Betsy Ross House

Curriculum Booklet

M. Adams 2014
Thanks for booking a visit to the Betsy Ross House. The Betsy Ross House is operated by Historic Philadelphia, Inc. (HPI)—a non-profit dedicated to making American history relevant and real through interpretation, interaction, and education. This curriculum booklet is part of that effort.

This book has lesson materials that supplement a Betsy Ross House visit. They can be used before or after the trip to enhance the educational value of the experience. Most of the materials are readings, writing prompts, and worksheets that can be used on their own with little or no prep work.

When combined with the on-site learning during a Betsy Ross House visit, this booklet meets Common Core and other national standards for English Language Arts, Math, and the Social Studies. Our goal is to make American history as meaningful for you and your students as possible. If something in this book needs explanation or if something else would be helpful please let the HPI education staff know. We will be happy to offer assistance!

Thanks, again, for booking a visit to the Betsy Ross House! We are looking forward to your visit!

Regards,

Mike Adams
Education Coordinator
Historic Philadelphia, Inc.
Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the many individuals who contributed their time, effort, and expertise in the fields of history and education throughout the process of revising this edition of the Betsy Ross House Curriculum Booklet. Sincere thanks are offered to Kim Staub, Jeff Miller, Logan Ackerley, Sandy Lloyd, Alison English, and the entire Betsy Ross House team.

With great appreciation,

Mike Adams
Education Coordinator
Historic Philadelphia, Inc.
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Lesson Materials Inspired by the Betsy Ross House
Basic Facts about Betsy Ross

Betsy Griscom—Childhood

★ Born Elizabeth Griscom in New Jersey on January 1, 1752, the 8th of 17 children.
★ When she was about three years old, Betsy and her Quaker family moved to a large home on 4th and Arch Streets in Philadelphia.
★ As a teen, she apprenticed at John Webster’s upholstery shop near 2nd and Chestnut.

Betsy and John Ross

★ John Ross was also an apprentice to Webster.
★ John Ross was the son of Aeneas Ross, the assistant rector of Christ Church.
★ Betsy and John eloped in November of 1773.
★ Betsy’s family and the Quakers did not approve of Betsy marrying outside of her faith. She was disowned by her family and read out of meeting (which meant she could no longer be a member of her Quaker meeting).
★ She attended church services with her husband at Christ Church.
★ Betsy and John ran an upholstery shop together on Chestnut Street. Benjamin Franklin and Benjamin Chew were among their customers.
★ John Ross served with the Pennsylvania militia, guarding guns and ammunition.
★ John Ross died at home and was buried at Christ Church on January 21, 1776.

Betsy and Joseph Ashburn

★ Betsy and Joseph Ashburn married at Old Swede’s Church on June 15, 1777.
★ Betsy made musket cartridges for the Continental Army in the winter of 1777/78.
★ Betsy and Joseph had two daughters together, Zillah and Eliza. Zillah died as an infant.
★ Captain Joseph Ashburn and his crew were captured by the British and taken to Old Mill Prison in England.
★ Joseph died from an unknown illness while at Old Mill Prison.

Betsy and John Claypoole

★ John was captured by the British and imprisoned with Ashburn in Old Mill Prison
★ Claypoole was released from prison on June 22, 1782.
★ Upon his return, Claypoole visited Betsy to tell her the news of her husband’s death.
★ John and Betsy were married on May 8, 1783 at Christ Church.
★ In 1784, John and Betsy joined the Free or “Fighting” Quakers and worshipped at the Meetinghouse that is still standing on 5th and Arch.
★ Betsy taught the upholstery trade to John and they continued the business together.
★ The Claypooles did upholstery work for the state government in Independence Hall.
★ Betsy and John had five daughters: Clarissa Sidney, Susanna, Rachel, Jane, and Harriet. Harriet died as a child.
Betsy Ross—Flag maker

★ Betsy’s story was first told publicly by her grandson, William Canby, at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1870.
★ Canby, as well as Betsy’s daughters, granddaughters, and a niece, signed sworn affidavits stating that they heard the story of the making of the first flag from Betsy’s own mouth.
★ In 1776, three men—George Washington, Robert Morris, and George Ross, visited Betsy Ross in her upholstery shop. These three men made up the “Flag Committee.”
★ Washington showed Betsy a sketch of a flag with thirteen red and white stripes and thirteen six pointed stars.
★ George Washington asked if Betsy could make a flag. Betsy responded: “I do not know, but I will try.” This line was used in the sworn statements of many of Betsy’s family members, suggesting that it is a direct quote from Betsy.
★ Betsy suggested changing the stars to five points rather than six because it would be faster to sew. She showed them how to do it with just one snip of her scissors. They agreed to change the design to have stars with five points.
★ George Ross was the uncle of Betsy’s late husband, John.
★ The first flag was probably used in battle and did not survive.
★ On May 29th, 1777, Betsy Ross was paid a large sum of money from the State Navy Board for making flags.
★ On June 14th, 1777, Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes as our official national flag.
★ Betsy continued to make flags. From 1817-1828, Betsy and her daughter Clarissa were in the upholstery and flag-making business together. Together, they made hundreds of flags for the government.

