

CURRICULUM ON MILITARY SUBJECTS

Strand 2: The Flag

Level 11

This Strand is composed of the following components:

- A. Flag Basics
- B. Presenting the Flag
- C. **Patriotic Music & Poems**



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C. PATRIOTIC MUSIC & POEMS

Objectives

DESIRED OUTCOME (Leadership) / PRACTICUM C. *90% of Unit Cadets are able to identify certain patriotic songs and poems.*

1. Sing the National Anthem (first verse)
2. Recognize and name the following songs:
 - a. America the Beautiful
 - b. My Country Tis of Thee
 - c. The Army Goes Rolling Along (US Army)
 - d. Anchors Aweigh (US Navy)
 - e. The Marine's Hymn (USMC)
 - f. The U.S. Air Force Song (USAF)
 - g. Semper Paratus (USCG)
 - h. You're a Grand Old Flag
 - i. God Bless America
 - j. This Land is My Land
 - k. Stars & Stripes Forever
 - l. Taps
 - m. Yankee Doodle
 - n. God Bless the USA
3. Appreciate the following poems:
 - a. The American Marine
 - b. To My Military Son
 - c. The Sheepdogs
 - d. The Tyrants
 - e. Why I Love Her
 - f. America for Me
 - g. Just a Common Soldier
 - h. God Save the Flag
 - i. Freedom Flies Like an Eagle
 - j. Ragged Old Flag

C1. Patriotic Music.

America the Beautiful

The words of this song came from a poem of the same title by Katharine Lee Bates (1859 -1929). She wrote the poem in 1893 and then revised it twice; first in 1904 and then in 1913. A trek to the summit of Pikes Peak in Colorado is believed to have inspired Katharine Lee Bates to pen the lyrics to "America the Beautiful." The melody of the song was written in 1882 by composer and organist Samuel Augustus Ward (1847-1903) and was originally titled "Materna." The lyrics combined with the melody was first published in 1910.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URbYAaAK9OQ>

Lyrics - *America the Beautiful* (1913)

O beautiful for spacious skies,
 For amber waves of grain,
 For purple mountain majesties
 Above the fruited plain!
 America! America!
 God shed his grace on thee
 And crown thy good with brotherhood
 From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for pilgrim feet
 Whose stern, impassioned stress
 A thoroughfare for freedom beat
 Across the wilderness!
 America! America!
 God mend thine every flaw,
 Confirm thy soul in self-control,
 Thy liberty in law!

O beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife.
 Who more than self the country loved
 And mercy more than life!
 America! America!
 May God thy gold refine
 Till all success be nobleness
 And every gain divine!

O beautiful for patriot dream
 That sees beyond the years America! America!
 God shed his grace on thee
 And crown thy good with brotherhood
 From sea to shining sea!

Thine alabaster cities gleam
 Undimmed by human tears!
 O beautiful for halcyon skies, For amber waves of
 grain, For purple mountain majesties Above the
 enameled plain! America! America!
 God shed his grace on thee
 Till soul's wax fair as earth and air
 And music-hearted sea!

O beautiful for pilgrims feet, Whose stern
 impassioned stress A thoroughfare for freedom
 beat Across the wilderness! America!
 America! God shed his grace on thee Till
 paths be wrought through wilds of thought By
 pilgrim foot and knee!

O beautiful for glory-tale Of liberating
 strife When once and twice, for man's avail
 Men lavished precious life! America!
 America! God shed his grace on thee Till selfish
 gain no longer stain The banner of the free!

O beautiful for patriot dream That sees beyond
 the years Thine alabaster cities gleam Undimmed
 by human tears! America! America!
 God shed his grace on thee Till nobler men
 keep once again Thy whiter jubilee

My Country 'Tis of Thee

My Country 'Tis of Thee (also known as "America") is a patriotic hymn written by Samuel F. Smith in 1832, while a student at Andover Theological Seminary in Andover, Massachusetts. The melody had traveled around Europe in several variations, including "God Save the King." Even Beethoven and Haydn had used the music in some of their own compositions.

My Country 'Tis of Thee (America) was the lyrical result of Samuel Smith's drive to create a national hymn for the United States. In about 30 minutes on a rainy day, he wrote the now classic anthem. The first three verses encourage and invoke national pride, while the last verse was specifically reserved as a petition to God for His continued favor and protection of the United States of America.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnH_OlgNgSY

Lyrics - *My Country 'Tis of Thee*

My country tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,

Of thee I sing.

Land where my fathers died!
Land of the Pilgrim's pride!
From every mountain side,
Let freedom ring!

My native country, thee,
Land of the noble free,

Thy name I love.

I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills;
My heart with rapture fills
Like that above.

Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees

Sweet freedom's song.

Let mortal tongues awake;
Let all that breathe partake;
Let rocks their silence break,
The sound prolong.

Our father's God to, Thee,
Author of liberty,

To Thee we sing.

Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light;
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God, our King!

