

## **The Story of the American Flag and "The Star-Spangled Banner"**

The American flag, with its bright red, white, and blue colors, has a special story that dates back to 1777. It was created during the American Revolution when the thirteen colonies wanted to show they were united and free from British rule. The stars on the flag represent each state, while the stripes stand for the original thirteen colonies. Legend has it that a woman named Betsy Ross sewed the first flag, but many people helped design it. Over the years, the flag has changed as new states joined the country, but it always stands for freedom and bravery for everyone in America!

One of the most important moments in American history happened during the War of 1812 at the Battle of Fort McHenry on September 13-14, 1814. The British forces tried to capture the fort to take control of Baltimore, but the brave defenders, led by Major George Armistead, held their ground against a fierce bombardment. Among the spectators was Francis Scott Key, who was watching from a nearby ship. As he looked on, he felt both fear and hope, wondering if the American flag would still be flying at dawn after the battle. When the sun rose, Key was filled with pride as he saw the large flag waving triumphantly, symbolizing the resilience and victory of the American people.

Inspired by the sight of the flag, Francis Scott Key wrote a poem called "Defence of Fort M'Henry," which later became known as "The Star-Spangled Banner." The song quickly gained popularity and was sung at patriotic events, becoming a symbol of American pride and unity. In 1931, it was officially designated as the national anthem of the United States. Today, "The Star-Spangled Banner" is performed at many important events, reminding everyone of the courage and sacrifices that shaped the nation. The anthem continues to inspire and unite Americans, showcasing the spirit of freedom and determination that the flag represents!