Betsy Ross House and Courtyard

★ The front of the house was built around 1740 and the later addition on the back was built sometime before 1760.
★ Betsy Ross lived in the house from about 1776-1779.
★ The offices were built in 1937, the gift shop in 1965.
★ The fountain was installed in the courtyard in 1974. The sculptor, Henry Mitchell, was famed for his ability to sculpt small animals. The cats have no real significance to Betsy Ross or the House.
★ The 19th century owners of the home added a large storefront window, removed the front staircase, removed fireplaces, and made other 19th century renovations.
★ The house was restored in 1937 with a $25,000 contribution from A. Atwater Kent and the architectural design of Richardson Brognard Okie.
★ Okie saved all of the old boards, nails, and architectural elements wherever possible. Where these elements could not be salvaged, he replaced them with pieces from demolished Colonial homes.
★ Betsy and John Claypoole were buried in the courtyard in 1976. They were originally laid to rest in a Quaker cemetery on Fifth and Locust Streets, then at Mount Moriah Cemetery in southwest Philadelphia, and finally, in the courtyard.
Betsy Ross Timeline Activity

Using the “History of Betsy Ross” information and everything you learned during your visit, create a timeline showing what you think are the ten most important events in her life.

Born,
January 1, 1752

Died,
January 30, 1836
The Betsy Ross Controversy

Betsy’s story came out in 1870 when her grandson, William Canby, made a speech to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. How can we trust him?

★ William Canby, along with Sophia B. Hildebrandt (Betsy’s granddaughter), Rachel Fletcher (Betsy’s daughter), and Margaret Donaldson Boggs (Betsy’s niece), all gave affidavits stating that Betsy Ross had told them the story of General Washington and the Flag Committee visiting her upholstery shop. The affidavits are virtually identical in their recollection Betsy’s story.¹

★ This type of history is called “oral history.” Many cultures, including American Indians, rely on oral history to pass important stories of their culture’s history from grandparents to grandchildren, generation after generation. More and more historians are seeing the value of oral histories as unique perspectives on the past.

How can we trust that Betsy Ross was telling the truth when she told her family the story?

★ According to her family, Betsy Ross received a visit from the Flag Committee in late May 1776. Though General Washington was away commanding the army at the time, he made a special trip to Philadelphia from May 23 – June 5, 1776 to pick up military supplies.² Betsy got the date right.

If Betsy Ross made the first flag, why was she not famous during her lifetime?

★ At the time, flags were not revered like they are today. The flag was not a symbol of liberty or patriotism; it was simply a military supply like a tent or a uniform. Betsy Ross told her children and grandchildren the legendary story not because she had made the first flag, which was probably somewhat insignificant in her mind, but because she had met General George Washington, a great man who would later become the first President of the United States.

Why did Washington choose Betsy Ross for the special honor of making the Nation’s first flag?

★ Washington didn’t choose Betsy for the special honor of making the Nation’s first flag because there was no special honor. The flag was just another military supply. He could just have easily asked her to make tents for the army, and asked a different upholsterer to make the flag.

★ Deciding to conduct business with Betsy Ross would have been an easy one. George Ross, a member of Washington’s Flag Committee who was actively involved in defending the Delaware River from British invasion, was her uncle by marriage. George Ross knew that

¹ View the affidavits online http://www.ushistory.org/betsy/flagaffs.html
Betsy had been recently widowed, and may have suggested helping the struggling young upholsterer.

**Is there any hard evidence to support the claim that Betsy Ross made the first flag?**

★ Yes. Aside from strong circumstantial evidence,, there are also the minutes from the Navy Board from May 1777 that clearly state that Betsy Ross was paid for making a flag: “An order on William Webb to Elizabeth [Betsy] Ross, for fourteen pounds, twelve shillings, two pence for making ship’s colours [flag], &c, put into Richards store.” This is the earliest receipt for a flag on record.

★ Fourteen pounds was an enormous sum of money for the time. This means that either Betsy made one very large flag, or that she made many small ones. The receipt from the Navy Board is not specific.

★ About one month after Betsy Ross was paid, Congress passed the flag resolution on June 14, 1777: “Resolved, That the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation.”

**Did Betsy make any other flags?**

★ Yes. Betsy made flags, many of which were government contracts, for over 50 years with the help of daughter Clarissa. For example, in 1811, Betsy made over 50 garrison flags for the U.S. Arsenal on the Schuylkill River.

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3 *Navy Board minutes, May 1777*, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg


On January 1, 1752, Elizabeth Griscom, familiarly called Betsy, was the eighth of 17 children born into the Quaker family of Samuel and Rebecca Griscom.

