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**Auszug aus:**

*4th of July - The American Independence Day*

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## 4th of July - The American Independence Day

### INTRODUCTION – FIRST STEPS

Task: Complete the sentences with the following words:

*fireworks, Declaration, Banner, Washington, flag, Independence, patriotic, Revolution*

On July 4<sup>th</sup> the United States of America celebrates its \_\_\_\_\_ Day.

Lots of parades can be seen and often there are \_\_\_\_\_ in the night sky.

In the American \_\_\_\_\_ the aim of the colonies was separation from Great Britain.

The \_\_\_\_\_ of Independence was adopted on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1776.

George \_\_\_\_\_ was the first President of the United States of America.

Since July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1960, the American \_\_\_\_\_ boasts 50 stars, each of them representing one state.

The national anthem of the USA is called the Star-Spangled \_\_\_\_\_.

July 4<sup>th</sup> is usually celebrated in a very \_\_\_\_\_ manner.

### THE FOURTH OF JULY – NATIONAL HOLIDAY

The terms "Independence Day" and "Fourth of July" are used almost interchangeably today, synonymously denoting the National Day of the USA, a federal holiday in honor of the Declaration of Independence's adoption in 1776. By this act, the thirteen former colonies formally claimed and declared independence from Great Britain and its king. The celebrations on Independence Day are of a decisively patriotic quality, emphasizing and celebrating the history and traditions of the still comparably young nation. Political speeches and ceremonies are accompanied by "fireworks, parades, barbecues, carnivals, fairs, picnics, concerts, baseball games, family reunions" (Wikipedia) in every corner of the country.



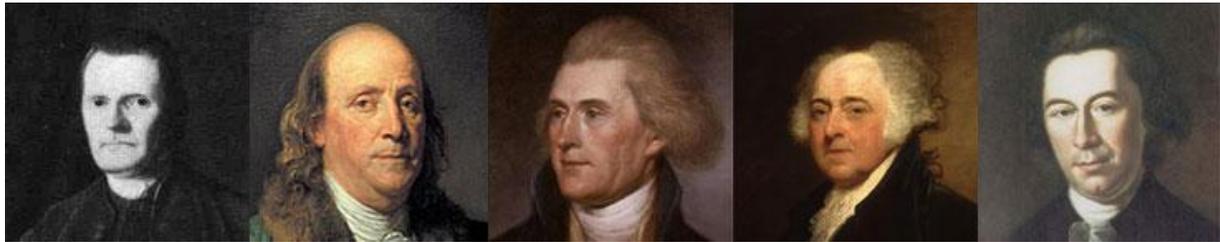
Display of fireworks over the Washington Monument

?

When does the National Holiday of Germany take place?  
What is commemorated? Compare.

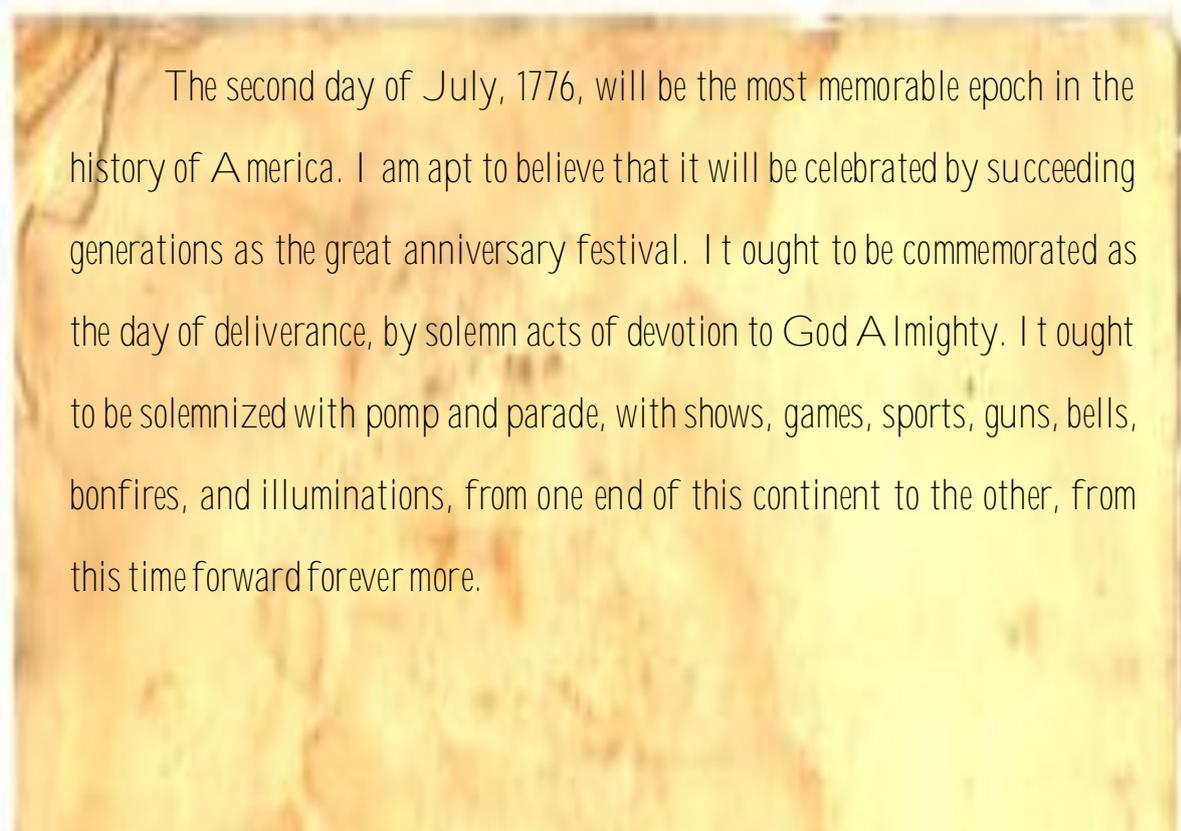
### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

