

Flags of Texas settlers

TRICENTENNIALTHEME: Tricentennial

SUBJECT: History

GRADEBAND/LEVEL: High School/Grades9-12

WRITTENBY: The Institute of Texan Cultures Education Department

TEKS:




World Geography USHistory
113.43.5A-B6A-B 113.41.3D



DESCRIPTION:

Twenty-four flags of nations representing Texas' earliest settlement groups are outlined here. We attempt to answer some of the many questions your students may have about the flags of Texas, the flags of the world's nations, and the flags flown in front of the Institute of Texan Cultures. Where did the colors and symbols of flags originate? Which flags have been changed since the early settlers left their counties of origin and which have stayed the same? How do the flags of the world's nations differ? How are they similar? What are the reasons for these similarities?

LESSON OBJECTIVES:

-  Understand the important contributions made by various cultures that settled in Texas.
-  Learn about the history and culture of the 24 flags of Texas settlers.
-  Compare and contrast the colors and symbols found on the 24 flags of Texas settlers.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Copy of the "Flags of Texas Settlers" handout for each student

A class set or individual copies of the "Texans One and All: Flags of Texas Settlers" informational sheet.

Additional resources:

Facts. co. "Facts of Countries". Webster's Dictionary & Encyclopedia Online. Encyclopedia Britannica 11th Edition/ Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary (13). <http://facts.co/> and <http://belgiumflag.facts.co/belgiumflagof/belgiumflag.php>. Accessed February 18, 2015.

Texas Historical Commission. "Six Flags Over Texas".

<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/public/upload/forms/six-flags-over-texas.pdf> Reprinted from the June 20, 1997, Texas Register, Volume 22, Number 46, Pages 5959 to 5967. Accessed February 18, 2015.

Texas State Library and Archives Commission. "Six Flags Over Texas". <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ref/abouttx/sixflags.html>. Accessed February 18, 2015.



ENGAGE (Opening Activity - Access Prior Learning / Stimulate Interest / Generate Questions):

Tell students that: "Flags are national symbols evoking strong feelings, both good and bad. They are also symbolic of an ever changing history and political evolution. They are flown at the Institute of Texan Cultures in honor of the peoples who made Texas". Ask students if they can name cultures and nationalities that were early settlers of Texas. Make a list.

Pass out a copy of the "Texans One and All: Flags of Texas Settlers" informational sheet and give students time to look over the information.

EXPLORE (Probing or Clarifying Questions):

Ask students to read through the handout and discuss what they learned.

EXPLAIN (Concepts Explained):

Students will then complete the "Flags of Texas Settlers" hand out. Discuss their findings.

ELABORATE (Applications and Extensions):

As an extension, consider visiting the Institute of Texan Cultures in order to see the 24 flags that fly over the plaza in person.

Other extension ideas:

- Research the history behind one of the flags presented in the text and present your findings to the class. What do the colors and symbols represent in the flag?
Why was the flag chosen to represent that country?
- Draw a flag with colors and a symbol that represent you. Then, write a paragraph explaining your choices or present your flag to the class.
- Use the text to play "Which Flag Am I?" by presenting clues about a flag and having the class guess which flag you are talking about.

EVALUATE:

Check for understanding by asking probing questions and evaluate student responses on the handouts.

Texans One and All: Flags of Texas Settlers

The Institute of Texan Cultures was built as the State of Texas exhibit for the 1968 World's Fair held in San Antonio. The indoor exhibit areas represented twenty-six of the earliest people groups that settled in Texas. Twenty-four flags representing these early settlement groups are flown in front of the Institute of Texan Cultures in an area known as H.B. Zachry Plaza. When these flags were first flown at the Institute's opening in 1968, nearly every design was considered correct and approved for display by either a national consulate or embassy located in the United States. However, some nations could not be asked at the time for political reasons. Some nations no longer existed in their older form, and a few nations had long been conquered by other nations. Furthermore, ambassadors from some nations requested that an earlier version of a flag not be displayed. For these groups, other representative flags are flown.

The Native Americans had a host of banners and standards, but they were not unified symbols. Also, research on certain topics like Russian settlements, Gypsy migrations, and Wendish origins were not complete. Flags representing these groups are omitted in order to avoid certain problems.

In any case, flags are national symbols evoking strong feelings, both good and bad. They are also symbolic of an ever changing history and political evolution. They are flown at the Institute of Texan Cultures in honor of the peoples who made Texas.

Please Note: All images of flags and coat of arms used in this document are in the public domain, consisting entirely of information that is common property and contains no original authorship.