Samuel, a successful carpenter, moved his large family from their farmhouse in New Jersey to the growing city of Philadelphia when Betsy was about three years old. They eventually settled into a large home on 4th and Arch streets.

Although Betsy is often referred to as a seamstress, she was actually a trained upholsterer. After completing her formal education at a school for Quaker children, Betsy went on to apprentice to John Webster, a talented and popular Philadelphia upholsterer. She spent several years under Webster, learning to make and repair curtains, bedcovers, tablecloths, rugs, umbrellas and Venetian blinds, as well as working on other projects that involved sewing.

While apprenticing to Webster, Betsy met and fell in love with a fellow apprentice named John Ross, an Anglican and son of the Assistant Rector of Christ Church. Being devout Quakers, Betsy’s family did not approve of her relationship with John. Marrying outside of the faith was an offense worthy of expulsion from the Quaker community. Nevertheless, on November 4, 1773, Betsy and John fled across the Delaware River to Hugg’s Tavern in Gloucester, New Jersey where they married without the blessing of her family and fellow Quakers.

Despite the loss of family connection, the newlyweds prospered, soon opening their own upholstery business in a rented house on Philadelphia’s Chestnut Street, in the heart of a bustling section of Philadelphia now known as Old City.

They were married for just over two years when their union was tragically cut short by the American Revolution. John Ross, a member of the local militia, passed away, leaving Betsy a childless widow at the age of 24. Betsy continued to run her upholstery business, making extra income by mending uniforms and making tents, blankets, cartridges, and, of course, flags for the Continental army.

On June 15, 1777, Betsy married her second husband, Joseph Ashburn. Joseph was a mariner and was often at sea, leaving Betsy, a new mother, alone in Philadelphia. The sea was a dangerous place during the Revolution; in 1780 a British war ship captured Joseph’s ship. The crew was charged with treason and taken to Old Mill Prison in Plymouth, England. While Ashburn was imprisoned at Old
Mill, his and Betsy’s first daughter, Zillah, died at only nine months old and their second daughter, Eliza was born.

Later, in 1782, still grieving from the death of her first child, Betsy was visited by an old acquaintance named John Claypoole. He was a fellow prisoner and close friend of Joseph Ashburn. John was there to bring Betsy the news of her second husband’s death. At the age of 30, Betsy was once again a widow.

John Claypoole and Betsy rekindled their old friendship and were married on May 8, 1783. A year later, Betsy returned to her Quaker roots when she and her husband joined the Society of Free Quakers—a sect, unlike the pacifist traditional Quakers, that supported America’s fight for freedom from British rule.

With John Claypoole, Betsy was finally able to enjoy a lengthy marriage. But, this 34-year relationship was not without its struggles. The couple had five more daughters together, but only four of them lived to maturity. In 1793, Betsy’s mother, father, and sister died within days of each other from the yellow fever, leaving Betsy to raise her niece. In 1812, Betsy and John’s young, widowed daughter Clarissa moved into their home with her five young children and a sixth on the way. Once again, Betsy had a full house of children to care for. But the children were not the only members of the household who needed Betsy’s attention. For nearly 20 years, John Claypoole was disabled as a result of his earlier war injuries. He died from a lengthy illness in 1817.

Betsy continued her upholstery and flag-making business with the help of her daughter Clarissa. After over fifty years in her trade, she retired at the age of 76 and left the city to live on her daughter Susanna’s farm in the remote suburb of Abington. According to her descendants, although her vision was failing rapidly, Betsy continued to take the long carriage ride to the Free Quaker Meetinghouse in the city every week.

By 1833 Betsy was completely blind. She spent the last three years of her life living with her daughter Jane’s family on Cherry Street in Philadelphia. With family present, Betsy Ross died peacefully in her sleep on January 30, 1836. She was 84 years old.
“History of Betsy Ross” Questions

1. Betsy Ross was a trained upholsterer, meaning she made what kinds of things?
   A. Dresses, shirts, hats, and gloves
   B. Curtain, bedcovers, tablecloths, and rugs
   C. Plates, cups, bowls, and platters
   D. Tools, horseshoes, nails, and swords

2. What things did Betsy make for the Continental Army to increase her income?
   A. Cartridges
   B. Blankets
   C. Tents
   D. All of the above

3. Betsy Ross joined the Free Quakers. What made Free Quakers different from traditional Quakers?
   A. Free Quakers could support American’s fight for freedom from Great Britain
   B. Free Quakers could vote in presidential elections
   C. Free Quakers could not serve as members of the Continental Congress
   D. Free Quakers could not be put in prison

4. Overall, do you think Betsy Ross had an easy life or a difficult life? Provide three examples to support your opinion.

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American Flags in the 1700s

Today, we think of the flag of the United States of America as a symbol of our county and patriotic spirit. It is more than red, white, and blue cloth sewn together; it represents our nation, our history, and what we stand for. We treat the flag with respect and have special rules and procedures for hanging and displaying it. In the late 1700s—when Betsy Ross started making flags for our new nation—the American flag did not carry these symbolic meanings.

