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## Book Resources
- World Book Encyclopedia
- *Uncle Sam and Old Glory, Symbols of America* by Delano C. West and Jean M. West
- *Our National Symbols* by Linda Carlson Johnson
- *Patriotic Holidays and Celebrations* by Valorie Grigoli
- *The Story of Old Glory* by Albert I. Mayer
- *The American Flag* by Thoma Parrish

## Web Site Resources
- www.quotations.about.com
- www.richmond.edu
- www.miketodd.net

Written by Terri Darr Mclean
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Patriotic Pursuits

Why do we sing “The Star-Spangled Banner” at sporting events? Or stand at attention when the U.S. flag is raised or lowered? Set off fireworks on the Fourth of July?

Because we love our country, and we show it through acts of patriotism. Patriotism is showing respect for your country’s symbols, celebrating its customs and traditions, taking pride in its history, and honoring its heroes.

Americans show their patriotism in many ways. In this special section, we’ll take a look at some of those ways and how they came about. We’ll also see firsthand that, whatever form it takes, patriotism is alive and well in America!

The Roots of Patriotism

Patriotism comes from a Greek word that means fatherland. Before America was founded, patriotism meant love of the fatherland, or homeland, and referred to a love for the country’s physical features — mountains, rivers, etc.

Today, patriotism is not only a love for one’s homeland but of the people who live there. It is a personal attachment to their customs and traditions. It is a respect for their forefathers. And it is a concern for their welfare.

Sept. 11, 2001

Patriotism — A Defining Moment

It’s a day we will never forget, not only because of the horrible loss of life and property but because of the renewed spirit of patriotism that took over this nation shortly afterward. U.S. flags were raised, ribbons were worn, and voices were united in support. It was a defining moment in U.S. history, and it was a defining moment for Americans as they joined together to support this country and the freedom for which it stands.

Activity

Patriotism, in the simplest terms, means love for one’s country. In the space below, write down all the things you love about your country.

Now cut pictures and words from your newspaper of these things (and others when you find them) and make a “Things I Love About America” collage.
The Symbols of Patriotism

Does your school have a mascot? The Tigers, maybe? The Bulldogs or Pirates?

A school mascot is an example of a symbol — something that stands for something else. In most cases, mascots are symbols of strength and power.

Nations use symbols, too. They are used to give people a sense of belonging and to show others what is important about the nation.

In America, our national symbols have become a part of our everyday lives. Whether it’s the beloved American flag,* the Bald Eagle, or Uncle Sam himself, these symbols represent basic American ideals. And respecting and displaying these symbols are ways we show our patriotism.

*See pages 8-9.

The ‘Power of the Land’

It was a simple gift — a feather from a bald eagle — but it carried a powerful message.

When a Native American chief presented England’s King George II with an eagle’s feather as a gift of peace in 1734, the chief told the king it represented the “power of the land.” Since then, the bald eagle has symbolized America’s great strength.

The eagle, with its majestic appearance, has been a symbol of power since ancient times. The United States made the eagle its official national bird in 1782 to signify the country’s independence and its strength. You’ll find the eagle on coins, paper money, and stamps, as well as in the Great Seal of the United States.

Unfortunately, the bald eagle has been an endangered species since the 1960s. By the 1970s, there were only about two to three thousand bald eagles nesting in the lower 48 states. But conservation efforts in recent years have allowed the bald eagle to make a strong comeback.

Is the Bald Eagle Really Bald?

No. The bald eagle’s head is covered with white feathers, giving it the appearance of baldness.

What a Turkey!

There were some people — including Benjamin Franklin — who thought the turkey should be America’s national bird. But after much debate, the bald eagle’s majestic appearance proved more appealing, and it was chosen instead.
It’s Official

At the time of our country’s independence, European countries had their own official seals, which they used on important paperwork. So when the United States gained independence and became a nation, it, too, needed an official seal. That seal, adopted by the U.S. government on June 20, 1782, became the official symbol of our nation.