To be precise, the official legal separation of the Thirteen Colonies from the United had already occurred on July 2<sup>nd</sup> 1776, when the Second Continental Congress approvingly voted on a Resolution of Independence. The Declaration of Independence, passed two days later, was actually an accompanying piece explaining this decision. Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman and Robert Livingston, the so-called Committee of Five, were its authors.



Committee of Five: Sherman, Franklin, Jefferson, Adams, Livingston

One day prior, John Adams, predicted in a letter to his wife Abigail:



**“Letter from John Adams to Abigail Adams, 3 July 1776, ‘Had a Declaration...’”. Adams Family Papers.**

Massachusetts Historical Society. Retrieved June 28, 2009.

<http://www.masshist.org/digitaladams/aea/cfm/doc.cfm?id=L17760703jasecond>

Before the Declaration of Independence was issued in 1776, war between the Thirteen Colonies and Great Britain had been raging for well over a year. In the aftermath of the Seven Years' War in 1763, interests and relations between them had been growing

WOODY GUTHRIE: "THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND" (1940/44) – LYRICS

*This land is your land, this land is my land  
From California to the New York Island,  
From the Redwood Forest, to the Gulf stream waters,  
This land was made for you and me.*

*As I went walking that ribbon of highway  
And saw above me that endless skyway,  
And saw below me the golden valley, I said:  
This land was made for you and me.*

*I roamed and rambled and followed my footsteps  
To the sparkling sands of her diamond deserts,  
And all around me, a voice was sounding:  
This land was made for you and me.*

*Was a high wall there that tried to stop me  
A sign was painted said: Private Property,  
But on the back side it didn't say nothing —  
This land was made for you and me.*

*When the sun come shining, then I was strolling  
In wheat fields waving and dust clouds rolling;  
The voice was chanting as the fog was lifting:  
This land was made for you and me.*

*One bright sunny morning in the shadow of the steeple  
By the Relief Office I saw my people —  
As they stood hungry, I stood there wondering if  
This land was made for you and me.*



Task: Do some research on the internet or in books about Woody Guthrie and his song "This Land Is Your Land", which is even considered an alternative National Anthem by some people. Present your most interesting findings in class. Relate them to the idea of "The American Dream".

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

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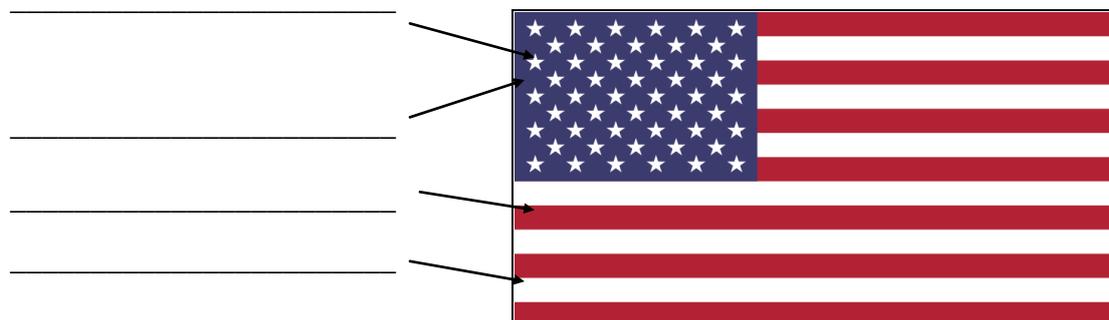
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## THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Task: Read the text and label the arrows above.

The flag of the United States of America is called the "Star-Spangled Banner" or just nicknamed "Stars and Stripes". It consists, in its current version, of 7 red and 6 white stripes, symbolizing the original thirteen colonies, and a small blue jack flag in the upper left corner, containing 50 white stars, one star for each of the federal states.

The colors stem from the original British Union Jack, but their use in the Star-Spangled Banner comes with several connotations, a symbolic value attributed to each of them:

White	-	purity, innocence
Red	-	valor, hardiness
Blue	-	vigilance, perseverance, justice

America's national anthem pays homage to the American Flag. After the bombing of Fort McHenry, Baltimore, during the War of 1812, the author Francis Scott Key was so relieved to see the still hoisted up after a night of relentless British attacks, that he decided to express his mirth over the American victory in the form of a song dedicated to the image of that waving American Flag. **Key's** song became the national anthem of the USA.



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