Flags served useful military purposes—they helped military leaders identify troops or ships as friend or foe from far away. Flags could also help direct armies and navies during smoke-filled battles on land or at sea—much like the way traffic lights today tell drivers when to stop or go. If major intersections would be dangerous without traffic lights imagine how much more dangerous a battlefield would be if there was no way to tell armies where to go. Without flags, commanders could lose track of their armies during battle and lives (and wars) could be lost. Flags, like the ones Betsy Ross sewed for the Continental Army, played a big part in the outcomes of battles during the American Revolution.

At the beginning of the American Revolution, each of the 13 states used their own versions of flags to represent themselves. Some flags had pine trees on them, others had snakes, and some even used parts of the British flag in their own designs. There was no such thing as an American flag that represented all the states. This could make it confusing for American commanders who needed to know where their soldiers were on the battlefield.

As the war went on, the Second Continental Congress—who represented the citizens of the 13 states—decided they needed a single design for a flag. On June 14, 1777, Congress passed the “Flag Resolution” that stated:

“Resolved, That the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new Constellation.”

This was the official birth of the American flag. But it still took many years for the flag to serve as a symbol, around the world, of everything America has done and all that America stands for. This is quite a change from the days when Betsy Ross made flags as tools for the military.
“American Flags in the 1700s” Questions

1. What was the main use of American flags in the 1700s?
   A. SHOWING PATRIOTISM
   B. FOR DISPLAYS ON HOMES AND STOREFRONTS
   C. IDENTIFYING OUR ARMIES AND NAVIES
   D. REPRESENTING AMERICA’S HISTORY

2. What does foe mean in the second paragraph?
   A. Ally
   B. Enemy
   C. Supporter
   D. Partner

3. What filled battlefields in the 1700s that could make it hard for military commanders to find their soldiers?
   A. Smoke
   B. Mud
   C. Fire
   D. Fog

4. What is the symbolic meaning of “new Constellation” in the “Flag Resolution”?
   A. Americans’ love of astronomy
   B. Creation of a new shape
   C. Union with Great Britain
   D. The new nation (America)

5. How important were flags as military supplies in the 1700s?

6. How important were flag makers, like Betsy Ross, to America’s ability to win Independence from Great Britain?
Charles Henry Weisgerber (1856-1932)

Charles Henry Weisgerber, the founder of the Betsy Ross House museum, was born June 15, 1856, in New York City. His parents were Carl and Augusta Weisgerber, who had recently moved to the United States from Germany. He and his family moved to Philadelphia in the 1860s.

When he grew up, Weisgerber wanted to be an artist. In 1888, he traveled to France to study at the Paris Conservatory of Art. When he returned to Philadelphia, he learned of a competition to paint an historic scene from Pennsylvania history. While walking through the city looking for inspiration he came across Mund’s Tavern on Arch Street in Philadelphia. In the window was a sign that read “First Flag of the US Made in this House.” Weisgerber went inside to inquire about the sign and learned the story of Betsy Ross and the American flag; he found the inspiration for his painting.

Weisgerber began work on a large (9 feet by 12 feet) painting called Birth of Our Nation’s Flag. It won the contest, and was displayed in the Pennsylvania Room of the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. While at the Exposition—a giant fair—Weisgerber’s painting was seen by millions of people.

Charles H. Weisgerber married his wife Sarah, in 1893. Their first child, Augusta, was born in 1895.

In 1898, Weisgerber moved with his family into the Betsy Ross House. The first floor of the house was open to visitors and the Weisgerber family lived in the upper two floors with his family. The house had been purchased by the “American Flag House and Betsy Ross Memorial Association.” This organization ran the Betsy Ross House in its early years as a museum. Weisgerber was the organization’s Executive Secretary.

In 1902, the Weisgerbers had a son, Charles Vexil Domus. “Vexil Domus” means Flag House in Latin.

Weisgerber was baptized, as an adult, at Christ Church on April 3, 1915. Charles Weisgerber lived at the Betsy Ross House and served as Executive Secretary of the American Flag House and Betsy Ross Memorial Association until his death, on March 13, 1932. Weisgerber was such a respected citizen that the Mayor of Philadelphia, J. Hampton Moore, and the former Mayor, Harry Mackey, attended his funeral. The millions who have visited the Betsy Ross House and learned the story of the first American flag and the woman who sewed it owe great thanks to Charles Weisgerber.
“Charles Henry Weisgerber (1856-1932)” Questions

1. Charles Weisgerber was the founder of what museum?
   A. Philadelphia Museum of Art
   B. Independence Hall
   C. Powel House
   D. Betsy Ross House

2. What does inquire mean in the second paragraph?
   A. Argue
   B. Complain
   C. Ask
   D. Make insults

3. What was the name of the painting by Charles Weisgerber that won a competition in 1893?
   A. Betsy Ross and the Flag
   B. Birth of Our Nation’s Flag
   C. Thirteen Stars and Stripes
   D. Columbian Exposition