The face, or front, of the seal, which is the part that’s used on official documents, carries an American eagle with a shield on its breast, symbolizing self-reliance. The shield contains 13 vertical stripes, which represent the 13 original colonies as they did on the flag of 1777. (On the shield, seven stripes are white, while on the flag, seven are red.)

The eagle clutches an olive branch with 13 leaves and 13 olives in its right talon and 13 arrows in its left talon, symbolizing the power of both war and peace.

In the eagle’s beak is a banner with the words, “E pluribus unum,” which is Latin for, “One out of many.” This represents a single, united nation formed out of many states. Above its head is the constellation from the 1777 flag, with 13 stars.

Originally, the “chief” above the stripes on the shield symbolized Congress. But since 1789, it has represented all branches of government.

Decisions! Decisions!

Because of the importance placed on the Great Seal of the United States, it wasn’t easy to decide on its design. It took Congress 12 years for its members to finally reach an agreement!

On the Flip Side

Although it is not used on documents, the reverse side of the Great Seal also has interesting symbolism. There is a pyramid of 13 layers of stone, which represent the Union. The pyramid is watched over by the Eye of Providence, which is enclosed in a triangle. Sound familiar? It should. These symbols are found on a common, everyday item. Can you figure it out? (Answer on page 15.)
The Symbols of Patriotism (continued)

The Sound of Freedom

Although the Liberty Bell is no longer rung, the symbolism behind this treasured old relic still comes through loud and clear.

Designed in 1752 for the Pennsylvania State House in Philadelphia, the “State House Bell” was used to draw attention to special announcements and to call people to events. It is probably best known for calling townspeople together for the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence on July 8, 1776.

The bell was rung on the same day each year until 1835, when it suffered a major crack while being rung at a funeral.

In 1839, the people who opposed slavery in the United States adopted the bell — crack and all — as a symbol of freedom. Soon they began referring to it as the Liberty Bell. On the 100th anniversary of American independence, the Liberty Bell was taken on tour to promote the cause of freedom throughout the country.

Today, the Liberty Bell still hangs in Philadelphia. More than a million visitors travel there each year to see this famous American symbol and to read its inscription, “Proclaim Liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.”

If at first you don’t succeed ...

The Liberty Bell actually cracked the first time it was rung, right after its arrival from England. To fix this first crack, the 2,080-pound bell was recast in Philadelphia using the same metal.

Does the Liberty Bell still ring?

Because of the crack, the Liberty Bell can’t ring. But every year, on the Fourth of July, a taped version of a bell rings out from Liberty Bell Pavilion in unison with thousands of other bells around the nation.

A Cartoon Comes to Life

Dressed in stars and stripes and sporting his famous white beard, Uncle Sam has been an American national symbol since the War of 1812.

That’s when Samuel Wilson, a meat-processing plant owner, began stamping the meat he sold to the U.S. Army with the letters “U.S.” It is believed that Wilson’s workers thought the “U.S.” stood for “Uncle Sam” because that’s what they called him — “Uncle Sam” Wilson. The nickname stuck when newspaper cartoonists began using Uncle Sam to refer to the U.S. government in political cartoons.

Uncle Sam has appeared in many different forms, but the most famous depiction was drawn during World War I for Army posters. With the slogan “I want you!” underneath his picture, Uncle Sam helped recruit men for the army.
Lady Liberty

With the exception of the American flag, the Statue of Liberty is probably the most recognizable American symbol in the world.

The statue, at the entrance of New York Harbor, is a symbol of freedom to people everywhere. It was given to the United States by France as an expression of friendship and to represent the ideal of liberty shared by both countries.

The statue shows liberty as a proud woman draped in a robe. In her right hand, lifted high, is a glowing torch. In her left hand is a tablet bearing the date of the Declaration of Independence. She wears a crown with seven spikes, which represents the light of liberty shining on the seven seas and seven continents. A chain, representing tyranny (unjust rule), lies broken at her feet.

On the statue’s pedestal is a poem with the lines, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.” These words have been especially important to immigrants who pass the statue as they enter the United States in search of freedom and opportunity.