The Flags of Texas Settlers

Included in front of the Institute are twenty-four flags representing Belgium, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, France, Germany (represented by the flags of Hesse, Mecklenburg, and Saxony), Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Scotland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Texas, and the United States of America. Most of these flags were in use when the peoples of their respective nations first came to Texas and may be different from the nation's current flag. Some groups left their native countries long before a national flag was adopted. For these groups, other representative flags are flown. The Texas flag represents all of the ethnic and cultural groups in the state.

Here are the twenty-four flags displayed in front of the Institute of Texan Cultures in alphabetical order.

BELGIUM



The national flag of Belgium (left) was adopted in 1830. The colors are from the coat of arms of the House of Brabant (right); the yellow from the lion, the red from the lion's tongue, and the black from the shield.



House of Brabant Coat of Arms

CHINA

The flag that is displayed is the Manchu dragon flag of Imperial China (below, left). The dragon is the traditional symbol of China. The first national flag of China (below, center) was adopted in 1872. It was triangular in shape with a yellow field, blue dragon and red sun. The flag was altered to a rectangular shape in 1890 to conform to European patterns.



First National Flag of China



China's flag today (adopted in 1949)

CZECH REPUBLIC

There was no Czech Republic when the Czechs began coming to Texas. The national flag of the Czech Republic (below, left) was adopted in 1920. Red and white are the colors of the historic kingdom of Bohemia (below, center) and blue represents the province of Moravia (below, right).



Flag of the Kingdom of Bohemia



Moravia Coat of Arms

DENMARK



The national flag of Denmark (left), known as the Dannebrog, was introduced in 1219. Denmark virtually ruled the Baltic at the time. Legend says the flag descended from heaven during a military siege. Of all the countries of the world, the Danish flag is the oldest in use without alteration.

ENGLAND



St. George is the patron saint of England and his flag became England's national emblem in 1277. In 1606 the cross of Saint Andrew (below, left), patron saint of Scotland, was added to form the Grand Union flag. The cross of Saint Patrick (below, middle), patron saint of Ireland, was added in 1801 to form the Union Flag, or Union Jack (below, right).



St. Andrew's Flag



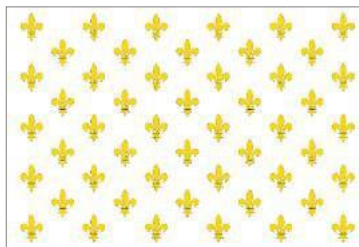
Cross of St. Patrick



*Union Flag or Union Jack
Current Flag of the United Kingdom*

FRANCE

The plain white flag (below, left) became the royal ensign when Henry III came to the throne in 1574, and in the subsequent reign of Henry IV it became the symbol of the French Bourbons. It is probable that the flag carried by LaSalle in Texas was white with scattered gold fleur-de-lis (below, center). In 1789, the white was combined with blue, the color of St. Martin, and red, the color of St. Denis, to form the French Tricolor (below, right).



*French flag circa 1643-1790
Probably carried by La Salle
One of the "Six Flags Over Texas"*



*France's flag today
(first adopted in 1794)*

GERMANY

At the time of initial German settlement, there was no unified Germany. Instead, there were many city-states, principalities, and small kingdoms. Each had its own flag. Therefore, the flags of Hesse, Mecklenberg and Saxony (below) are flown to represent the variety of German flags in use before the founding of the German Empire in 1871. These same flags are flown today by these modern German states.



Germany's flag today (adopted in 1919)



Hesse



Mecklenberg



Saxony

GREECE



The Greek national flag (left) dates from 1832 when the country won its independence from Turkey. The flag's colors, white and blue, were taken from the coat of arms of Otto of Bavaria (right) who was called to the throne of Greece in 1833.



*Coat of Arms of King Otto
(1833–1862)*

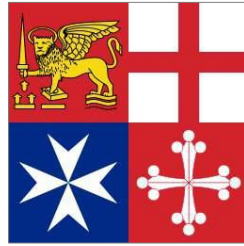
IRELAND



The color combination of the modern Irish national flag was in use as early as 1830. The present version of the flag (left) was introduced in 1848, when the deputation of the Young Ireland Movement returned from France bringing such a flag with them. The green represents Catholics of Ireland, orange represents Protestants, and white represents the permanent peace invoked between them. When Ireland became independent in 1922, the green, white and orange became the national flag.

ITALY

The Italian naval flag (below, left) symbolizes the period of Italian immigration to America. The central emblem contains the coats of arms of the four historical maritime republics (below, center): Venice, Genoa, Pisa, and Amalfi. The Italian Tricolor was derived from the flag of the French Revolution (France's current flag). Green replaced blue and represents nature and man's natural right to liberty and equality.