4. What is the main point of the biography?
   A. Charles Weisgerber was an excellent artist
   B. Charles Weisgerber dedicated much of his life to the Betsy Ross House
   C. Vexil Domus is Latin for Flag House
   D. Charles Weisgerber did not have a large family

5. Describe a time when you looked for and found inspiration for a project.

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How and Why the Betsy Ross House Was Saved

The house at 239 Arch Street in Philadelphia, known at the Betsy Ross House, was built sometime around 1740. A rear addition to the house was added around 1760. During the time Betsy Ross lived there and began making flags, the property was owned by Widow Hannah Lithgow. Betsy probably only rented two rooms—a shop and bedroom—for her use from 1776 to 1779. When Betsy Ross left the house in 1779, no one realized its significance. America was still at war with England and no one knew about the flag made within the house’s walls.

The structure was both a place of business and a residence for numerous shopkeepers and artisans for over 150 years. The front room on the first floor served as the workshop and showroom, while the business owner and his or her family lived in the rest of the house. By the late 1850s, the house was home to a tailor shop, and in the 1870s the Mund Family transformed the home into a Tavern and cigar store.

When Betsy Ross’ story first became public in the 1870s, the house took on historical significance. By 1876, the building was generally recognized as the place where Betsy Ross lived when she made the first American flag. Several of Betsy Ross’ surviving family members (daughters, grandchildren, and a niece) said this was the location of the legendary event. The Mund family took advantage of the house’s history by posting a sign which read: “First Flag of the US Made in this House.” An 1876 advertisement for the Mund’s tavern read: “Original Flag House...this is the house where the first United States flag was made by Mrs. John (Betsy) Ross.”

By the late 19th Century most of the other colonial-era buildings that once stood on Arch Street had been torn down and replaced with large industrial buildings and warehouses. People feared that Betsy Ross’ home might also be torn down. If the building was lost, an important piece of history would be lost, too. In 1898, a group of concerned citizens established the American Flag House and Betsy Ross Memorial Association to raise the funds to purchase the house from the Munds, restore it, and reopen it as a public museum in honor of Betsy Ross and our first flag.
To raise the money to purchase the house, Charles Weisgerber and other members of the American Flag House and Betsy Ross Memorial Association sold lifetime memberships to the organization for 10 cents each. Donors received membership certificates imprinted with images of *Birth of Our Nation’s Flag* and the Betsy Ross House and Betsy Ross’ grave. Individuals were encouraged to form “clubs” of thirty members to support the effort.

The 10-cent subscriptions worked. By 1898, nearly two million dimes were collected—mostly from school children—and the American Flag House and Betsy Ross Memorial Association and enough money to purchase the house and open the museum. It was through the efforts of people like Charles Weisgerber, the American Flag House and Betsy Ross Memorial Association, and millions of school children that the Betsy Ross House was saved for future generations to learn the story of the birth of the American flag.
“How and Why the Betsy Ross House Was Saved” Questions

1. Which of the following about the Betsy Ross House is true?
   A. Betsy Ross lived there her entire life
   B. It was as a place of business and a residence for more than 150 years
   C. It has always had historical significance
   D. Charles Weisgerber was the first person to live there

2. What does numerous mean in the second paragraph?
   A. Unskilled
   B. Few
   C. Wealthy
   D. Many

3. What is the legendary event referred to in the third paragraph?
   A. The signing of the Declaration of Independence
   B. George Washington crossing the Delaware River
   C. The making of the first American flag
   D. The Boston Tea Party

4. In your own words, describe why the Betsy Ross House was saved.

5. In your own words, describe how the Betsy Ross House was saved.
Betsy Ross Math: 
Multiplication and Division

Directions: Betsy Ross used her skills as an upholsterer to make many contributions to the American cause during and after the Revolution. Complete the multiplication and division problems below to get an idea of how much work Betsy had to do.

1. Even though it looks like there are 13 stars on the flags that Betsy Ross made, she actually had to sew stars on both the front and back of each flag for a total of 26 stars per flag. If Betsy had an order to make 102 flags with 26 stars each, how many stars would Betsy have to sew onto flags?

2. The American Revolution lasted for about 440 weeks. If Betsy Ross worked 72 hours every week, how many hours did Betsy Ross work during the American Revolution?

3. If, over the course of her flag making career, Betsy Ross made 172 flags for the U.S. Navy and had to sew 978 stitches per flag, how many stitches did Betsy Ross make when sewing flags for the Navy?
4. If Betsy Ross was completing an order of musket cartridges for the Continental Army and she had to put 1,440 completed cartridges into boxes of 40 cartridges each, how many boxes would Betsy Ross have filled?

5. Some upholsterers also made tents for soldiers in the Continental Army. If Betsy Ross sewed a total of 9,316 stitches making 17 tents, and every tent has the same number of stitches, how many stitches did Betsy Ross sew for each tent?