What goes up, must come down

It took 10 years for sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi and his workers to finish the Statue of Liberty in Paris. Then, once they finished it, they took it apart! They had to disassemble the statue to pack it in 214 wooden crates for shipment to the United States.

A newspaperman helps out

Although the people of France paid for the statue, the people of the United States had to pay for its pedestal. The money was slow coming in, though, until Joseph Pulitzer stepped in. His newspaper, the New York World, published articles and cartoons promoting the pedestal project. He even listed the names of children who gave their pennies. Soon, Pulitzer was able to publish a story announcing that enough money had been raised to build the pedestal.

Uncle Sam has appeared in thousands of political cartoons. Depending on the cartoonist’s opinion of what the government is doing, he might be drawn in a positive or negative light. Watch your newspaper for political cartoons with Uncle Sam. Find one and determine if the cartoonist is in favor of what the government is doing or in opposition. Discuss.

Following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, a saddened or angry Uncle Sam was the image of choice for many cartoonists. Do research to find a Sept. 11-related cartoon with Uncle Sam. Describe the message you think the cartoonist is trying to convey. How did Uncle Sam’s image help get that message across? Discuss.

Find and read the famous poem about the Statue of Liberty, “The New Colossus” by Emma Lazarus. Then write a poem that describes your thoughts about one of the patriotic symbols described in this section. Use the space below for your final draft.
Why is the U.S. flag folded into a triangular shape?
To symbolize the shape of the cocked hats worn by soldiers during the American Revolution.

The Stars and Stripes

The most widely known symbol of a nation is its flag — a piece of cloth with a picture or design that represents something special about that nation. In the United States, that flag, of course, is the Stars and Stripes.

Every part of the flag’s design represents an American ideal. The red, white, and blue colors are symbolic of the American spirit — red for hardiness and valor, white for purity and innocence, and blue for perseverance and justice. The 13 red and white stripes stand for the original 13 colonies. And the stars represent the 50 states.

For more than 200 years, the Stars and Stripes has flown over the United States — in good times and in bad. Created during the Revolutionary War, the flag has changed as the nation has changed, but the ideals for which it stands have not.

The Betsy Ross Story: Fact or Fiction?
Charming though it may be, the story that Philadelphia seamstress Betsy Ross made the first U.S. flag with stars and stripes is probably legend, not fact. Mrs. Ross was a seamstress in Philadelphia and she did make flags during the Revolutionary War. But there is no evidence to back up the claim by Ross’ grandson that she specially made the first American flag at the request of a group headed by General George Washington himself.

When the colonists fought the Revolutionary War, they fought under many flags. The first one was the Continental Colors, or Grand Union flag, and it had a small British flag in the upper left-hand corner. The Continental Colors served as the unofficial American flag from 1775 to 1777.

After the United States gained independence in 1776, it was no longer desirable for the flag to be a part of the American flag. On June 14, 1777, Continental Congress declared that “the Flag of the United States of America shall be thirteen stripes alternate red and white in a blue field representing a new constellation.”
Honoring the Stars and Stripes

In 1942, Congress adopted the Flag Code — a set of rules governing the use and treatment of the U.S. flag. The code is based on the principle that the flag should be honored and respected as a symbol of the nation it represents. Here are just a few of the rules to give you an idea of how we are to treat our national flag:

Displaying the flag
- The U.S. flag should be displayed every day except when weather conditions might damage it. It is customarily displayed from sunrise to sunset but can be flown 24 hours a day. It should be raised briskly and lowered slowly and ceremoniously.
- When flown with a group of flags other than national flags on separate staffs, the U.S. flag must be in the center and higher than the others.
- If there are other national flags being displayed, they should be flown on separate staffs of the same height and of the same size as the U.S. flag.
- During times of mourning, raise the flag to its peak then lower it to half-mast. Raise it to peak again before lowering it at the end of the day.
- When the flag is used to cover a casket, it should be placed with the union at the head and over the left shoulder. It should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.
- At no time should the U.S. flag touch the ground, the floor, or anything beneath it.

