, the flag is flown at half-staff on Memorial Day morning and by order of the president or a governor as a mark of respect to deceased people of national importance.

When the American flag and the United Nations flag are on display together, the American flag is on the right and above the United Nations flag.

Air Force personnel should always show respect to the American flag. They should be aware of guidelines for displaying, carrying, and using the flag in a respectful way. They should also know how to properly destroy a flag that is no longer fit for display.
Air Force personnel should follow specific procedures to show their respect to the flag during flag ceremonies and when the National Anthem or “To the Colors” is played at those ceremonies.

After watching the British bombardment of Fort McHenry in 1814, Francis Scott Key was inspired to write a poem called “The Star-Spangled Banner.” The poem was eventually adopted as the National Anthem of the United States.

The Pledge of Allegiance expresses patriotism and loyalty to the flag. It is also an expression of the free nation it represents. It reminds us that we must preserve, at any cost, our heritage of liberty and justice for all citizens.

Each year, on June 14, we celebrate Flag Day. This holiday commemorates the birthday of the Stars and Stripes, which came into being on June 14, 1777.

The flag first flew in a Flag Day celebration in 1861 in Hartford, Connecticut.

The first national Flag Day was June 14, 1877.

In 1916, President Wilson issued a proclamation calling for the nation to observe Flag Day on June 14.

In 1949, Congress made this day a permanent observance, and President Truman signed the measure into law.

The Great Seal of the United States, adopted on June 20, 1782, is a heraldic device intended to reflect the Founding Fathers’ beliefs and values as well as the sovereignty of the new nation.

The obverse, or front, of the Great Seal is used to authenticate the president’s signature on many official documents. The design of the obverse of the Great Seal is the U.S. coat of arms. It can be shown on coins, postage stamps, passports, monuments, flags, and many other things.

Both the obverse and reverse of the Great Seal appear on the dollar bill.

The design of the Air Force Seal is based on historic tradition and symbolism. The official Air Force colors, ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow, appear prominently on the Air Force Seal.

The American’s Creed is a statement about the type of government in the United States and the principles on which it is based, followed by a personal statement of commitment to the country.

The American’s Creed was written by William Tyler Page in 1918.
CONCLUSION

In this lesson, we discussed the following:
1. What is the history of the American flag?
2. What laws and regulations govern the flag?
3. When should the flag be displayed?
4. How should the flag be positioned and displayed?
5. What is the proper way to show respect for the flag?
6. What courtesies should be rendered to the flag and the National Anthem?
7. What is the significance of the Pledge of Allegiance?
8. What is the history of Flag Day?
9. What is the significance of the Great Seal of the United States?
10. What is the significance of the Air Force Seal?
11. What is the American’s Creed?

REMOTIVATION

Being aware of the history of the American flag and other patriotic symbols helps us appreciate their meaning and importance. Studying the related customs and courtesies we should follow enables us to proudly represent the Air Force and our country whether we are in uniform or in civilian dress.

CLOSURE

We’ve learned about the American flag and other symbols. Next, we’ll learn about the rights and duties of citizens.
Checkpoints

Below are the answers to the questions at the end of Chapter 6, Lesson 1 in the student edition of Leadership Education I: Citizenship, Character and Air Force Tradition. These end-of-lesson questions are not assigned in the lesson plans or student workbooks. The answers are provided here in case you want to assign any of them in your classes, for homework, or if your students ask you about them. The answers are in the same order as the questions on pages 275–276 of the student book.

1. The first flag that resembled the present Stars and Stripes was the Grand Union Flag. It had 13 stripes, alternately red and white, representing the Thirteen Colonies. In the upper left corner, it had a blue field with the red cross of St. George of England and the white cross of St. Andrew of Scotland. P 259–260

2. President Monroe accepted a bill on April 4, 1818, requiring that the American flag have a union of 20 stars, white on a blue field. The process he established was that each time a new state came into the Union, one star would be added to the union of the flag on the Fourth of July following the state’s date of admission. P 260–261

3. The event that prompted Francis Scott Key to write the National Anthem was the British bombardment of Fort McHenry in the harbor at Baltimore, Maryland, on September 13, 1814. On the morning after the attack, Key saw that the American flag was still waving over the fort. This prompted him to write a poem called “The Star-Spangled Banner,” which was later adopted as the National Anthem of the United States. P 268

4. The admission of Arizona and New Mexico to the Union in 1912 resulted in a flag with 48 stars. P 261

5. The 49th state was Alaska, which was added to the Union in 1959. The 50th state was Hawaii, which was added to the Union in 1960. P 261

6. The admission of the 50th state to the Union resulted in a 50-star flag. With the 50-star flag came a new design and arrangement of stars in the union, a requirement met by President Eisenhower in Executive Order 10834. P 261


8. When you are in uniform while the National Anthem or “To the Colors” is played, stand at attention, face the flag, and render the military salute. If the flag is not visible, face the music. Salute on the first note of the music, and hold the salute until the last note. P 267

9. An American flag with 50 stars was first raised at 12:01 A.M. on July 4, 1960, at the Fort McHenry National Monument in Baltimore, Maryland. P 261
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10. The present American flag has 13 horizontal stripes: seven red and six white, alternating. It also has a union of white, five-pointed stars on a blue field in the upper quarter of the flag next to the staff. The blue field extends from the top of the flag to the lower edge of the fourth red stripe from the top. The number of stars equals the number of states in the Union. P 261

11. Laws that govern the American flag can be found in the United States Code: Title 4, Chapter 1; Title 18, Chapter 33; and Title 36, Chapter 10. Executive orders and presidential proclamations add to these laws. P 261

12. When the United Nations flag and the American flag are on display together, the American flag is on the right (“the marching right”) and above the United Nations flag. P 265


14. The Great Seal of the United States was designed to reflect the Founding Fathers’ beliefs, their values, and the sovereignty of the new nation. P 272

15. William Tyler Page of Friendship Heights, Maryland, wrote the American’s Creed in 1918. P 275

Applying Citizenship Skills

16. Answers may vary. Students’ letters should demonstrate an understanding of how to show proper respect for the American flag. Examples from pages 265–268 should be included. P 265–268

Lesson One, The American Flag and Other Symbols