6. Betsy Ross had to cut fabric to make the necessary number of stripes to complete an order for flags. If she needed 13 stripes per flags and cut her fabric into 1,547 stripes, how many flags had probably been ordered?
# Betsy Ross Math:
## Prime and Composite Numbers

Directions: Read the facts below about Betsy Ross and the American flag. Identify whether the number in each fact is *prime* or *composite* by circling either P (for *prime*) or C (for *composite*). Explain how you know.

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<td>1. P or C</td>
<td>Over the course of her life, Betsy Ross was married 3 times.</td>
<td>How do you know?</td>
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<td>2. P or C</td>
<td>The stars Betsy Ross made had 5 points each.</td>
<td>How do you know?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. P or C</td>
<td>The original design of the American flag had 6-pointed stars.</td>
<td>How do you know?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. P or C</td>
<td>The first American flag had 13 stars.</td>
<td>How do you know?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. P or C</td>
<td>Betsy Ross grew up in a family with 17 children.</td>
<td>How do you know?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. P or C</td>
<td>Betsy married John Ross when she was 21 years old.</td>
<td>How do you know?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. P or C</td>
<td>Betsy Ross was 24 years old when she made the first American flag.</td>
<td>How do you know?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. P or C</td>
<td>Betsy was 25 years old when she married Joseph Ashburn.</td>
<td>How do you know?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. P or C</td>
<td>Betsy was 31 years old when she married John Claypoole.</td>
<td>How do you know?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. P or C</td>
<td>Betsy Ross made flags for over 50 years.</td>
<td>How do you know?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bonus:** P or C  Betsy Ross’ mother and father died from Yellow Fever in the year 1793.  How do you know?
### Betsy Ross Math: Writing and Ordering Fractions

Directions: **Write a fraction for each Betsy Ross fact** below using the numbers provided. Then, **order the fractions** as directed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fraction</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \frac{7}{13} )</td>
<td>On the American flag, 7 of the 13 stripes are red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Betsy Ross made 5-pointed stars, but the original design for the flag had 6-pointed stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 of Betsy Ross’ 3 husbands died during the American Revolution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Order the three fractions above from *lowest* value to *highest* value:

|  |  |  |

|  |  |  |

|  |  |  |

|  |  |  |

|  |  |  |

|  |  |  |

Only 5 of Betsy Ross’ 7 daughters survived to adulthood.

On the American flag, 6 of the 13 stripes are white.

Growing up, Betsy Ross was 1 of 17 children.

Betsy Ross made flags for about 50 years. She lived for 84 years.

Order the four fractions above from *lowest* value to *highest* value:

|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
Betsy Ross Math:
Multiplying and Dividing Fractions

In Betsy Ross’ time dinner often included a meat dish such as stew, roasted chicken, or baked ham. But there were also side dishes as part of the meal. This often included bread, biscuits, or muffins such as Apple Cheddar Muffins. Below is a recipe for Apple Cheddar Muffins. This is not an exact Colonial recipe; but, it can be thought of as an updated version of a Colonial recipe with flavors and ingredients that someone like Betsy Ross would have known.

Directions: By multiplying and dividing fractions, halve and triple the recipe for Apple Cheddar Muffins below. Use the blank “recipe cards” on the next page to record your answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apple Cheddar Muffins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation time:</strong> 15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cooking time:</strong> 20-25 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Servings:</strong> 12 muffins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ingredients**

| 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour |
| 1/3 cup cornmeal |
| 1 1/3 teaspoons baking powder |
| 1/2 teaspoon baking soda |
| 1 teaspoon salt |
| 1 cup coarsely grated cheddar cheese |
| 1/2 cup butter |
| 2/3 cup granulated sugar |
| 2 large eggs |
| 3 apples (peeled, cored, and diced or grated) |

**Method**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease muffin tin or line it with 12 cupcake papers.
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine the first five (5) ingredients. Add the grated cheddar to the *dry mixture* and stir.
3. In a separate bowl, beat the butter and sugar with an electric mixer. Continue beating as you add the eggs, one at a time.
4. Stir the diced or grated apples into the *wet mixture*.
5. Add the wet mixture to the dry mixture all at once and stir until the dry ingredients are moistened.
6. Fill the muffin cups about 2/3 full and bake 20 minutes. Do a *toothpick test* to be sure the muffins are done.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Apple Cheddar Muffins—Half ($\frac{1}{2}$) Recipe</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cups all-purpose flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cup cornmeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaspoons baking powder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaspoon baking soda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaspoon salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cup coarsely grated cheddar cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cup butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cup granulated sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apples (peeled, cored, and diced or grated)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Apple Cheddar Muffins—Triple (3x) Recipe</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cups all-purpose flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cup cornmeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaspoons baking powder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaspoon baking soda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaspoon salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cup coarsely grated cheddar cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cup butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cup granulated sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apples (peeled, cored, and diced or grated)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A  
Frequently Asked Questions

What do the colors on the flag represent?  
When the Continental Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes as the nation’s flag in 1777, it did not specify reasons for the colors of the flag. However, when Congress approved the design of the national Seal, Charles Thomson, Secretary of the Continental Congress, did report:

"The colors of the [the vertical stripes] are those used in the flag of the United States of America; White signifies purity and innocence, Red, hardiness & valour, and Blue, the color of the [the broad band above the stripes] signifies vigilance, perseverance & justice."

