

Our Flag



After Your Program

Thank you for participating in the *Our Flag* program. Please take a moment to complete the attached *Program Evaluation Form*, which will provide Bennington Museum with information about the content of the program and about the way in which it was presented. This sort of input from classroom teachers and program leaders is important to us.

You may wish to extend the experience of the *Our Flag* program by engaging your students in one or more of the following activities.

Flags of the World

During the program, the students may have seen flags from other countries. Have students research their own ancestral backgrounds and learn about the flags from their countries of origin. Students could also research state flags and learn about the history and symbolism they contain.

Open to Interpretation

The original flag code set by Congress in June of 1777 was pretty simple and left out a lot of details, including how to arrange the stars, among other things. Provide your students with the *Open to Interpretation* sheet and encourage them to think about some possible interpretations of the vague rules that originally dictated the appearance of our flag.

Make a Class Flag

Students made individual flags during the program, but what would your class flag look like? Work with your class to choose symbols that reflect your class history, values, etc. and work together to create a flag to represent your class.

More US Flags

The flags the class saw during the program are only a few examples of flags that have been used to represent our country. Using the library and Internet, students can learn about other designs that were used throughout our history. We have included a few examples of historic flags from the Bennington Museum collection to get you started.

75 Main Street
Bennington VT 05201
www.benningtonmuseum.org
802.447.1571

Take the Bennington Flag Challenge

Learning to question and back up sources is an important research skill for students to develop, and being comfortable changing one's opinion when new information comes to light helps us all become better citizens. The Bennington Flag provides a great example. As we learned during the program, the Bennington Museum's beliefs about the history of this flag had to change when new information about its construction came to light. Despite the museum having and promoting the new information since the mid-1990s, there is still an abundance of misinformation about this flag, distributed in informational texts and, especially, on the Internet.

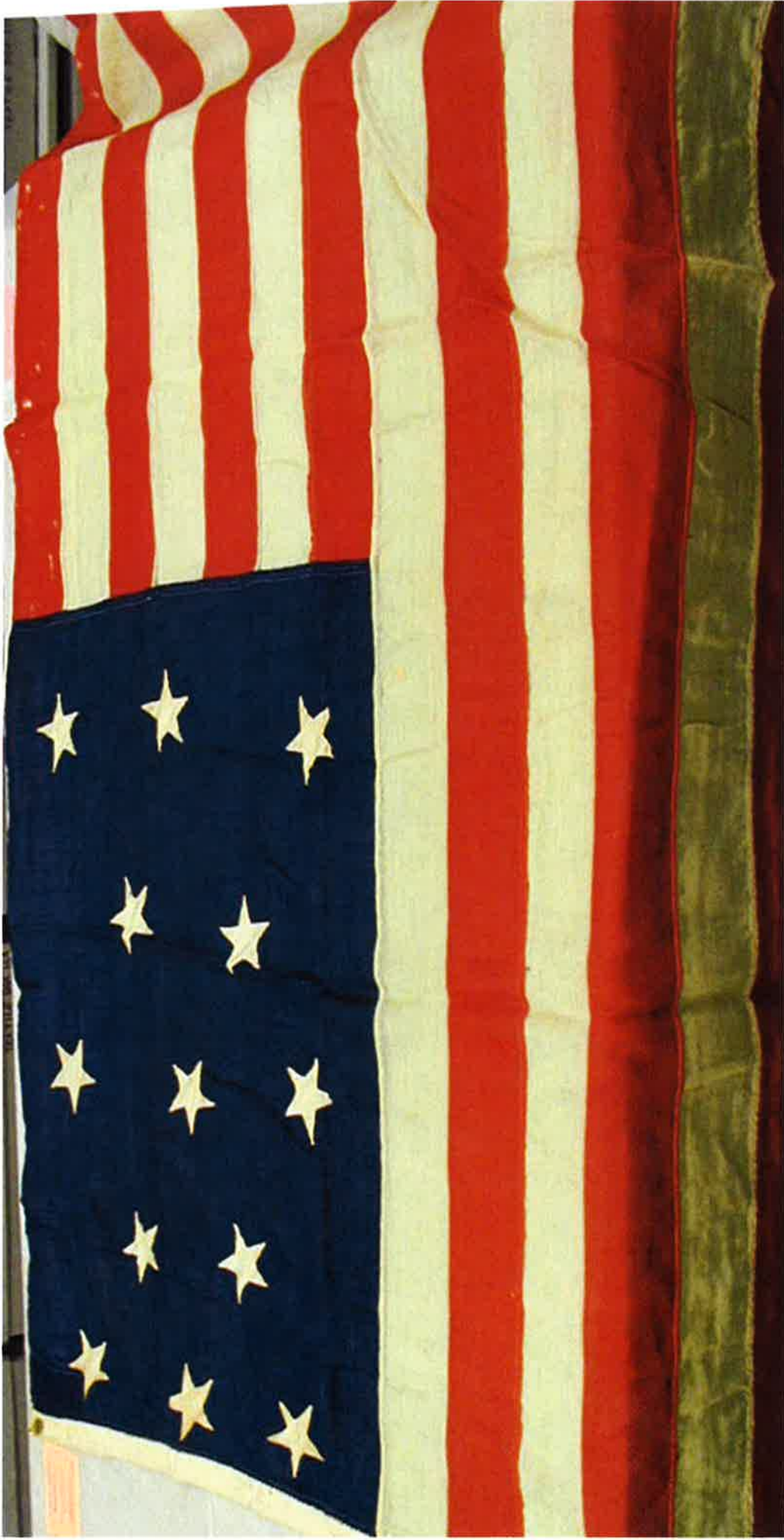
Have your students search the Internet for "Bennington Flag" and select at least six websites, other than the Bennington Museum's. Help them to determine whether or not each site provides accurate or inaccurate information, and then to figure out the percentage of sites still providing inaccurate information. If your students take an interest in the problem, they could try to contact the managers of one or more of the sites providing inaccurate information and get them to change it!