The Army Goes Rolling Along (US Army)

"The Army Goes Rolling Along" was designated the official song of the United States Army in 1956. Yet its history goes back to March 1908 when Brigadier General Edmund Louis "Snitz" Gruber, a graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, wrote "The Caissons Go Rolling Along."

Early in his Army career Gruber, a descendent of Franz Gruber, the composer of "Silent Night," was stationed in the Philippines. During a difficult march through the Zambales Mountains on Luzon Island, Gruber went ahead with a small detachment to select the best route for his battalion. He

climbed to higher ground to get an overview and to look back down on the marching companies and artillery. As they rattled nearer Gruber heard one of the section chiefs shout out to his drivers, "Come on! Keep 'em rolling!" Months later, with lyrical assistance from a number of his fellow lieutenants, Gruber came up with a tune that grew from that experience.

After World War II, in 1948 and again in 1952, the U.S. Army conducted a nationwide song contest to find an official song. None of the songs submitted proved to be especially popular within the ranks. Finally the Army's major commanders were polled and an overwhelming majority voted for Gruber's "Caisson song." Still, the Army was unwilling to settle for the popular lyrics so it sent out a call for new ones. Of the 140 sets of lyrics received, the screening committee selected phrases from which Dr. H. W. Arberg molded an official song.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8cvljfwAyXQ>

Lyrics - *The Army Goes Rolling Along* (US Army)

INTRO: March along, sing our song, with the
Army of the free

Count the brave, count the true, who have
fought to victory

We're the Army and proud of our name
We're the Army and proudly proclaim

VERSE: First to fight for the right,
And to build the Nation's might,
And The Army Goes Rolling Along
Proud of all we have done,
Fighting till the battle's won,
And the Army Goes Rolling Along.

REFRAIN: Then it's Hi! Hi! Hey!
The Army's on its way.
Count off the cadence loud and strong (TWO!
THREE!)
For where e'er we go,

You will always know
That The Army Goes Rolling Along.

VERSE: Valley Forge, Custer's ranks,
San Juan Hill and Patton's tanks,
And the Army went rolling along
Minute men, from the start,
Always fighting from the heart,
And the Army keeps rolling along.
(refrain)

VERSE: Men in rags, men who froze,
Still that Army met its foes,
And the Army went rolling along.
Faith in God, then we're right,
And we'll fight with all our might,
As the Army keeps rolling along.
(refrain)

Anchors Aweigh (US Navy)

Throughout history, the military, regardless of the branch, have adopted battle songs as a means to solidify the camaraderie among the men. Similarly many sports teams will use the same kind of incentive to signify team spirit.

It was the US Naval Academy's Football team who originally inspired the battle cry song known as Anchor's Aweigh. The term itself means that the Anchor has been pulled from the bottom and the vessel is launched and features predominately in the song. The music for Anchor's Aweigh was composed by Lieut. Charles A. Zimmermann with lyrics by Midshipman First Class Alfred Hart Miles in

1906. Its debut was at the Army-Navy football game in December 1906, which the Navy won after several seasons of losses. The third verse was added in 1926, when it was penned by Royal Lovell.

The song is taught during Naval training but the Navy has yet to officially adopt the song. Discussions continue as to the protocols for the use of Anchor's Aweigh during official Naval events. Another revision to the tune was made in 1950 with a slight change to the melody and changes to the lyrics. The 1950 changes by George Lottman, were spurred by an effort to make the song more relevant to the Navy servicemen with references to the Naval academy having been dropped from the lyrics.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-3ws7b4sZg> (without lyrics)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bNGBY4yVQgQ> (includes lyrics) (1906 version)

Lyrics – *Anchor's Aweigh* (US Navy)

Stand, Navy, out to sea,
 Fight our battle cry;
 We'll never change our course,
 So vicious foe steer shy-y-y-y.
 Roll out the TNT,
 Anchors Aweigh.
 Sail on to victory
 And sink their bones to Davy Jones, hooray!

Anchors Aweigh, my boys,
 Anchors Aweigh.
 Farewell to foreign shores,
 We sail at break of day-ay-ay-ay.
 Through our last night ashore,
 Drink to the foam,
 Until we meet once more.
 Here's wishing you a happy voyage home.

The Marine's Hymn (USMC)

America declared war on the Barbary Pirates of northern Africa in 1805 because they had been raiding our ships in the Mediterranean Sea. During the conflict, Lieutenant Presley N. O'Bannon, United States Marine Corps, and his small force of Marines participated in the capture of the city of Derne in Tripoli (which is today part of the country of Libya). As this was the first time that the American flag had been hoisted over a fortress in the Old World, the Colors (ceremonial flag) of the Marine Corps were inscribed with the words: "To the Shores of Tripoli."

