

# As American as Apple Pie

A Fully-Developed Interdisciplinary Project Using the Power of Technology to Increase Learning for Grades 2 through 5

## Overview

Recent events have caused many Americans to demonstrate their patriotic pride. Yet, a strong feeling of American patriotism is not a new concept. Did you know that the saying "as American as apple pie" was first used in America's original thirteen colonies? Did you know that apple pie is a symbol of patriotism? Now your class will have the opportunity to share their patriotism as part of a unique learning experience.



As American As Apple Pie is an interdisciplinary project that incorporates document-based learning and technology to expand students' learning experiences. In this series of real-world activities, your students will explore patriotism and citizenship from a new perspective! Your class will create a variety of multimedia presentations, books, and other products to demonstrate what they have learned about the history of the United States and what it means to be an American citizen.

As American As Apple Pie is designed to provide young students with opportunities to develop questioning, speaking, and listening skills. Designed for students in grades 2 through 5, this project is driven by the standards of several disciplines including social studies, language arts, and mathematics. Over the next few weeks, your class will investigate, learn about, and then teach others about America's history, government, and ideals.



## Project Scope

The project's structure includes a comprehensive introduction that assesses and augments students' background knowledge, two distinct but interrelated learning phases, and a culminating event in which students demonstrate their learning.

**Introduction: You're A Grand Old Flag** – Students will learn how to research using primary and secondary resources, text, and the Internet. They will create a multimedia presentation about one of the fundamental symbols of the United States, the American flag!

**Phase One: America's Symbols** – Students will explore a variety of symbols associated with the United States as well as develop an understanding of what these symbols represent. They will create brochures that identify America's symbols, their history, and their meaning. Students will create a game based on the information they have learned.



**Phase Two: America's Heritage** – Students will use a variety of primary and secondary source materials such as signs, posters, oral narratives, songs, movies, newspapers, and letters to gain an understanding of America's past. Working in cooperative groups, students will produce a class newspaper focusing on one or more periods of American history.



The culminating activity will be a "Tribute to America." This day will be an opportunity to celebrate student achievement. Students will share their enthusiasm and patriotism by showcasing presentations, newspapers, books, and other products they created to invited guests.

## About Project Based Learning

Project-based learning is a comprehensive approach to instruction. As students participate in engaging, multi-faceted investigations, they develop an array of interdisciplinary skills. Project-based learning allows teachers to create tasks whose complexity and openness mimic problems in the real world. Students collaborate with peers to tackle real-world problems.



### Key Components

The key components to project-based learning are clear objectives, student autonomy, investigative activities, and real-world results:

- Teachers clearly define the instructional objectives: The first step to creating your own project is to define your objectives. Knowing where the project is going is more important to reaching the destination than any other single variable.
- Students direct their own work and take control over their own learning: Students work independently as well as participate in flexible cooperative groupings. Rather than divide students by abilities, allow students with similar interests to work cooperatively. As the range of materials and interests of the students develop and expand, so will the need for different kinds of collaborations and group interactions.
- Students conduct multi-faceted investigations: Students use authentic tools (including technology), seek resources, and solve problems in response to an overall challenge. Students learn that knowing how to find information and making connections is more important than memorizing the facts. They use primary source documents, conduct experiments, construct models, and conduct interviews and surveys.
- Students create real-world products: Students make choices about how to demonstrate learning and are accountable for the choices they make. Products can include multimedia presentations, letters, posters, brochures, newsletters, maps, videos, and more.



As American As Apple Pie is an example of project-based learning with all of the above components. You can use this project as a model to create your own projects based on specific content and curriculum by adapting many of the activities.

### Orientation on Project Based Learning Summary

- Establish an Essential Question for the group to answer.
- Teacher laptops or desktops used for research on the essential question. How to training is in real time and in context.
- Grouping; 4 to 5 Teacher Students working towards the same essential question.
- Teachers will experience Cooperative Learning using different strengths of colleagues for final product.
- Inquiry Based Learning exercised to reflect research and decisions and answers to the essential question.
- Differentiated Learning; how each student individually shows understanding with final product presentation.
- Engaging thematic activities through collaboration, creativity and decision making.
- Final Activity Product created on the essential question to present at the end of the day.

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