

American Symbols & Our First President: A 2-Day Lesson Plan for Mirabelle

Day 1: The Super Symbols of America

Focus: Introducing American symbols in a fun, story-based way and creating a keepsake booklet.

Time: 15-20 minutes (plus independent creative time)

Materials Needed:

- Your PowerPoint of US symbols
- 3-4 sheets of white or colored paper, folded in half to make a booklet
- Stapler
- Your "cut and paste symbol sheet"
- Child-safe scissors
- Glue stick
- Crayons or markers
- Optional: Star stickers
- **Library Prep:** Look for a picture book about American symbols. Suggestions: *"The Bald Eagle" by Norman Pearl*, *"The Statue of Liberty" by Lucille Recht Penner*, or a general book like *"A is for America" by Devin Scillian*.

Learning Goals for Mirabelle:

- To identify 3-5 American symbols by name.
- To understand that a symbol is a picture that stands for a big idea.
- To create a project that shows her understanding of the symbols.

Lesson Steps (What to Do and Say):

1. Introduction (2 minutes)

What to do: Sit with Mirabelle and hold up a simple drawing of a heart.

What to say: "Hi Mirabelle! Look at this picture. What is it? (A heart). Right! And what do we think of when we see a heart? (Love!). Exactly! A heart is a **symbol** for love. A symbol is just a picture that stands for a big idea. Today, we're going to be detectives and discover the symbols for our country, the United States of America!"

2. Symbol Exploration with PowerPoint (8-10 minutes)

What to do: Go through your US symbols PowerPoint one slide at a time. Don't just read the names; tell a tiny story for each one.

What to say (examples):

- **US Flag:** "Here's our flag! It has 50 stars for the 50 states, and 13 stripes for the first 13 colonies, which were like the very first parts of our country. It's like our country's team flag!"
- **Bald Eagle:** "This is the Bald Eagle. It's our national bird. It was chosen because it's strong and flies high, a symbol of being free."

- **Statue of Liberty:** "This is the Statue of Liberty! She was a giant gift from another country, France, to say 'hello and welcome' to people coming to America. Her torch is a light to show the way to freedom."
- **White House:** "Look, it's the White House! This is where the president lives and works. It's like the country's special house."
- **Liberty Bell:** "This is the Liberty Bell. It has a big crack! A long time ago, it was rung to tell people important news, like when America became its own country. It's a symbol of freedom."

Tip: Keep it short and sweet for each symbol. Ask her questions like, "Which one is your favorite so far?"

3. **Activity: "My American Symbols" Booklet (5 minutes with you, then independent)**

What to do: Give Mirabelle the folded paper booklet, scissors, glue, and the cut-and-paste symbol sheet.

What to say: "Great job, Detective Mirabelle! Now you get to make your very own book of American symbols. Let's make a cover first." (Help her write "My American Symbols by Mirabelle" on the front and let her decorate it).

What to say next: "Now, you can cut out the symbols you liked best from this sheet. Glue one symbol on each page of your book. Underneath, you can draw a picture of what it reminds you of, or we can write one word about it, like 'Freedom' or 'President's House'."

Independent Work:

Mirabelle can continue to cut, glue, and decorate her booklet on her own. She can color the symbols and add her own drawings to each page. This is a perfect activity for you to step away while she works creatively.

Portfolio Project:

The completed **"My American Symbols" booklet** is a fantastic, hands-on project to include in her portfolio. It shows her ability to identify symbols and creatively engage with the material.

Day 2: Meeting George Washington!

Focus: Learning about the first president and connecting him to the symbols we learned.

Time: 10-15 minutes (plus independent creative time)

Materials Needed:

- Your PowerPoint story of George Washington's life
- A dollar bill and a quarter (real or play money)
- A piece of paper or a paper plate
- Pencil and crayons
- Your Symbol Bingo Card & the cut-out symbol pictures from yesterday (or just point to them)
- **Video Prep:** Find a short, kid-friendly video. Search YouTube for "George Washington for Kids" or "The Story of George Washington for Children." (e.g., channels like Homeschool Pop or similar animated history channels). Watch it first to ensure it's age-appropriate.

Learning Goals for Mirabelle:

- To identify George Washington as the first president of the United States.
- To connect George Washington to a national symbol (the White House, dollar bill).
- To use her imagination to think about leadership.

Lesson Steps (What to Do and Say):

1. Review and Connect (3 minutes)

What to do: Play a quick game of "Symbol Spy." Lay out the cut-out symbols from yesterday or her booklet.

What to say: "Let's play Symbol Spy! I spy with my little eye... the symbol for our country's bird. (Bald Eagle!). I spy... the building where the president lives. (White House!). Speaking of the president, do you know who the VERY first president was? His name was George Washington, and we're going to learn about him today!"

2. Story of George Washington (5-7 minutes)

What to do: Watch the short YouTube video you picked OR go through your PowerPoint story of his life.

What to say (while showing the PowerPoint/video): "This is George Washington. He was a brave leader a long, long time ago, even before America was its own country. People trusted him so much that when it was time to pick the very first president, they all chose him! He helped get our country started. He even lived in the White House... well, he helped plan it!"

What to do next: Pull out the quarter and dollar bill.

What to say: "Look! Who do you see on this quarter? And on this dollar bill? It's George Washington! We put his face on our money to remember how important he was as our first leader."

3. Activity: Design a Coin for President Mirabelle! (2 minutes with you, then independent)

What to do: Give Mirabelle the paper or paper plate.

What to say: "What if YOU were president? What would you do? (Let her answer). That's a great idea! Presidents get their faces on coins to be remembered. Today, you get to design a brand new coin for President Mirabelle! Draw a circle. Inside, you need to draw a picture of your face. Then, you can write how much it's worth, like '100 dollars!' And you have to write one rule President Mirabelle would make for the country, like 'Everyone must be kind' or 'Free ice cream on Fridays!'"

Independent Work:

Mirabelle can take her time designing her coin. She can add colors, numbers, and words. This is a fun way for her to think about leadership and be creative.

Fun Finisher (Optional):

Play a round of Symbol Bingo! This is a great way to review everything from both days in a no-pressure, game-based format.

Portfolio Project:

The "**President Mirabelle Coin**" design is another wonderful, creative piece for her portfolio. It shows engagement with the concept of a president and allows for personal expression.