Discarding the flag
- When the U.S. flag is no longer fit to be displayed, the most dignified way to destroy it is to burn it.

The Pledge of Allegiance

“I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

The Pledge of Allegiance is an example of how Americans show their respect for a national symbol and the country it represents. The original pledge was distributed to schoolchildren in 1892 when President Benjamin Harris asked schools throughout the country to conduct patriotic exercises in observance of the 400th anniversary of Columbus discovering America. The wording was changed slightly in 1923 and again in 1954. In 1942, Congress made the pledge part of the Flag Code.
Patriotism in Song

Americans have always shown their patriotism through music. Whether inspired in times of war or in times of peace, the words to some of our favorite songs were written out of love and respect for this country.

You know the words to them:

“O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave? O’er the land of the free and the home of the brave?” from “Star-Spangled Banner;” “Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim’s pride. From ev’ry mountain side, let freedom ring!” from “My Country, ’Tis of Thee.”

These are just two of the many patriotic songs that have been handed down through the years. And though times have changed, these songs are sung as proudly today as they were when they were written years ago.

‘By the Dawn’s Early Light’

When American lawyer Francis Scott Key boarded a British warship during the War of 1812, his mission was to seek the release of a friend who was being held prisoner. Little did he know that he, too, would be held captive until the British finished a mission of their own: the bombardment of Fort McHenry near Baltimore harbor.

Key and his friend stood helpless on the deck as the British pounded a nearly defenseless Fort McHenry all day and night. When the shelling stopped and dawn came, Key could barely believe his eyes: The American flag was still flying and the fort still standing.

Moved deeply by the sight, Key pulled a letter from his pocket and began writing his thoughts down in words — words that would eventually form the verses to America’s national anthem.

Originally titled, “Defense of Fort McHenry,” Key’s song was printed just days after the onslaught. It was later called “Star-Spangled Banner” and grew quickly in popularity. Before long, the U.S. Army was singing this patriotic song at daily raisings and lowerings of the U.S. flag. Congress approved the song as the national anthem in 1931.

An Inspiration to All

The actual flag that inspired Francis Scott Key to write the “Star-Spangled Banner” is on display at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. The nearly 50-foot-long flag covers an entire wall.
‘Purple Mountains Majesties’

When Katherine Lee Bates reached the summit of Pike’s Peak in Colorado one day in 1893, the view inspired her to write what many people consider to be our second-most popular patriotic song: “America the Beautiful.”

With such memorable phrases as, “O beautiful for spacious skies” and “For purple mountains majesties,” the song unmistakably hails America’s physical beauty. Yet, Bates also wrote passionately about freedom, brotherhood, and patriot dreams in the song that was originally intended as a poem.

Bates, a college professor, was on a vacation when she hiked the 14,000-foot mountain and looked out over the land she loved. Her poem remained unpublished for two years. Its meter (beat or rhythm) fit several tunes at the time, including the one it is most closely associated with, “Materna.”

An Un-American American Song?

To some early Americans, the tune to which “My Country ’Tis of the Thee” is sung was considered unpatriotic because the melody was the same as Britain’s “God Save the King.”

Yet, that tune had actually been used in America long before “My Country ’Tis of Thee” was written by the Rev. Samuel F. Smith in 1832. Such patriotic songs as “God Save the President” and “God Save George Washington” were also sung to the same tune.

With a partner or by yourself, try your hand at writing a patriotic song. It can be a rap song, a country song, or any other style of music you like. Put your original words to a familiar tune or compose both the words and the music! Don’t forget to give it a title.

“Yankee Doodle” is a song originally used by the British to poke fun at colonial soldiers from New England. However, the colonists turned the joke around and made “Yankee Doodle” their battle song. At the library or online find the lyrics to “Yankee Doodle.” In small groups, discuss what you think they mean. Then do some research to find out what the British were really saying about the “Yankees.”