During the hardest fighting of the Mexican War; U.S. Marines were the first to breach the otherwise impregnable walls of Mexico City by capturing the Castle of Chapultapec, which was the palace of the great Aztec emperor, Montezuma. The Colors of the Corps were then changed to read "From the Shores of Tripoli to the Halls of Montezuma." Following the close of the Mexican War came the first great verse of the Marines' Hymn, written according to tradition by a Marine on duty in Mexico. For the sake of the euphony, the unknown author transposed the phrases in the motto on the Colors so

that the first two lines of the Hymn would read: "From the Halls of Montezuma to the Shores of Tripoli."

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5kCqvsO_7c

Lyrics – *The Marine's Hymn* (US Marine Corps)

From the halls of Montezuma
To the shores of Tripoli;
We will fight out country's battles
in the air, on land and sea;
First to fight for right and freedom
And to keep our honor clean;
We are proud to claim the title of United States Marine.

Our flag's unfurled to every breeze
From dawn to setting sun;
We have fought in ev'ry clime and place
Where we could take a gun;
In the snow of far-off Northern lands
And in the sunny tropic scenes;
You will find us always on the job
The United States Marines.

Here's health to you and to our Corps
Which we are proud to serve;
In many a strife we've fought for life
And never lost our nerve;
If the Army and the Navy
Ever look on Heaven's scenes;
They will find the streets are guarded
By United States Marines.

The U.S. Air Force Song (USAF)

In 1938, Liberty magazine sponsored a contest for a spirited, enduring musical composition to become the official Army Air Corps song. Of 757 scores submitted, the one composed by Robert MacArthur Crawford (1899-1961) was selected by a committee of Air Force wives. The song (informally known as "The Air Force Song" but now formally titled "The U.S. Air Force") was officially introduced at the Cleveland Air Races on September 2, 1939. Fittingly, Crawford sang in its first public performance.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHOq6SI9u38>

Lyrics – *The U.S. Air Force Song*

Off we go into the wild blue yonder,
Climbing high into the sun;
Here they come zooming to meet our
thunder,
At 'em boys, Give 'er the gun! (Give 'er the
gun now!)
Down we dive, spouting our flame from
under,
Off with one heckuva roar!
We live in fame or go down in flame.
Hey! Nothing'll stop the U.S. Air Force!

Minds of men fashioned a crate of thunder
Sent it high into the blue
Hands of men blasted the world asunder,
How they lived God only knew!
Souls of men dreaming of skies to conquer
Gave us wings ever to soar,
With scouts before and bombers galore,
Hey!
Nothing'll stop the US Air Force!

Here's a toast to the host of those
Who love the vastness of the sky,
To a friend we send a message
Of his brother men who fly.
We drink to those who gave their all of old,
Then down we roar
to score the rainbow's pot of gold.
A toast to the host of men we boast, the US
Air Force.

Zoom!

Off we go into the wild sky yonder,
Keep the wings level and true!
If you'd live to be a grey-haired wonder,
Keep your nose out of the blue! (Out of the
blue, boy!)
Flying men guarding the nation's border,
We'll be there, followed by more,
In echelon we carry on! Hey!
Nothing'll stop the US Air Force!

Semper Paratus (USCG)

The United States Coast Guard is the world's oldest life-saving service and "Semper Paratus" ("Always Ready") is its theme song. The song's original words and music were composed by Captain Francis Saltus Van Boskerck, USCG.

Captain Van Boskerck was Commander of the Coast Guard's Bering Sea Forces when he composed "Semper Paratus" in 1927. Coast Guard lore developed that he composed the tune on a beat-up old piano belonging to a Mrs. Albert C. Gross, the wife of an Alaskan fur trader, who owned what was at that time the only piano in the Aleutian Islands. Two public health dentists, Alfred E. Nannestad and Joseph O. Fournier of Unalaska Island, also contributed to developing the song's early lyrics.

Under President Woodrow Wilson the Coast Guard was created as a separate military service unit in 1915 and by 1927 they were seeking an anthem. Van Boskerck and his friends entered their material into a song-search contest sponsored by the Coast Guard and won. In 1943 a second chorus was added to "Semper Paratus" (and the first chorus was rewritten in 1969).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FKUCXjRTk4M>

Lyrics – *Semper Paratus (US Coast Guard)*

First Verse:

From Aztec Shore to Arctic Zone,
To Europe and Far East,

The Flag is carried by our ships
In times of war and peace;
And never have we struck it yet
In spite of foemen's might,

Who cheered our crews and cheered again
For showing how to fight.

Chorus:

We're always ready for the call,
We place our trust in Thee.
Through surf and storm and howling gale,
High shall our purpose be.
"Semper Paratus" is our guide,
Our fame, our glory too.
To fight to save or fight and die,
Aye! Coast Guard we are for you!

Second Verse:

SURVEYOR and NARCISSUS,
The EAGLE and DISPATCH,

The HUDSON and TAMPA,
These names are hard to match;
From Barrow's shores to Paraguay,
Great Lakes or ocean's wave,
The Coast Guard fights through storms and
winds,
To punish or to save.