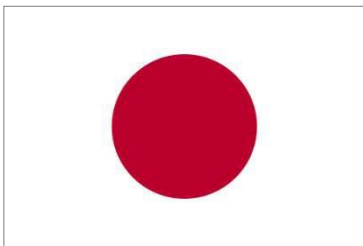


*Naval Jack of Italy
Clockwise beginning top left:
Venice, Genoa, Pisa, Amalfi*



Italy's flag today (adopted in 1946)

JAPAN



The Japanese national flag (left) came into use in 1870. The design, a red sun in a white field, is the old shipping sign of the shogun of the house of Tokugawa, ruling power in Japan from 1603 until 1867. The sun, mythical ancestor of the emperor, has been used in Japanese flags for more than a thousand years.

LEBANON



Lebanese immigrants, often identified as Syrians, began coming to Texas long before their country became independent. The Lebanese flag (left) was introduced in 1944 when the country became an independent republic. It serves as the national, naval and merchant flag. The cedar tree is the national symbol of Lebanon.

MEXICO



The Mexican state flag was adopted in its present form (left) in 1833. The green represents independence, white the purity of religion, and red the union of the Spanish element with the Mexican nation. The Mexican coat of arms, an eagle perched on a cactus with a serpent in its beak, denotes the founding of Tenochtitlan, the capital city of the Aztec empire.



Coat of Arms of Mexico



*Flag of the First Mexican Empire
1821-1823*



*Flag of the United Mexican States
1823-1863
One of the "Six Flags Over Texas"*

NETHERLANDS

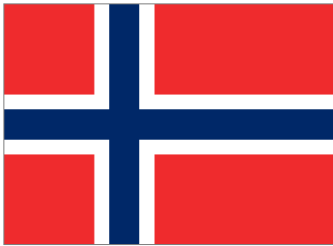


The Netherlands flag dates from the Dutch revolt against Spanish rule led by William of Orange. The original flag (right) was adopted in 1579 and bore the colors of the House of Orange: orange, white and blue. Its present colors and dimensions (left) were approved in 1937.



Netherlands' original flag

NORWAY



The Norwegian national flag (left) was first introduced as the Norwegian merchant flag in 1821. The colors, red, white and blue, were chosen because they were believed to be the old national colors of Norway and because they were the colors of France and the United States.

POLAND



The flag of the dependent Russian Kingdom of Poland (left) came into being after the Napoleonic Wars. The white Polish eagle is the national symbol. The cross of blue is the cross of St. Andrew, which denotes Russian rule of Poland.



*Poland's flag today (adopted in 1919)
Now the Republic of Poland*

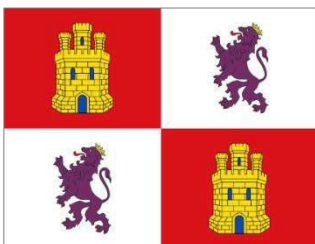
SCOTLAND



The cross of St. Andrew appears on Scotland's national flag (left), which is also called St. Andrew's flag. St. Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland.

SPAIN

The flag of Castile and León (below, left) was the first national flag of Spain. It was the flag carried by Christopher Columbus in 1492. The castles represent the old kingdom of Castile and the lions represent the kingdom of Leon.

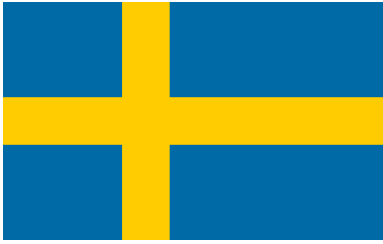


*Flag of the Kingdom of Spain
March 8, 1793-April 27, 1931
Officially one of the "Six Flags of Texas"*

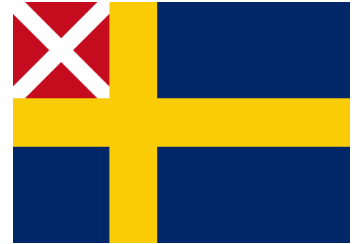


Spain's flag today (adopted in 1978)

SWEDEN

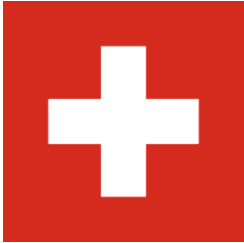


The Swedish national flag (left), a yellow cross in a blue field, has been flown since 1523. During the time of the Texas Republic and extending until 1905, Sweden and Norway were united under one king. The red, white and blue colors of Norway in the upper, inner field of the Swedish merchant flag (right) indicate the union of the two countries.



Sweden's flag today

SWITZERLAND



The Swiss white cross on red was carried by Swiss soldiers as early as 1339. The flag was adopted as the national flag of Switzerland in 1848. The final version of the flag (left), including its present dimension, was established in 1889.