It is considered an honor to be asked to sing the national anthem at a major American sporting event. Watch your newspaper’s sports section for an upcoming sporting event. If you were in charge of choosing someone to sing the national anthem at such an event, who would you choose? Discuss.

Look up the words to “America the Beautiful.” Choose one verse and paraphrase it. (To paraphrase means to put something into different words having the same meaning.) Write your version of the verse below.

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In the Words of Patriots

If Patrick Henry really meant what he said (and there's no evidence that he didn't), there might be no more sincere patriot than him. His famous words, “Give me liberty, or give me death!” clearly embody the American patriotic spirit.

They also provide evidence of the power of words. Henry's fiery speech influenced others to take up the cause of liberty long after he was dead and gone.

Americans have used both the spoken and written word to inspire and influence others to embrace that same patriotic spirit. Whether in a speech or on paper, the words of patriots are among the most idealized and, without doubt, are the most memorized.

A Birth Announcement

In some of the most stirring and memorable words ever put down on paper, the Declaration of Independence announced to the world that a nation was born — a nation where all men are created equal and where government exists for the benefit of the people, not its rulers. It is one of the most important documents of all time.

Adopted on July 4, 1776, the declaration brought to an end a long fight by our nation’s forefathers to separate from Britain, which American colonists blamed for many abuses. But it also established the United States as a country in which all people are due certain rights, “among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.” Both have become important principles in the development of democracy.

Years later, the words contained in the Declaration of Independence are still among the most cherished. They have been a source of authority for many other important documents, including our Bill of Rights and the Constitution. And they have served as a guide for every freedom-loving country in the world.

Words to Remember

“I regret that I have but one life to give for my country.” — Nathan Hale

“Patriotism is easy to understand in America; it means looking out for yourself by looking out for your country.” — Calvin Coolidge

A Little TLC

Treasured though it is, the actual document containing the Declaration of Independence was not always given the greatest care. During the Revolution, it was rolled up and moved from one place to another. Then, when the U.S. capital was moved from New York to Washington, D.C., the document got wet. And, during the 19th Century, it hung for almost 40 years near a window with strong sunlight. Modern restoration efforts began in 1951. The original parchment copy of the Declaration of Independence can be seen in the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C. It is displayed along with the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights.
Short But Sweet

The site was where the Battle of Gettysburg was fought during the Civil War. The speaker was Abraham Lincoln. And the message was simple: America is a nation of one people dedicated to one principle — equality.

The Gettysburg Address, which begins with the famous opening, “Four score and seven years ago...,” is probably one of the best remembered speeches in American history. It was originally written as a dedication speech for a cemetery, but it actually served to help redefine a nation divided by civil war.

In just two minutes, President Lincoln reminded listeners that America is a nation “conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.” He also honored the brave men — dead and alive — who struggled in battle there.

And, in closing, he stated his resolve that “this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.”

Credit Where Credit’s Due

President Lincoln was not the keynote speaker at the dedication ceremony at Gettysburg. A man named Edward Everett was. He spoke for two long hours before Lincoln finally got his turn. After all was said and done, Everett wrote to Lincoln, “I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion in two hours as you did in two minutes.”

Enough said!

More Words to Remember

“A man’s country is not a certain area of land, of mountains, rivers, and woods, but it is a principle; and patriotism is loyalty to that principle.” — George William Curtis

“Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.” — John Fitzgerald Kennedy

“There is nothing wrong with America that cannot be cured with what is right with America.” — William J. Clinton

Activities

Find a copy of Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address. What does the speech say about veterans, and how do you think this relates to patriotism? Discuss in small groups.

Select one of the famous quotes printed on this page and, in the space below, describe the quote’s message.

Watch your newspaper for patriotic quotes. They can be quotes from the president of the United States or someone in your city or town. Cut out the quotes and paste them onto note cards to share with the class.

Put your own patriotic thoughts into writing. You can write a speech, a letter to the editor or editorial, or an essay describing how you feel about America and the foundation of freedom and equality upon which it was built.
Let's Celebrate!

