

# History in a Nutshell

## The Pledge of Allegiance

**Grade Level:** 1-3

### Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Examine the text contained in this historic oath to extend comprehension of the key words, while enhancing understanding and appreciation of the civic ideals of our Republic, as stated within this national promise of loyalty. (Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks HIST 1.2, 1.8, 3.8; CIV 2.1, 3.2, 3.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.1-2, 1.4, 2.1, 2.6, 3.1-2; SL.1.1-2, 1.4, 2.1-2, 3.1-2)
- Develop an initial awareness of the rich geographic and multicultural diversity of our nation, along with the inherent rights and responsibilities of American citizenship, as addressed in this patriotic vow. (Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks: HIST 1.2, 1.8, 2.6, 2.7, 3.8; CIV 1.2, 2.3, 3.2, 3.4; GEO 1.2, 2.6, 3.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.6, 3.1-2; SL.1.1-2, 1.4, 2.1-2, 3.1-2)

### Program Framework:

1. Introductory video
2. Close-looking/listening activities
3. Independent enrichment activities

**Teacher Background:** Many students in schools across our country recite this historic oath, in rote manner, on a daily basis, but are often uncertain as to what the key words of this national vow specifically express. In this intriguing program, students will gain an understanding of the true meaning of this inspiring promise of loyalty, and begin to discover the rich geographic and multicultural diversity of our nation, along with the rights and responsibilities of American citizenship.

**Materials:** Introductory video, historic images for close-looking, music for close-listening

**I. Introductory Video** - six-minute video with compelling imagery that examines the text contained within this historic oath, focusing on extending comprehension of key words to enhance awareness, understanding, and appreciation for the civic ideals of our Republic.

Images Shown

1. [Flag of Allegiance Pledge at Raphael Weill Public School, San Francisco, California](#), Dorothea Lange, April 20, 1942. Department of the Interior, War Relocation Authority, 537476, National Archives.

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2. [A musical setting for "The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag,"](#) created by Irving Caesar, July 26, 1955, 84th Congress, 1st Session, House Document No. 225, United States Government Printing Office.
3. [School Children on Parade, Hartford, Memorial Day,](#) 1909. Photography; gelatin silver print on paper. 2000.209.3, The Connecticut Historical Society.
4. [Flag Bearers in Parade,](#) Dick Spafford et al, Hartford, Connecticut, February 11, 1961. HPL\_HHC\_HT\_B083\_F12\_8804, Hartford History Center, Hartford Public Library, Hartford Times Collection.
5. [Parade passing reviewing stand, north end of Main Street, Hartford,](#) 1950. Photograph. 2003.185.1, The Connecticut Historical Society.
6. [Flag of USA,](#) January 27, 2017. Video. Pixabay.
7. [Flag of the United States \(1777-1795\),](#) Devin Cook. Scalable Vector Graphic using Inkscape.
8. [Pieced Quilt,](#) attributed to Sophia Pinney and Edmond Thompson, East Granby, Connecticut, 1860-1862. Hand-stitched plain-woven cotton. Gift of Miss Adele R. Hough, 1963.36.2, The Connecticut Historical Society.
9. [Farmhouse in Hartford, Connecticut,](#) painted by Nelson Augustus Moore, 1862. Painting; oil on canvas in wood frame with gilt gesso decoration. Bequest of Mrs. J. Edward Grinfield-Coxwell, 1969.17.5, The Connecticut Historical Society.
10. [Main Street, New Britain, Conn.,](#) published by the Hugh C. Leighton Co., before 1906. Photomechanical print; colored printer's inks on postcard. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. W. Thurston Rowley, 1984.7.121, The Connecticut Historical Society.
11. Skyline of Hartford, CT, painted by Robert Templeton, 1971.2014.182.1, The Connecticut Historical Society.
12. [Hanging Hills of Meriden,](#) about 1870. Painting; oil on canvas in gilt wood frame. Gift of William Lamson Warren, 1957.27.1, The Connecticut Historical Society.
13. [Teachers and children outside of school,](#) from the collection of F.H. De Mars, about 1915. Photography; gelatin silver on glass. Gift of Margaret G. Giles, 2015.87.3873, The Connecticut Historical Society.
14. [Hartford Board of Education taking oath of office, Hartford,](#) created by Ed Lescoe, 1959-1971. Photograph. hpl-hhc\_ht\_32520104892525, Hartford History Center, Hartford Public Library, Hartford Times Collection.
15. [African American man at a voting booth,](#) created by Einar G. Chindmark, November 26, 1963. Photograph. hpl\_hhc\_ht\_b036\_f10\_8711, Hartford History Center, Hartford Public Library, Hartford Times Collection.
16. [Vote Button,](#) by amberzen, April 11, 2016. PNG image. Pixabay.