Third Verse:

Aye! We've been always ready!
To do, to fight, or die
Write glory to the shield we wear
In letters to the sky.
To sink the foe or save the maimed,
Our mission and our pride.
We'll carry on 'til Kingdom Come,
Ideals for which we've died.

You're a Grand Old Flag

The original lyrics for this George M. Cohan (1878–1942) favorite, written for his 1906 stage musical *George Washington Jr.*, were inspired by a chance encounter Cohan had with a Civil War veteran who fought at Gettysburg. Driving on a country road, Cohan offered a ride to an old man who, once seated in the vehicle, began to reminisce about his war days. Cohan noticed the vet held a tattered flag. "It was all for this," the veteran told Cohan. "She's a grand old rag." Cohan thought it was a terrific line, and made it the original title of his song. So many objected to calling the flag a "rag," however, that he changed the words, renaming the song "You're a Grand Old Flag."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FN9XSMRrtgM>

Lyrics – *You're a Grand Old Flag*

You're a grand old flag,
You're a high flying flag
And forever in peace may you wave.
You're the emblem of
The land I love.
The home of the free and the brave.
Ev'ry heart beats true
'neath the Red, White and Blue,
Where there's never a boast or brag.
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
Keep your eye on the grand old flag.

You're a grand old flag,
 You're a high flying flag
 And forever in peace may you wave.
 You're the emblem of
 The land I love.
 The home of the free and the brave.
 Ev'ry heart beats true
 'neath the Red, White and Blue,
 Where there's never a boast or brag.
 Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
 Keep your eye on the grand old flag.

God Bless America

America's unofficial national anthem was composed by an immigrant who left his home in Siberia for America when he was only five years old. The original version of "God Bless America" was written by Irving Berlin (1888-1989) during the summer of 1918 at Camp Upton, located in Yaphank, Long Island, for his Ziegfeld-style revue, Yip, Yip, Yaphank. "Make her victorious on land and foam, God Bless America..." ran the original lyric. However, Berlin decided that the solemn tone of "God Bless America" was somewhat out of keeping with the more comedic elements of the show and the song was laid aside.

In the fall of 1938, as war was again threatening Europe, Berlin decided to write a "peace" song. He recalled his "God Bless America" from twenty years earlier and made some alterations to reflect the different state of the world. Singer Kate Smith introduced the revised "God Bless America" during her radio broadcast on Armistice Day, 1938. The song was an immediate sensation; the sheet music was in great demand. Berlin soon established the God Bless America Fund, dedicating the royalties to the Boy and Girl Scouts of America.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ohxDqJCI3yY>

Lyrics – *God Bless America*

While the storm clouds gather far across the
 sea,
 Let us swear allegiance to a land that's free.
 Let us all be grateful for a land so fair,
 As we raise our voices in a solemn prayer:

God bless America, land that I love,
 Stand beside her and guide her
 Through the night with a light from above.
 From the mountains, to the prairies,
 To the oceans white with foam,
 God bless America, my home sweet home.
 God bless America, my home sweet home.

This Land is My Land

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXLiUoxUMYs>

Lyrics – *This Land is My Land*

This land is your land, This land is my
land, From California To the New York
Island From the redwood forest To the
Gulf steam waters This land was made for
you and me.

As I was walking, That ribbon of
highway, I saw above me That endless
skyway, I saw below me That golden
valley, This land was made for you and me.

I've roamed and rambled, And I've
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.

The sun comes shining As I was
strolling, The wheat fields waving And

the dust clouds rolling, The fog was lifting a
voice come chanting, This land was made for
you and me.

As I was walkin', I saw a sign there, And
that sign said no trespassin' But on the
other side It didn't say nothing! Now that
side was made for you and me!

In the squares of the city, In the shadow of
the steeple, Near the relief office I see
my people And some are grumblin' And
some are wonderin' If this land's still made
for you and me.

Nobody living, can ever stop me, As I go
walking That freedom highway Nobody
living can make me turn back This land was
made for you and me.

Stars & Stripes Forever

"The Stars and Stripes Forever" is a patriotic American march widely considered to be the magnum opus of composer John Philip Sousa. He composed his famous march on Christmas Day, 1896 while at sea, returning from a trip to Europe. While on vacation, he had learned that his close friend and manager of the Sousa Band, David Blakely, had died. Sousa and his wife immediately booked the next ship back to New York, where he began work on the march. In his autobiography, *Marching Along*, Sousa said the song was about the feeling of coming home to America and how "in a foreign country the sight of the Stars and Stripes seems the most glorious in the world." The march was designated the official National March of the United States of America in 1987. Although not as familiar as the music itself, Sousa wrote lyrics for the march.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXLiUoxUMYs> (lyrics)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M5bcpjUjLpU>

Lyrics – Stars and Stripes Forever

Let martial note in triumph float
 And liberty extend its mighty hand
 A flag appears 'mid thunderous cheers,
 The banner of the Western land.
 The emblem of the brave and true
 Its folds protect no tyrant crew;
 The red and white and starry blue
 Is freedom's shield and hope.
 Other nations may deem their flags the best
 And cheer them with fervid elation
 But the flag of the North and South and
 West
 Is the flag of flags, the flag of Freedom's
 nation.