Class Debate

Hold a class debate regarding the flag. It could be a historical recreation (such as debating whether or not to remove the stars of the Confederate States during the Civil War) or a contemporary debate (such as the practice of flag burning as protest or the display of the Confederate flag).



33 Star Flag, about 1862
Gift of M.H. Lenrow
Collection of Bennington Museum
Carried in the Civil War by John W. Fales, Company F, 6th Regiment
Vermont Infantry.



13 Star Flag (commemorative)

Gift of H.E. Bradford

Collection of Bennington Museum

This flag was probably made around 1927 for a pageant held in Bennington, celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Bennington.



37 Star Flag, 1867
Gift of Mrs. C. Thorn
Collection of Bennington Museum



38 Star Flag, 1876
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. L.P. Brush
Collection of Bennington Museum

Open to Interpretation

When the United States formed, Congress laid out the rules for the new country's flag. Here's what they said:

Resolved: That the Flag of the United States be 13 stripes alternate red and white, that the union be 13 stars in a blue field, representing a new constellation.

This left the actual appearance of the flag open to many different interpretations, some of which you saw during the *Our Flag* program. What are some of the things they left out?

Use the space below to design your own version of the flag, following the original rules set by Congress.

Congress had a lot of things to figure out as they were starting the new country, but after that they had many opportunities to add more detail to the rules. They chose not to, until 1912, 135 years after they first created the flag.

Why might Congress have decided to leave the rules about the flag so vague?



Educational Program Evaluation

Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation. Your input helps us to improve our educational programs.

Grade/Age Range of Students: _____ Number of Students: _____

School Name (optional): _____

Teacher (optional): _____

Program Title: _____

In-House/Outreach
(Circle One)

Museum Educator: _____

Was this your first experience with a Bennington Museum educational program? Yes/No
(Circle One)

PART I: Please tell us about the **program**. Rank the program in each of these categories, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent. Please explain any scores of 3 or less.

	Poor		Good		Excellent
Pre- and Post-Visit Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Duration of Program	1	2	3	4	5
Age Appropriateness	1	2	3	4	5
Program Pace	1	2	3	4	5
Relevance to Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
Program Format (lecture, hands-on, exhibit exploration)	1	2	3	4	5
Student Understanding of Content	1	2	3	4	5
Student Involvement	1	2	3	4	5

Score Explanations/Comments:

How could this program be improved?

In what ways did participation in this program enhance your students' understanding of the subject matter?

Part II: Please tell us about the **Museum Educator** who presented the program. Rank the Educator in each of these categories, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent. Please explain any score of 3 or less.

	Poor		Good		Excellent
Set Expectations (rules, introduction, schedule, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Appearance	1	2	3	4	5
Professionalism	1	2	3	4	5
Friendliness	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge of Material	1	2	3	4	5
Age-Appropriate Delivery	1	2	3	4	5
Adaptability	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to Engage Students	1	2	3	4	5
Group Management (maintaining order, moving through museum, behavior management, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5

Score Explanations/Comments:

How could this educator improve his or her presentation?

Additional input for this educator:

Please return to:
 Director of Public Programs
 Bennington Museum
 75 Main Street
 Bennington, VT 05201
 dmallory@benningtonmuseum.org