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17. [Boy in Blue Dress Shirt Standing on Green Grass Field During Daytime](#), by Chris Hardy, Ocean City, Maryland, June 24, 2020. Photography. Unsplash.
18. [Theodora Talcott in a nurse's uniform, Hartford](#), 1918. Photography; gelatin silver print on paper. Gift of John G.T. Slater and Shirley S. Crosman, 1978.1.181, The Connecticut Historical Society.
19. [Group of people wearing white and orange backpacks walking](#), by Note Thanun, Osaka, Japan, July 12, 2020. Photography. Unsplash.
20. [Still image \(00:01-00:03\) from "Join the Dayton Police Department" video](#), by City of Dayton, Ohio, November 16, 2015. Police Recruitment PSA video. Internet Archive.

## II. Close-Looking/Listening Activity Options

1. These activities can be done with students in real time, either in the classroom or virtually, with the teacher guiding students using [Visual Thinking Strategies](#) to connect the images and/or song shown below to what students have learned in the introductory video.
  - Key VTS questions
    - What's going on in this image (and/or song)?
    - What makes you say that?
    - What else do you notice?
2. Alternatively, students can explore the images (and/or song lyrics) on their own, using the guiding questions provided below.
  - Close-Looking
    - As noted in the introductory video, our country has a rich geographic diversity with a wide range of rural, urban, and suburban communities. Invite your students to choose two out of the four colorful images shown below, and examine them carefully to compare/contrast these varied land-/cityscapes.
  - Guiding Questions
    - What is the first thing you noticed about each of these artworks? Why did that specific part catch your eye? What else do you see?
    - Describe each painting in detail, as if you were explaining what each one looks like to someone who can't see it.
    - What is similar about the two locations you selected? What is different?
    - In which of these places would you prefer to live? Why?

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- Close-Listening: “This Land is Your Land,” American folk song originally recorded by Woody Guthrie, 1944
  - Invite students to listen to the first four verses of this classic song. You may have a copy of this iconic anthem in your school's media center or music department; many versions can also be found online. One student-friendly version can be found [here](#).
  - Guiding Questions
    - What is this song about? What makes you think so?
    - Why do you think the musician chose to write this song?
    - What message do you think the songwriter is communicating to listeners? Why?
    - Which part of our country described in this song would you most like to visit? Why?

### III. Options for Independent Enrichment Activities

1. **Flag Day!** Create a colorful, detailed flag to represent your family, your class, your school, or your town. Present your finished flag to your classmates, and explain the significance of any symbols and/or colors you chose to represent aspects of your chosen topic.
2. **Vacation Nation!** Write a story, poem, or song about a special place in our country that you have visited or would like to visit, explaining in detail why this place, above all others, beckons to you, and what you like or plan to do while you're there! **OR** Create a two-sided postcard by drawing a colorful picture of an interesting place here in the U.S.A. on the front side of an index card. Then, imagine that you are visiting this special spot, and write a message to your family on the backside of the card describing your adventures there!
3. **Follow Your Dreams!** Imagine traveling into the “future”...Write a fictional news report about an important life goal that you yourself achieved or a difficult challenge that you were able to overcome. Be sure to describe in detail: Who, Where, When, What, Why, and How!
4. **Please...VOTE!** Design a colorful poster persuading American citizens to vote. Be sure to include detailed information on who is eligible to vote in our national elections and why voting is such an important civic duty.
5. **Betsy Ross - Legend or Fact?** Research, write, and present a report on the key facts regarding the life and accomplishments of Betsy Ross, American Patriot.

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6. **Uncle Sam Needs You!** Research, write, and present a report on the mission, goals, and training required to serve in one of the six branches of our United States Military - Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, and Coast Guard - all of whom are tasked with safe-guarding the freedoms that American citizens enjoy.

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**Images for Close-Looking**

*Rural*



[Farmhouse in Hartford, Connecticut](#), painted by Nelson Augustus Moore, 1862. Painting; oil on canvas in wood frame with gilt gesso decoration. Bequest of Mrs. J. Edward Grinfield-Coxwell, 1969.17.5, The Connecticut Historical Society.

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## *Suburban*



[Main Street, New Britain, Conn.](#), published by the Hugh C. Leighton Co., before 1906. Photomechanical print; colored printer's inks on postcard. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. W. Thurston Rowley, 1984.7.121, The Connecticut Historical Society.

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## *Urban*



Skyline of Hartford, CT, painted by Robert Templeton, 1971. 2014.182.1, The Connecticut Historical Society.



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*Rural*



[Hanging Hills of Meriden](#), about 1870. Painting; oil on canvas in gilt wood frame. Gift of William Lamson Warren, 1957.27.1, The Connecticut Historical Society.



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