Hurrah for the flag of the free!
 May it wave as our standard forever,
 The gem of the land and the sea,
 The banner of the right.
 Let despots remember the day
 When our fathers with mighty endeavor
 Proclaimed as they marched to the fray
 That by their might and by their right
 It waves forever.

Let eagle shriek from lofty peak
 The never-ending watchword of our land;
 Let breeze summer waft through the trees
 The echo of the chorus grand.
 Sing out for liberty and light,
 Sing out for freedom and the right.
 Sing out for Union and its might,
 O patriotic sons.
 Other nations may deem their flags the best
 And cheer them with fervid elation,
 But the flag of the North and South and West

Is the flag of flags, the flag of Freedom's
 nation.

Hurrah for the flag of the free.
 May it wave as our standard forever
 The gem of the land and the sea,
 Let despots remember the day
 When our fathers with might endeavor
 Proclaimed as they marched to the fray,
 That by their might and by their right
 It waves forever.

Taps

The 24-note melancholy bugle call known as "taps" is thought to be a revision of a French bugle signal, called "tattoo," that notified soldiers to cease an evening's drinking and return to their garrisons. It was sounded an hour before the final bugle call to end the day by extinguishing fires and lights. The last five measures of the tattoo resemble taps.

The revision that gave us present-day taps was made during America's Civil War by Union Gen. Daniel Adams Butterfield, heading a brigade camped at Harrison Landing, Va., near Richmond. Up to that time, the U.S. Army's infantry call to end the day was the French final call, "L'Extinction des feux." Gen. Butterfield decided the "lights out" music was too formal to signal the day's end. One day in July 1862 he recalled the tattoo music and hummed a version of it to an aide, who wrote it down in music.

He ordered Norton to play this new call at the end of each day thereafter, instead of the regulation call. The music was heard and appreciated by other brigades, who asked for copies and adopted this bugle call. It was even adopted by Confederate buglers.

This music was made the official Army bugle call after the war, but not given the name “taps” until 1874.

The first time taps was played at a military funeral may also have been in Virginia soon after Butterfield composed it. Union Capt. John Tidball, head of an artillery battery, ordered it played for the burial of a cannoneer killed in action. Not wanting to reveal the battery’s position in the woods to the enemy nearby, Tidball substituted taps for the traditional three rifle volleys fired over the grave. Taps was played at the funeral of Confederate Gen. Stonewall Jackson 10 months after it was composed. Army infantry regulations by 1891 required taps to be played at military funeral ceremonies.

Taps now is played by the military at burial and memorial services, to accompany the lowering of the flag and to signal the “lights out” command at day’s end.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9xNoEu3O8c>

Lyrics – *Taps*

Day is done, gone the sun
From the hills, from the lake From the sky;
Fading light, dims the sight,
And a star gems the sky, gleaming bright.
From afar, drawing nigh, falls the night.

Thanks and praise, for our days,
'Neath the sun, 'neath the stars, neath the sky;
As we go, this we know, God is nigh.

Sun has set, shadows come,
Time has fled, Scouts must go to their beds
Always true to the promise that they made.

While the light fades from sight,
And the stars gleaming rays softly send,
To thy hands we our souls, Lord, commend.

Yankee Doodle

Singing a song in Revolutionary America was not necessarily an innocent act. At the time, almost everyone sang in public on occasion, either for entertainment, for worship, or as part of their work. However, songs were also important instruments of satire and mockery. People used them to make fun of public figures, to pass ugly rumors, or to playfully insult their enemies—and sometimes their friends.

As opposition to British rule in the American colonies heated up, satirical songs took on a new edge. Rebellious colonists sang songs insulting Britain's king, George III, as a drunken tyrant, and British soldiers answered with songs ridiculing the Americans as backwoods yokels.

One of these songs, which told the story of a poorly dressed Yankee simpleton, or "doodle", was so popular with British troops that they played it as they marched to battle on the first day of the Revolutionary War. The rebels quickly claimed the song as their own, though, and created dozens of new verses that mocked the British, praised the new Continental Army, and hailed its commander, George Washington.

By 1781, when the British surrendered at Yorktown, being called a "Yankee Doodle" had gone from being an insult to a point of pride, and the song had become the new republic's unofficial national anthem.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=niD-AKpAJNc>

Lyrics – *Yankee Doodle*

Yankee Doodle went to town
A-riding on a pony
He stuck a feather in his hat
And called it macaroni

Chorus:
Yankee Doodle, keep it up
Yankee Doodle dandy
Mind the music and the step
and with the girls be handy!

Father and I went down to camp
Along with Captain Gooding
And there we saw the men and boys
As thick as hasty pudding.