SHORT ANSWER: White: Purity; Red: Valor; Blue: Perseverance and Justice

How long did it take Betsy to make the flag?  
Based on the research and work done by the staff and first-person interpreters at the Betsy Ross House, it has been determined that given the conditions, tools, and materials under and with which Betsy worked, a typical flag would take approximately two weeks to make.

SHORT ANSWER: About two weeks.

What happened to Betsy’s family?  
Of the seventeen Griscom children (Betsy and her sixteen siblings), only nine survived into maturity. Of these not much is known as very little was documented. We do know three of Betsy’s siblings were nearly read out of Quaker Meeting (essentially, kicked out of the church) but by publicly and formally apologizing were able to remain within the faith. One of Betsy’s brothers was a silversmith—an indicator of the Quaker and Griscom family traditions of involvement in the skilled trades. One of Betsy’s sisters was an upholsterer (like Betsy) who, at the time of her death, in 1826, owned so many clothes that they made up 20% of her entire estate. These clothes, according to the will, were divided between Betsy and another surviving sister. Betsy’s parents and one of her sisters died within weeks of each other during the Yellow Fever outbreak of 1793. Betsy, now in her early 40’s, took responsibility for her niece while raising her own daughters. Betsy passed the upholstery and flag-making trades onto her daughters and granddaughters who worked in those fields well into the late-19th Century.
Appendix B

A visit to the Betsy Ross House, coupled with the materials in this packet, can meet the following national curricular standards.

National Council for the Social Studies

**Theme I: Culture**
A. Explore and describe similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures address similar human needs and concerns.
C. Describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior or people living in a particular culture.

**Theme II: Time, Continuity, & Change**
A. Demonstrate an understanding that different people may describe the same event or situation in diverse ways, citing reasons for the differences in views.
B. Demonstrate an ability to use correctly vocabulary associated with time such as past, present, future, and long ago; read and construct simple timelines; identify examples of change; and recognize examples of cause and effect relationships.
C. Compare and contrast different stories or accounts about past events, people, places, or situations, identifying how they contribute to our understanding of the past.

**Theme III: People, Places, & Environments**
A. Describe how people create places that reflect ideas, personality, culture, and wants and needs as they design homes, playgrounds, classrooms, and the like.

**Theme IV: Individual Development & Identity**
B. Describe personal connections to place—especially place as associated with immediate surroundings.
E. Identify and describe the ways family, groups, and community influence the individual’s daily life and personal choices.
F. Explore factors that contribute to one’s personal identity such as interests, capabilities, and perceptions.
G. Analyze a particular event to identify reasons individuals might respond to it in different ways.

**Theme V: Individuals, Groups, & Institutions**
B. Give examples of and explain group and institutional influences such as religious beliefs, laws, and peer pressure, on people, events, and elements of culture.

**Theme VI: Power, Authority, & Governance**
A. Examine the rights and responsibilities of the individual in relation to his or her social group, such as family, peer group, and school class.
B. Explain the purpose of government
C. Give Examples of how government does or does not provide for needs and wants of people, establish order and security, and manage conflict.  
F. Identify and describe factors that contribute to cooperation and cause disputes within and among groups and nations.

**Theme VII: Production, Distribution, & Consumption**  
E. Describe how we depend upon workers with specialized jobs and the ways in which they contribute to the production and exchange of goods and services.

**Theme VIII: Science, Technology, and Society**  
A. Identify and describe examples in which science and technology have changed the lives of people, such as in homemaking, childcare, work, transportation, and communication.

**Theme IX: Global Connections**  
A. Explore ways that language, art, music, belief systems, and other cultural elements may facilitate global understanding or lead to misunderstanding.  
B. Give examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among individuals, groups, and nations.  
C. Examine the effects of changing technology on the global community.  
F. Investigate concerns, issues, standards, and conflicts related to universal human rights, such as the treatment of children, religious groups, and effects of war.