TEXAS

The Lone Star flag (below, left) was adopted by the Third Congress of the Republic of Texas, meeting in Houston on January 25, 1839. It remained the official flag of the Republic of Texas until December 29, 1845, when Texas became a state. It has been the state flag since. It is one of six national flags flown over Texas. The other five are Spain (1519-1685; 1690-1821), France (1685-1690), Mexico (1821-1836), the Confederate States of America during the Civil War (1861-1865), and the United States (1845-1861; 1865-present).



*Supposed first battle flag of Texas
Gonzales Banner of 1835
The "Come and Take it Flag"*

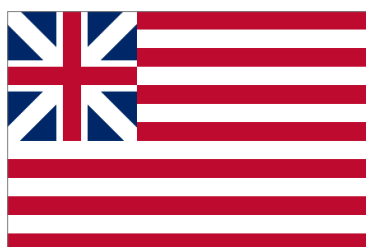


*Flag of the Confederate States of America,
1861-1863
One of the "Six Flags Over Texas"*

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



This flag commemorates those individuals who came to Texas from the United States. The flag displayed (left) is that of the United States in 1820, bearing twenty three stars and thirteen stripes. It is the flag in use at the beginning of Anglo-American colonization in 1821.



*The Grand Union Flag, 1775-1776
Unofficially considered the first
national flag of the U.S.A.*



*The U. S. Flag Today
One of the "Six Flags Over Texas"*



*The U. S. Flag in 1846
Texas officially became the 28th state
to join the Union on December 29, 1845*

NAME: _____ DATE: _____ PERIOD: _____

What are symbols?

Symbols are objects that represent ideas or beliefs or make us think about something else. Some common symbols we see in everyday life are traffic and safety signs. Symbols play an important role in our lives because we can understand their meanings without using words. Flags are also a type of symbol. They help us identify countries, states and groups of people. People can feel a sense of pride in seeing their flags because it is a symbol of cultural identity.

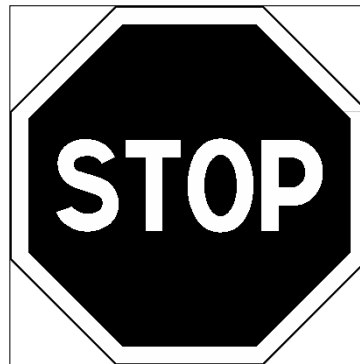
Define *symbols* in your own words.

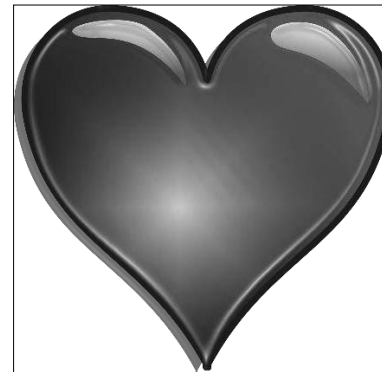
Why are symbols important?

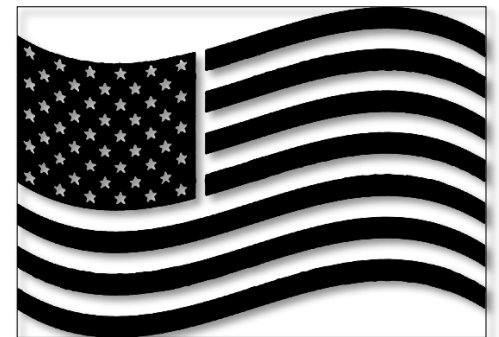
Symbols

Identify what each symbol means.









Flags of Texas Settlers

Using Texans One and All: Flags of Texas Settlers, answer the following questions about the flags and symbols.

Why do you think certain colors and symbols are chosen for flags?

What are some reasons for flags changing over time?

Why is the U.S. flag included in the Flags of Texas Settlers?

Pick two of the countries that only use colors in their flags. Why did these countries choose their colors?

Pick two countries that use symbols in their flags. Why did these countries choose to use symbols?

Before the Lone Star flag was adopted in 1839, other flags flew over Texas. Research one of the other Texas flags and summarize your findings in three sentences.

Extension Activities:

1. Research the history behind one of the flags presented in the text and present your findings to the class.
 - a. What do the colors and symbols represent in the flag?
 - b. Why was the flag chosen to represent that country?
2. Draw a flag with colors and a symbol that represent you. Then, write a paragraph explaining your choices or present your flag to the class.
3. Use the text to play “Which Flag Am I?” by presenting clues about a flag and having the class guess which flag you are talking about.