And there was Captain Washington
And gentle folks about him
They say he's grown so tarnal proud
He will not ride without them.

God Bless the USA

"God Bless the USA" is an American patriotic song written and recorded by country music artist Lee Greenwood, and is considered to be his signature song. The first album it appears on is 1984's *You've Got a Good Love Comin'*. It was played at the 1984 Republican National Convention with President Ronald Reagan and first lady Nancy Reagan in attendance, but the song gained greater prominence during the Gulf War in 1990 and 1991, as a way of boosting morale.

The popularity of the song rose sharply after the September 11 attacks and during the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and the song was re-released as a single in 2001. The song was also re-recorded in 2003 and released as "God Bless the USA 2003". The song also rose up in popularity in May 2011 when Osama bin Laden was killed by an American raid in Pakistan.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yH61hFsma24>

Lyrics – *God Bless the USA*

If tomorrow all my things
were gone
I'd work for all my life.
And I had had to start again,
With just my children and my
wife.

And I'd think my lucky stars to
be livin' here today,
Cause the flag still stand for
freedom and they can't take
that away
[Chorus]

And I'm proud to be an
American
Where at least I know I'm free
And I won't forget the ones
who died who gave that right
to me

And I'll gladly stand up next to
you and defend her still today
Cause there ain't no doubt I
love this land, God Bless the
USA.

From the lakes of Minnesota,
to the hills of Tennessee,
Across the plains of Texas,
from sea to shining sea.
From Detroit down to
Houston and New York to LA,
Well there's pride in every
American heart and it's time
we stand and say
[Chorus]

'Cause there ain't no doubt I
love this land
God bless the USA!

C2. Patriotic Poems.

a. The American Marine! by Sybil Shearin

He stands straight as an arrow
Dressed in Red White and Blue
His dress blues starched and pressed sharp as a tack.
America, He's heart and soul dedicated to You.

His shoes are spit shined to perfection
Like a mirror in which he can see his reflection
His gloves are white like the new fallen snow.
His rifle loaded and ready to meet his foe.

His hands are calloused

But onward he marches never missing a step.
His eyes keen like the eagles
Scouring the fields for a buddy who may need his help.

His heart is sealed from God above.
His letters written to Mom and family with love.
It's his God and his country America's pride and joy.
Standing on the carrier ready to deploy.

No one sees his hands sweat and slightly tremble.
No one sees the tear fall from his American eyes.
No one feels his heart break when a soldier beside him dies.
Only God sees the pain the American soldier with honor defies.

He still remembers when the Twin Towers fell.
He still remembers the American Liberty Bell.
He still remembers "In God We Trust"
He still remembers Saddam's dungeons and mass graves called prison cells.

He remembers Mom's apple pie each Sunday at noon.
He remembers the ball games and rock and roll tunes.
He remembers Ole Glory there will never be another.
He remembers saying goodbye to his baby brother.

He will fight with honor with his blood spilled upon the hot burning sands.
He will dig down and live in the fox holes called the very pits of hell.
He will fight in swamps, jungles or in the dusty desert lands.
He is the American soldier with trigger cocked who will soon bid this war farewell!

b. To My Military Son, by Shirley Evans

Today my heart was heavy,
As I watched you leave.
The moment I've been dreading
Is finally here ... it's hard to believe

As the bus was pulling out,
My eyes began to fill with tears.
Only a mother's heart feels this pain
After raising a son all those years.

I know your duty is to serve when needed,
And you have to go when Uncle Sam calls.
You'll be in my thoughts and prayers,
And your pictures are on my walls.

This is twice that I've watched you go,
Twice in wartime you've had to serve.

Your loyalty and patriotic duty
Could be more than we deserve.

Folks take things for granted,
Just living from day to day.
But when it comes time for war,
They realize who has to pay.

God Bless you, son ...
For your willingness to serve.
For there are a lot of others
That don't have the nerve.

Thank you for loving your country
Enough to leave your home this way.
Freedom isn't always free ...
There is always a price to pay.

Some people don't care,
Most people really do.
I for one appreciate it,
I wish you only knew.

My prayers are for our country
And all of the military it sends.
I'll fly the flag every day
Until you are back home again.

I pray for your safe return
And send you my love.
Keep your eyes upon God and
Ask for guidance from above.

d. The Sheepdogs, by Russ Vaughn

It's so easy to forget them there,
As we warm beside the fire.
Those spread so far out everywhere,
Those sent to man the wire.
Patrolling on the front line,
As peacefully here we bask,
Protecting what is yours and mine,
That's their hard, dreary task.
Like sheep we are protected,
From the far off wolves of war,
And our Sheepdogs as expected,
Never waver from their chore.
In peace we sheep ignore their kind,

Wary of their violent trends;
But when the wolves attack we find,
These Sheepdogs are our friends.
Forever this has been the way,
Since time for us began,
Sheep fearing that the Sheepdogs may
Disrupt our placid plan.
Yet time again Dogs surely prove,
When comes a wolfine danger,
The Sheepdogs will most swiftly move
To Guard the lambs, the manger.
So here's to Sheepdogs everywhere,
At this Christmas time of year;
Just know the flock is with you there,
And to wish you Christmas cheer.
We wish we could advance the clock,
Cause truth is, Dogs, we miss you,
To the day that you'll rejoin the flock,
When we'll sheepishly then kiss you.

e. The Tyrants, by Joanna Fuchs

The tyrants are loose again;
They hate all but their own.
They give their lives to kill us,
To scatter our blood and bone.