**Theme X: Civic Ideals and Practices**  
A. Identify key ideals of the United States’ democratic republican form of government, such as individual dignity, liberty, justice, equality, and the rule of law, and discuss their application in specific situations.  
B. Identify examples of rights and responsibilities of citizens.  
C. Locate, access, organize, and apply information about an issue of public concern from multiple points of view.  
D. Identify and practice selected forms of civic discussion and participation consistent with the ideals of citizens in a democratic republic.  
E. Explain actions citizens can take to influence public policy decisions.  
F. Recognize that a variety of formal and informal actors influence and shape public policy.  
G. Examine the influence of public opinion on personal decision-making and government policy on public issues.  
H. Explain how public policies and citizen behaviors may or may not reflect the stated ideals of a democratic republican form of government.  
I. Describe how public policies are used to address issues of public concern  
J. Recognize and interpret how the “common good” can be strengthened through various forms of citizen action.
National Council of Teachers of English
Anchor Standards

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

2. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.

7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

9. Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

10. Students whose first language is not English make use of their first language to develop competency in the English language arts and to develop understanding of content across the curriculum.
11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).
Common Core State Standards
English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Writing

**Text Types and Purposes**

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

**Production and Distribution of Writing**

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

**Research to Build and Present Knowledge**

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

**Range of Writing**

10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
Speaking and Listening

**Comprehension and Collaboration**

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

3. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

**Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas**

4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
Common Core Standards

Below is a list of the individual lesson materials in this booklet with the Common Core standards each activity meets.

Betsy Ross House

History of Betsy Ross
R5.A.1.3.1: Make inferences and/or draw conclusions based on information from text.
R5.A.1.4.1: Identify and/or explain stated or implied main ideas and relevant supporting details from text.

Betsy Ross Timeline
R5.A.1.3.1: Make inferences and/or draw conclusions based on information from text.
R5.A.1.4.1: Identify and/or explain stated or implied main ideas and relevant supporting details from text.

American Flags in the 1700s
R5.A.1.1.2: Identify and/or interpret a synonym or antonym of a word used in text.
R5.A.1.3.1: Make inferences and/or draw conclusions based on information from text.
R5.A.1.4.1: Identify and/or explain stated or implied main ideas and relevant supporting details from text.
1.5.5.A: Write with a clear focus, identifying topic, task, and audience.
1.5.5.C: Organize writing in a logical order. Use appropriate transitions within sentences and between paragraphs. Include an identifiable introduction, body, and conclusion.

How and Why the Betsy Ross House Was Saved
R5.A.1.1.2: Identify and/or interpret a synonym or antonym of a word used in text.
R5.A.1.3.1: Make inferences and/or draw conclusions based on information from text.
R5.A.1.4.1: Identify and/or explain stated or implied main ideas and relevant supporting details from text.
1.5.5.A: Write with a clear focus, identifying topic, task, and audience.
1.5.5.C: Organize writing in a logical order. Use appropriate transitions within sentences and between paragraphs. Include an identifiable introduction, body, and conclusion.

Charles Henry Weisgerber
R5.A.1.1.2: Identify and/or interpret a synonym or antonym of a word used in text.
R5.A.1.3.1: Make inferences and/or draw conclusions based on information from text.
R5.A.1.4.1: Identify and/or explain stated or implied main ideas and relevant supporting details from text.
1.5.5.A: Write with a clear focus, identifying topic, task, and audience.
1.5.5.C: Organize writing in a logical order. Use appropriate transitions within sentences and between paragraphs. Include an identifiable introduction, body, and conclusion.
**Prime and Composite Numbers**
**M5.A.1.6.1:** Define/list/identify prime and composite numbers less than or equal to 100.

**Multiplication and Division**
**M5.D.2.1.1:** Solve for a missing number (blank, question mark, variable) in an equation involving a single operation whole numbers only.

**2.2.5.B:** Multiply and divide single- and double-digit numbers; add and subtract fractions and mixed numbers; add, subtract, multiply, and divide decimals.

**M5.B.1:** Demonstrate an understanding of measurable attributes of objects and figures, and the units systems and processes of measurement.

**M5.A.3.2.1:** Use addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to compute accurately without a calculator.

**Writing and Ordering Fractions**

5. **2.1.5.A:** Apply number patterns to count and compare values of whole numbers, fractions, and decimals.

**M5.A.1.3.3:** Compare proper fractions through 16ths with like and unlike denominators.

**M6.A.1.3.2:** Find the Least Common Multiple (LCM) of two numbers (through 50) and/or use the LCM to find the common denominator of two fractions.

**Multiplying and Dividing Fractions**

**M6.A.3.2.1:** Solve problems involving operations (+, -, x, ÷) with whole numbers, decimals (through thousandths) and fractions (avoid complicated LCDs) - straight computation or word problems.
Appendix C

References


Center for Civic Education. *We the People: The Citizen & the Constitution.* 2007.


Appendix D

Thank you, again, for booking a visit to the Betsy Ross House! We hope the experience was exciting, memorable, and—of course—educational.

If you need any additional information regarding the materials in this booklet or for help using, altering, expanding, or developing these or any other curricular materials, please let us know. If you want us to help you write a few lesson plans or if you have questions related to the things you did and saw on your trip, let us know. We can help with that, too!

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Thanks for experiencing American history with Historic Philadelphia, Inc. See you next year!