

1. **Flag ceremony** (Girl Scouts)
2. **Pledge** (Scouts)
3. **Anthem** (maybe not play anthem at this point)
4. **Intro**—how many of you know the Star Spangled Banner? We have sung it here many times, but who knows how it became our national song/hymn?
5. Q&A with kids; introduce program :

How many of you went to the United States this summer?

Did you see lots of flags flying? Big ones? Smaller ones?

What were some of the things you thought when you saw the flag? (America, special feeling for country, proud, patriot, etc)

Now I want to play a song for you (If you can get an instrumental of the SSB to play, if not – any recording will do) Who can recognize this song?

Today we want to talk about our beautiful national song and why it was written.

6. **Program:** Ft. McHenry and the War of 1812
7. **Song:** Sing the Star Spangled Banner
8. **Activity**—color in the flag that flew over the fort and Mr. Key saw, color in Ft. McHenry, color Francis Scott Key watching the rockets and bombs
9. **Conclusion** Is this a good song for our country? Are there other songs that are also good? (America, the Beautiful, My Country 'tis of Thee). Many people have different ideas of which song we should have, but this one has been our National Song for 82 years.
1. **Retire the Colors (Flag Ceremony)**

Program:

Over 227 years ago the United States won a war against Great Britain and became a free country. However, Great Britain was still fighting wars with other countries, for example France. In 1810 the United States decided to help France fight Great Britain by sending them supplies on small quick ships called "Skipjacks". These skipjacks came from the city of Baltimore. **Map of Baltimore, skipjack, Great Britain, France**

Great Britain decided to fight the United States again so they would stop helping the French and thought they could stop these skipjack ships if they went to Baltimore and took over the city.

The British ships came to city, but had to pass by a large fort that was protecting the city, named Ft. McHenry. **Ft. McHenry** They shot many bombs on the fort and the soldiers at the fort shot many cannonballs back at the British ships. There was lots of light and smoke from the rockets bombs exploding and cannons. It was very difficult to see anything far away. It was also difficult to see who was winning the battle! During the night both sides finally stopped firing cannonballs and bombs because they didn't know where they were shooting anymore.

A young lawyer, Francis Scott Key, was on a ship watching the battle. Sometimes when a rocket was shot or a bomb exploded he could see just a little bit of the flag flying over the fort. He wondered the whole night what was going to happen to his new young country. Would they win the battle against a strong country like Great Britain? **Francis Scott Key**

When the sun came up the next morning there was still some smoke, but most of it had disappeared. Mr. Key was able to see a flag flying over the fort. Was it the British flag? Had the British won the battle? Or was it an American flag? Had the Americans won the battle? Well, that is exactly the question that is asked in the song the Star Spangled Banner!

O! say can you see
by the dawn's early light,

It is morning, the sun is shining, can you see.....

What so proudly we hailed
at the twilight's last gleaming,

What we saw last night when the sun was going down.....

Whose broad stripes and bright stars
through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched,
were so gallantly streaming?

The wide stripes and bright stars that we saw flying over the fort's walls?

And the rockets' red glare,
the bombs bursting in air,

The bright lights from the rockets and the exploding bombs

Gave proof through the night
that our flag was still there;

Let us see that our American flag was still flying

O! say does that star-spangled
banner yet wave,
O'er the land of the free
and the home of the brave?

But, does the Star-Spangled Banner still fly over the land of the free and the home of the brave?

After seeing that the American flag, which was named the Star Spangled Banner (banner is another name for flag) Mr. Key was so happy he wanted to write a poem about it. He had an envelope in his back pocket which he took out and started writing. This poem is sung to a song that was popular at that time and most people already knew the tune. We sing it today at all important American events.

Did you know?

° Banner is another name for flag ?

°The same flag that flew over Ft. McHenry during that battle is now at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C. ?

°That very same flag was so big it would not fit in any room in your school? You need a soccer field to roll it out and over 100 school children and their teachers to hold it up so it won't touch the ground?

°If any flag of the United States touches the ground, it does not have to be burned in a fire. It may be cleaned and flown again. But, if you want to throw away a flag of the United States of America, you should burn it and not put it in the trash.