They care not whom they murder,
Whether woman, man or child;
Their minds are full of fury;
Their sickness has gone wild.
To rule the world with violence
Is their one and only goal;
Terror is their method;
They want complete control.

We've seen it all before,
And we could not let it be;
We gave our lives for freedom,
For the world, and for you and me.

We fight all forms of oppression,
Helping victims far and near,
To keep the world from chaos,
To protect what we hold dear.

America's the only country
That gives with its whole heart,

And ask so very little;
We always do our part.

So let's unite again
To subdue our newest foe,
Whatever we must do,
Wherever we must go.

Let's show the world once more
That America is blessed
With people who are heroes,
Who meet each and every test.

f. Why I Love Her, by John Wayne

"America, America, God shed His grace on thee.."
You ask me why I love her? Well, give me time and I'll explain.
Have you seen a Kansas sunset or an Arizona rain?
Have you drifted on a bayou down Louisiana way?
Have you watched the cold fog drifting over San Francisco Bay?

Have you heard a bobwhite calling in the Carolina pines
Or heard the bellow of a diesel at the Appalachia mines?
Does the call of the Niagara trill you when you hear her water roar?
Do you look with awe and wonder at her Massachusetts shore...
Where men, who braved a hard new world,
First stepped on Plymouth's rock?
And do you think of them when you stroll along a New York's dock?

Have you seen a snowflake drifting in the Rockies...way up high?
Have you seen the sun come blazing down from a bright Nevada's sky?
Do you hail to the Columbia as she rushes to the sea...
Or bow you head at Gettysburg...at our struggle to be free?

Have you seen the mighty Titans?...
Have you watched an eagle soar?
Have you seen the Mississippi roll along the Missouri's shore?
Have you felt a chill at Michigan, when on a winter's day,
Her waters rage along the shore in thunderous display?
Does the word "Aloha"..make you warm?
Do you share in disbelief
When you see the surf come roaring in at Waimea Reef?

From Alaska's cold to the Everglades...
From the Rio Grande to Maine...
My heart cries out...
My pulse runs fast at the might of her domain

You ask me why I love her? ... I've a million reasons why.
My beautiful America...beneath God's wide, wide sky.
"And crown they good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea."

g. An American Soldier, by Mary Hamrick

There is no final solution for wretched man,
only a quest for good fellows to defy them.
I am a revolutionary of true colors
carrying the weight of the world
in my immigrant red, white, and blue hands.
Always puckering for a kiss of democracy
I lay back and fall easily in love
with my terrain.
I know no war is an easy war
but I am aware that within its frenzy of gloom
it reanimates the speechless.
War,
a place where madness in the eye of a flower seems
normal
and at the end of the stain of the day the beauty of
being
is forever gone to a place where whimpering
willowy men and women are soon crushed by
dangerous things in the crosscurrents of the air, then
crucified.
How can we ignore misery
and deepen the darkness
by laying back like reclining nudes
with faraway eyes? No grace, no grit, no honor.

For me it is not so simple.
My eyes, like distant beacons,
shield the will-less on their borders
and as the gray gulf pulls us close to them
we stand as one, waist-deep in lumps of earth wielding
our orange tambourines
and pray the goal of glory
becomes as visible and as dominant
as the force of prairie lightning.

I am a soldier, your sweet protector
(where old terrors mingle) creeping on until their
undoing.
Sign of life,
as I carry the world piece by piece.

This poem by Mary Hamrick first appeared in the Style section of the Tallahassee Press Democrat, October 7, 2001.

h. Just a Common Soldier, Author Unknown

He was getting old and paunchy and his hair was falling fast,
And he sat around the Legion telling stories of his past.
Of a war that he had fought in and the deeds that he had done,
In his exploits with his buddies -- they were heroes, every one.

And tho' sometimes to his neighbors, his tales became a joke,
All this Legion buddies listened, for they knew whereof he spoke
But we'll hear his tales no longer, for old Bill has passed away,
And the world's a little poorer, for the soldier died today.

He won't be mourned by many, just his children and his wife,
For he lived an ordinary, quick and uneventful life.
Held a job and raised a family, quietly going his own way
And the world won't note his passing, tho' a soldier died today.

When politicians leave this earth, their bodies lie in state,
While thousands note their passing and proclaim that they were
great.
Papers tell their life stories from the time that they were young,
But the passing of a soldier goes unnoticed and unsung.

