

Graphic Designer: American Symbols

Adventure Description:

In this adventure, you will think like a graphic designer and make a new product that is inspired by an American symbol.

Activity

Step 1: Background on American Symbols (10+ minutes)

- Show [Video: American Symbols](#).
- As a class, discuss how a symbol is a drawing or object that makes people think of something else. For example, a stop sign is a symbol that tells a driver to stop the car. When a driver sees a red stop sign, he or she knows to slow down. The symbol tells them what to do and think.
- Ask students if teachers use any symbols in their classroom. For example, a sticker or stamp on a paper is a symbol that means “good job!”
- Explain that the United States has many symbols. Show [Handout: Examples of Symbols](#). Read about each symbol.
- Next, explain to students that graphic designers use words and pictures to design things, like t-shirts, websites, or packages on toys!
- Show [Handout: Being a Graphic Designer](#). As a class, discuss how a graphic designer created the words and pictures on each of the items. The graphic designer chose what colors and sizes the letters would be. The graphic designer also chose what pictures to use.
- Next, discuss how graphic designers have to think about what pictures and words to use for different products. Show [Handout: Which Would You Choose?](#) Discuss which pet product people would buy based on the words and pictures that the graphic designer created.
- Discuss why someone would probably want to buy the brightly colored dog food bag with pictures of dogs on it. Then, discuss why someone would probably not want to buy the package that is black with random shapes on it.

Step 2: Creating a Product (25 minutes)

- Explain to students that they will imagine they are a graphic designer who is creating a new product. The product will be inspired by an American symbol.
- Provide students with [Handout: Steps to Design a Product](#). As a class, read through Step 1. Explain to students that they will first choose which product they want to create.
- Then, read through Step 2 as a class. Explain to students that they will choose 1 American symbol to incorporate into their product.
- Then, read through Step 3. Explain to students that they will now brainstorm ideas for their new product. How will they incorporate an American symbol into their product? Have students draw what their product will look like in this step. Give students 5 or more minutes to sketch their ideas.
- Tip: Display [Handout: Examples of Symbols](#) so students can look at symbols while they are creating their product.
- When students are finished sketching, read through Step 4 as a class. Discuss how they will now use art supplies and building materials to create their product.
- Provide students with the following materials:
 - Assortment of art supplies (e.g., scissors, construction paper, pom pom balls, pipe cleaners, popsicle sticks)
 - Assortment of building supplies (e.g., cardboard pieces, recycled boxes or jars, egg cartons).

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Step 3: Creating a Tag (5-10 minutes)

- Explain to students that they will now complete Step 5. They will create a tag that tells people who would buy their product about why they chose that American symbol. Students can either write or draw what symbol their product is inspired by.
- Have students fill out the tag. When they are done, they should cut it out and find a way to attach it to their product (e.g., tape it, ask for string or ribbon to tie it around the product).

Step 4: Class Discussion and Reflection (5-10 minutes)

- When students are finished creating their labels, have students set all of the items at the front of the class.
- Have students volunteer to explain what their product is and how it is inspired by an American symbol.
- Then, discuss similarities and differences between the items. For example, did most people use similar colors? How did people use the symbols as inspiration for their products.

Materials List

Provided online:

- Video: American Symbols
- Handout: Examples of Symbols
- Handout: Being a Graphic Designer
- Handout: Which Would You Choose?
- Handout: Steps to Design a Product

Not Provided online (each student needs):

- assortment of art supplies (e.g., tape, construction paper, tissue paper, pipe cleaners, pom pom balls)
- Assortment of building materials (e.g., cardboard pieces, recycled boxes or jars)
- Tape, string, or ribbon

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