Americans love to celebrate, and when it comes to patriotic holidays, we can celebrate with the best of them! Fireworks, parades, and picnics are the order of the day for some; memorials and solemn ceremonies for others. In either case, Americans know how to show their true patriotic colors.

There are many patriotic holidays and celebrations. Some are shared throughout the nation, while others are celebrated regionally. From these special occasions, many customs and traditions have been handed down.

On these two pages, we’ll take a look at just a few of the special days and the traditions associated with them. But don't stop there! Do some research to find out about the others — especially those in your city or state. You’ll be surprised at just how much there is to celebrate!

A Presidential Day

Some call it Washington’s Birthday. Others call it President’s Day. It's celebrated as a federal holiday on the third Monday in February in honor of the first president of the United States, the “Father of the Country,” George Washington.

Actually, some states celebrate President’s Day not only as Washington’s birthday but as Abraham Lincoln’s birthday, too, and for all presidents past. (Lincoln’s birthday also falls in February.)

Birthday Boy!

As holidays go, President’s Day is fairly uneventful. There is a wreath-laying ceremony at Washington’s burial site in Mount Vernon in Virginia. There is also a re-enactment of military exercises at Valley Forge. But most people observe the holiday simply by getting the day off from work or school or taking advantage of President’s Day sales.
**A Birthday Blowout!**

Americans have enjoyed celebrating the nation's birthday since the very beginning. Just four days after the Declaration of Independence was adopted on July 4, 1776, church bells rang and bonfires were lit. A year later on the Fourth of July, cannons boomed, soldiers paraded, fireworks were set off, and candles glowed in windows.

The Fourth of July became a national legal holiday in 1941. Today, celebrations include many of the same traditions — and more! Brilliant fireworks displays; patriotic music programs; barbecues; parades and festivals; red, white, and blue decorations; even appearances by Uncle Sam are the usual fare for America's annual birthday festivities.

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**How Do You Celebrate the Fourth?**

If you live in Kotzebue, Alaska, you might celebrate with whale-watching contests or kayak races. If you live in Lititz, Pa., you might celebrate by attending the Festival of Candles. Or if you live in Bristol, R.I., you might celebrate by observing a Fireman's Muster — a water-squirting contest between fire engine companies. Every city has its own special way of celebrating the Fourth, including yours. Check it out.

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**A Day of Remembrance**

Several communities claim to have come up with the idea behind Memorial Day — that of remembering Americans who gave up their lives for our country. But in 1966, the U.S. government declared that Waterloo, N.Y., was the birthplace of this patriotic holiday.

Memorial Day originally honored those who died during the Civil War. It now also honors any American who died in any war while serving the United States. The holiday is marked by the placing of flowers and U.S. flags on the graves of soldiers, as well as by military parades and special programs. Often, the Gettysburg Address — that famous speech by Abraham Lincoln that paid tribute to those who died fighting in the Civil War — is read as part of Memorial Day festivities.

Memorial Day became a legal holiday in 1971 and is observed on the last Monday in May. Many Southern states also observe their own days to honor those who died fighting for the Confederate Army during the Civil War.

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**Activities**

What is special about the Fourth of July where you live? Talk about holiday customs and traditions your community observes, then list some of them below. Are any of them unique to your area? Discuss.

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In addition to George Washington (and Abraham Lincoln in some states), there are two other men from America's past who have their own holidays. Do you know who they are? Discuss the reasons you think those men are honored with national holidays.

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We pay tribute to America's servicemen and women on Veterans' Day on Nov. 11. To get an idea of why we honor our veterans, invite a veteran to speak to your class. Prior to his or her visit, prepare a list of reporter's questions to ask. Afterward, write a newspaper-style story based on your guest's talk.

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Can you think of other patriotic holidays? Make a list of national and regional observances that you think are patriotic in nature. Be prepared to explain your reasoning.

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**Answer to question on page 5** - The images and words found on the back side of the Great Seal of the United States are also found on the back of the $1 bill.