In the greatest contribution to the welfare of our land
One guy breaks his promises and cons his fellow man.
But the ordinary fellow, who in time of war and strife,
Goes off to serve his country and offers up his life.

A politician's stipend and the style in which he lives
Are sometimes disproportionate to the service that he gives.
While the ordinary soldier who offered up his all,
Is paid off with a medal and perhaps a pension small.

It's so easy to forget them, for it was so long ago
That the old Bills of our country went to battle, but we know
It was not the politicians, with their compromise and ploys
Who won for us the freedom that our country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger with your enemies at hand,
Would you want a politician with his ever-shifting stand?
Or would you prefer a soldier who has sworn to defend
His home, his kin and country and would fight right to the end?

He was just a common soldier and his ranks are growing thin,
 But his presence should remind us we may need his likes again.
 For when countries are in conflict then we find the soldier's part
 Is to clean up all the troubles that the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honor while he's here to hear the praise,
 Then at least let's give him homage at the ending of his days.
 Perhaps just a simple headline in a paper that would say,
"Our Country is in Mourning, For a Soldier Died Today!"

h. God Save the Flag, by Oliver Wendell Holmes

Washed in the blood of the brave and the blooming,
 Snatched from the altars of insolent foes,
 Burning with star-fires, but never consuming,
 Flash its broad ribbons of lily and rose.

Vainly the prophets of Baal would rend it,
 Vainly his worshippers pray for its fall;
 Thousands have died for it, millions defended it,
 Emblem of justice and mercy to all.

Justice that reddens the sky with her terrors,
 Mercy that comes with her white-handed train,
 Soothing all passions, redeeming all errors,
 Sheathing the saber and breaking the chain.

Borne on the deluge of all usurpation,
 Drifted our Ark o'er the desolate seas,
 Bearing the rainbow of hope to the nations,
 Torn from the storm-cloud and flung to the breeze!

God bless the Flag and its loyal defenders,
 While its broad folds o'er the battle-filed wave,
 Till the dim star-wreath rekindle its splendors,
 Washed from its strains in the blood of the brave!

i. Freedom Flies in your Heart Like an Eagle, by Audie Murphy

Dusty old helmet, rusty old gun,
 They sit in the corner and wait -
 Two souvenirs of the Second World War
 That have withstood the time, and the hate.
 Mute witness to a time of much trouble.

Where kill or be killed was the law -
 Were these implements used with high honor?
 What was the glory they saw?

Many times I've wanted to ask them -
 And now that we're here all alone,
 Relics all three of a long ago war -
 Where has freedom gone?

Freedom flies in your heart like an eagle.
 Let it soar with the winds high above
 Among the spirits of soldiers now sleeping,
 Guard it with care and with love.

I salute my old friends in the corner,
 I agree with all they have said -
 And if the moment of truth comes tomorrow,
 I'll be free, of By God, I'll be dead!

j. Ragged Old Flag, by Johnny Cash

I walked through a country courthouse square,
 on a park bench an old man was sitting there.
 I said, "Your old courthouse is kinda run down."
 He said, "Naw, it'll do for our little town."
 I said, "Your flagpole has leaned a little bit,
 And that's a Ragged Old Flag you got handing on it."

He said, "Have a seat", and I sat down.
 "Is this the first time you've been to our little town?" I said, "I think it is." He said, "I
 don't like to brag,
 But we're kinda proud of that Ragged Old Flag."

"You see, we got a little hole in that flag there
 When Washington took it across the Delaware.
 And it got powder-burned the night Francis Scott Key Sat watching it writing _Oh Say
 Can You See_
 And it got a bad rip in New Orleans
 With Packingham and Jackson tuggin' at its seams."

"And it almost fell at the Alamo
 Beside the Texas flag, but she waved on through.
 She got cut with a sword and Chancellorsville
 And she got cut again at Shiloh Hill.
 There was Robert E. Lee, Beauregard, and Bragg,
 And the south wind blew hard on that Ragged Old Flag."

“On Flanders Field in World War I
She got a big hole from a Bertha gun.
She turned blood red in World War II
She hung limp and low by the time it went through. She was in Korea and Vietnam.
She went where she was sent by her Uncle Sam.”

“She waved from our ships upon the briny foam, And now they’ve about quit waving her
back here at home. In her own good land she’s been abused -
She’s been burned, dishonored, denied and refused.”

“And the government for which she stands
Is scandalized throughout the land.
And she’s getting threadbare and wearing thin,
But she’s in good shape for the shape she’s in. ‘Cause she’s been through the fire
before
And I believe she can take a whole lot more.”

“So we raise her up every morning,
Take her down every night.
We don’t let her touch the ground
And we fold her up right.
On second thought I DO like to brag,
“Cause I’m mighty proud of that Ragged Old Flag.”

C. Patriotic Music and Poetry Vocabulary: