



American Heritage Merit Badge Workbook

SCOUTMASTER BUCKY

Scouts participating in a Scoutmaster Bucky merit badge opportunity, whether online or in person, should consider using the American Heritage merit badge pamphlet for discovery and knowledge, along with the class preparation pages for clarifications, insights, and expectations.

<https://scoutmasterbucky.com/merit-badges/american-heritage/american-heritage-pamphlet.pdf>

<https://scoutmasterbucky.com/merit-badges/american-heritage/american-heritage-cpp.pdf>

REQUIREMENTS 2b, 2c, 2d, 5a, and 5b REQUIRE COUNSELOR APPROVAL.

REQUIREMENT 5a REQUIRES PARENT / GUARDIAN APPROVAL.

REQUIREMENT 1: Read the Declaration of Independence.

The declaration is not divided into formal sections; but it is often discussed as consisting of five parts: introduction, preamble, indictment of King George III, denunciation of the British people, and conclusion.



Introduction

Asserts as a matter of Natural Law the ability of a people to assume political independence; acknowledges that the grounds for such independence must be reasonable, and therefore explicable, and ought to be explained.

In CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

"When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation"

Preamble

Outlines a general philosophy of government that justifies revolution when government harms natural rights.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,—That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security."

Indictment

A bill of grievances documenting the king's "repeated injuries and usurpations" of the Americans' rights and liberties.

"Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

"He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

"He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

"He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.



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"He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their Public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

"He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness of his invasions on the rights of the people.

"He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected, whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the meantime exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

"He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

"He has obstructed the Administration of Justice by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers.

"He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

"He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

"He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

"He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.

"He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

"For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

"For protecting them, by a mock Trial from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

"For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:

"For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

"For depriving us in many cases, of the benefit of Trial by Jury:

"For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences:

"For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:

"For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

"For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

"He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

"He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

"He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & Perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

"He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

"He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

"In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people."

Failed Warnings

Describes the colonists' attempts to inform and warn the British people of the king's injustice, and the British people's failure to act. Even so, it affirms the colonists' ties to the British as "brethren."

"Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity."



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Denunciation

This section essentially finishes the case for independence. The conditions that justified revolution have been shown.

"We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends."

Conclusion

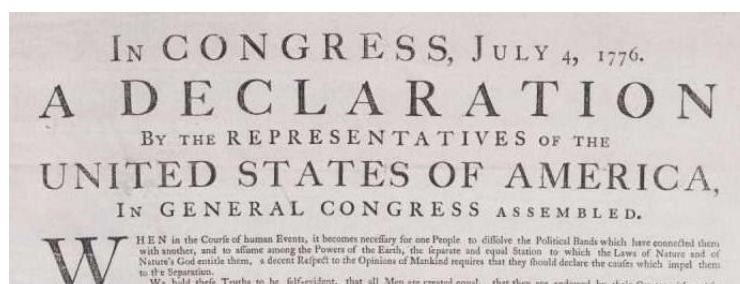
The signers assert that there exist conditions under which people must change their government, that the British have produced such conditions and, by necessity, the colonies must throw off political ties with the British Crown and become independent states. The conclusion contains, at its core, the Lee Resolution that had been passed on July 2.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,—That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security."

Signatures

The first and most famous signature on the engrossed copy was that of John Hancock, President of the Continental Congress. Two future presidents (Thomas Jefferson and John Adams) and a father and great-grandfather of two other presidents (Benjamin Harrison V) were among the signatories. Edward Rutledge (age 26) was the youngest signer, and Benjamin Franklin (age 70) was the oldest signer. The fifty-six signers of the Declaration represented the new states as follows (from north to south).

- New Hampshire: [Josiah Bartlett](#), [William Whipple](#), [Matthew Thornton](#)
- Massachusetts: [Samuel Adams](#), [John Adams](#), [John Hancock](#), [Robert Treat Paine](#), [Elbridge Gerry](#)
- Rhode Island: [Stephen Hopkins](#), [William Ellery](#)
- Connecticut: [Roger Sherman](#), [Samuel Huntington](#), [William Williams](#), [Oliver Wolcott](#)
- New York: [William Floyd](#), [Philip Livingston](#), [Francis Lewis](#), [Lewis Morris](#)
- New Jersey: [Richard Stockton](#), [John Witherspoon](#), [Francis Hopkinson](#), [John Hart](#), [Abraham Clark](#)
- Pennsylvania: [Robert Morris](#), [Benjamin Rush](#), [Benjamin Franklin](#), [John Morton](#), [George Clymer](#), [James Smith](#), [George Taylor](#), [James Wilson](#), [George Ross](#)
- Delaware: [George Read](#), [Caesar Rodney](#), [Thomas McKean](#)
- Maryland: [Samuel Chase](#), [William Paca](#), [Thomas Stone](#), [Charles Carroll of Carrollton](#)
- Virginia: [George Wythe](#), [Richard Henry Lee](#), [Thomas Jefferson](#), [Benjamin Harrison](#), [Thomas Nelson Jr.](#), [Francis Lightfoot Lee](#), [Carter Braxton](#)
- North Carolina: [William Hooper](#), [Joseph Hewes](#), [John Penn](#)
- South Carolina: [Edward Rutledge](#), [Thomas Heyward Jr.](#), [Thomas Lynch Jr.](#), [Arthur Middleton](#)
- Georgia: [Button Gwinnett](#), [Lyman Hall](#), [George Walton](#)





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REQUIREMENT 1:

Pay close attention to the section that begins with "We hold these truths to be self-evident" and ends with "to provide new Guards for their future security." Rewrite that section in your own words, making it as easy to understand as possible.

Notes:

REQUIREMENT 1:

Share your writing with your counselor and discuss the importance of the Declaration to all Americans.

This requirement must be reviewed with your merit badge counselor.



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DO TWO OF THE FOLLOWING (2A, 2B, 2C, or 2D) FOR REQUIREMENT 2

REQUIREMENT 2a: Select two individuals from American history, one a political leader (a president, senator, etc.) and the other a private citizen (a writer, religious leader, etc.). Find out about each person's accomplishments and compare the contributions each has made to America's heritage.

POLITICAL LEADER:

Name:

Profession:

Accomplishments:

PRIVATE CITIZEN:

Name:

Profession:

Accomplishments:



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REQUIREMENT 2b: With your counselor's approval, choose an organization that has promoted some type of positive change in American society.

COUNSELOR APPROVAL: IS REQUIRED.

Organization:

Positive Change:

Counselor's Name

Phone or Email

Counselor's Signature

Date

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approved

REQUIREMENT 2b: Find out why the organization believed this change was necessary and how it helped to accomplish the change.

Notes:



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REQUIREMENT 2b: Discuss how this organization is related to events or situations from America's past.

Notes:

REQUIREMENT 2c: With your counselor's approval, interview two veterans of the U.S. military. Find out what their experiences were like. Ask the veterans what they believe they accomplished.

COUNSELOR APPROVAL: IS REQUIRED.

Veteran's Name #1 and Affiliation:

Veteran's Name #2 and Affiliation:

Counselor's Name

Phone or Email

Counselor's Signature

Date

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approved



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VETERAN #1:

Name:

Military Affiliation:

Experience:

What they believe they accomplished:



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VETERAN #2:

Name:

Military Affiliation:

Experience:

What they believe they accomplished:



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REQUIREMENT 2d: With your counselor's approval, interview three people in your community of different ages and occupations. Ask these people what America means to them, what they think is special about this country, and what American traditions they feel are important to preserve.

COUNSELOR APPROVAL: IS REQUIRED.

PERSON #1:

Name:

Age and Occupation:

Counselor's Name

Phone or Email

Counselor's Signature

Date

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approved

What does America mean to this person:

What this person thinks is special about America:

What this person thinks are important American traditions to preserve:



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PERSON #2:

Name:

Age and Occupation:

Counselor's Name

Phone or Email

Counselor's Signature

Date

☐

approved

What does America mean to this person:

What this person thinks is special about America:

What this person thinks are important American traditions to preserve:



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PERSON #3:

Name:

Age and Occupation:

Counselor's Name

Phone or Email

Counselor's Signature

Date

☐

approved

What does America mean to this person:

What this person thinks is special about America:

What this person thinks are important American traditions to preserve:



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REQUIREMENT 3a: Select a topic related to the United States that is currently in the news.

Topic:

News Source:

Date:

REQUIREMENT 3a: Describe to your counselor what is happening.

Notes:

REQUIREMENT 3a: Explain how today's events are related to or affected by the events and values of America's past.

Notes:



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REQUIREMENT 3b:

For the following, describe its adoption, tell about any changes since its adoption, and explain how each one continues to influence Americans today: the flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, the Great Seal of the United States, the motto, the national anthem.

THE FLAG



Describe its adoption:

Tell about any changes since its adoption:

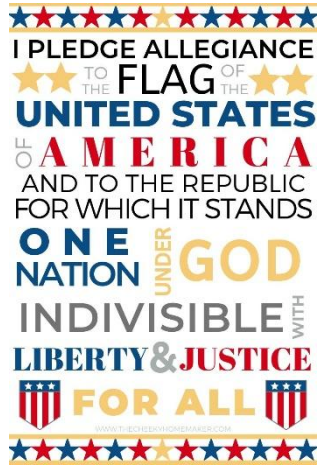
Explain how it continues to influence Americans today:



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THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE



Describe its adoption:

Tell about any changes since its adoption:

Explain how it continues to influence Americans today:



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THE GREAT SEAL OF THE UNITED STATES



Describe its adoption:

Tell about any changes since its adoption:

Explain how it continues to influence Americans today:



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THE MOTTO



Describe its adoption:

Tell about any changes since its adoption:

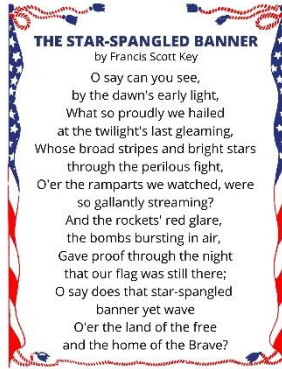
Explain how it continues to influence Americans today:



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THE MOTTO



Describe its adoption:

Tell about any changes since its adoption:

Explain how it continues to influence Americans today:



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REQUIREMENT 3c: Research your family's history. Find out how various events and situations in American history affected your family. Share what you find with your counselor.

Notes:

REQUIREMENT 3c: If your family immigrated to America, tell the reasons why. Share what you find with your counselor.

Notes:



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DO TWO OF THE FOLLOWING (4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, or 4E) FOR REQUIREMENT 4

REQUIREMENT 4a: Explain the National Register of Historic Places.



Notes:

REQUIREMENT 4a: Explain how a property becomes eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Notes:

REQUIREMENT 4a: Make a map of your local area, marking the points of historical interest.

REQUIREMENT 4a: Tell about any National Register properties in your area.

REQUIREMENT 4a: Share the map with your counselor, and describe the historical points you have indicated.

Use a separate sheet of paper to make your local area map.

This requirement must be reviewed with your merit badge counselor.

Be sure to bring any work you have done in preparation to share with your merit badge counselor.



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REQUIREMENT 4b: Research an event of historical importance that took place in or near your area. If possible, visit the place.

Historic Event:

Location and Date:

Visited Date:

Notes:

REQUIREMENT 4b: Tell your counselor about the event and how it affected local history.

Notes:

REQUIREMENT 4b: Describe how the area looked then and what it now looks like.

Notes:



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REQUIREMENT 4c: Find out when, why, and how your town or neighborhood started, and what ethnic, national, or racial groups played a part.

Notes:

REQUIREMENT 4c: Find out how the area has changed over the past 50 years and try to explain why.

Notes:



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REQUIREMENT 4d: Take an active part in a program about an event or person in American history. Report to your counselor about the program, the part you took, and the subject.

Historical Event or Person:

Notes:

REQUIREMENT 4e: Visit a historic trail or walk in your area. After your visit, share with your counselor what you have learned.

Historical Trail or Walk:

Date Visited:

Notes:

REQUIREMENT 4e: Discuss the importance of this location and explain why you think it might qualify for National Register listing.

Notes:



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DO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING (5A, 5B, or 5C) FOR REQUIREMENT 5

REQUIREMENT 5a: Watch two motion pictures (with the approval and permission of your counselor and parent or guardian) that are set in some period of American history. Describe to your counselor how accurate each film is with regard to the historical events depicted and also with regard to the way the characters are portrayed.

Here are some movies to consider for completing Requirement 5a

12 YEARS A SLAVE	BLACK KLANSMAN	GOODFELLAS	MONEYBALL	THE LONGEST DAY
42	BORN ON THE 4 TH OF JULY	GRANT (MINI-SERIES)	NEWSIES	THE OLD WEST
A NIGHT TO REMEMBER	BRIDGE OF SPIES	GREASE	OCTOBER SKY	THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE
ACROSS THE UNIVERSE	CASUALTIES OF WAR	GREEN BOOK	PATTON	THE REPORT
ALI	COLD MOUNTAIN	GRAPES OF WRATH	REVOLUTION	THE RIGHT STUFF
ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN	DANCES WITH WOLVES	HARRIET	SAVING MR. BANKS	THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN
AMERICAN GRAFFITI	DEEPWATER HORIZON	HIDDEN FIGURES	SAVING PRIVATE RYAN	THE WOLF OF WALL STREET
ANDERSONVILLE	FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS	HOOSIERS	SEABISCUIT	THIRTEEN DAYS
APOLLO 13	FORREST GUMP	HOSTILES	SELMA	TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD
APRIL MORNING	FULL METAL JACKET	JACKIE	THE ALAMO (2004)	TOMBSTONE
BACK TO THE FUTURE	GANGS OF NEW YORK	JOHN ADAMS (MINI-SERIES)	THE BELLS OF ST MARY	TORA! TORA! TORA!
BAD COMPANY	GETTYSBURG	LAST OF THE MOHICANS	THE BIG SHORT	UNITED 93
BAND OF BROTHERS (MINI-SERIES)	GLORY	LINCOLN	THE EMIGRANTS	WORTH
BATTLE OF THE SEXES	GONE WITH THE WIND	LONESOME DOVE	THE GREAT DEBATERS	YOUNG GUNS
BLACK HAWK DOWN	GOOD MORNING VIETNAM	MIRACLE	THE JOURNEY OF NATTY GANN	

Selected Movie #1:

Selected Movie #2:

COUNSELOR APPROVAL: IS REQUIRED.

Counselor's Name

Phone or Email

Counselor's Signature

Date ☐ approved

PARENT/GUARDIAN APPROVAL: IS REQUIRED.

Parent's Name

Phone or Email

Parent's Signature

Date ☐ approved



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MOTION PICTURE #1:

Selected Movie Title:

Notes:

MOTION PICTURE #2:

Selected Movie Title:

Notes:



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REQUIREMENT 5b: Read a biography (with your counselor's approval) of someone who has made a contribution to America's heritage.

Biography Title, Author, and Person about:

COUNSELOR APPROVAL: IS REQUIRED.

Counselor's Name

Phone or Email

Counselor's Signature

Date

☐

approved

Notes:

REQUIREMENT 5b: Tell some things you admire about this individual and some things you do not admire.

Admire:

Do NOT admire:



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REQUIREMENT 5b: Explain why you think this person has made a positive or a negative contribution to America's heritage.

Notes:

REQUIREMENT 5c: Listen to recordings of popular songs from various periods of American history. Share five of these songs with your counselor, and describe how each song reflects the way people felt about the period in which it was popular. If a recording is not available, have a copy of the lyrics available.

SONG #1:

Song Title:

Singer / Musician:

Time Period:

Notes:



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SONG #2:

Song Title:

Singer / Musician:

Time Period:

Notes:

SONG #3:

Song Title:

Singer / Musician:

Time Period:

Notes:

SONG #4:

Song Title:

Singer / Musician:

Time Period:

Notes:



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SONG #5:

Song Title:

Singer / Musician:

Time Period:

Notes:

SONG #6:

Song Title:

Singer / Musician:

Time Period:

Notes:

SONG #7:

Song Title:

Singer / Musician:

Time Period:

Notes:



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SONG #8:

Song Title:

Singer / Musician:

Time Period:

Notes:

SONG #9:

Song Title:

Singer / Musician:

Time Period:

Notes:

SONG #10:

Song Title:

Singer / Musician:

Time Period:

Notes:



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REQUIREMENT 6: Discuss with your counselor the career opportunities in American heritage.

Career Opportunity #1:

Career Opportunity #2:

Career Opportunity #3:

REQUIREMENT 6: Pick one that interests you and explain how to prepare for this career. Discuss what education and training are required for this career.

Selected Career Opportunity:

How to prepare for this career:

Educational Requirements:

Training Requirements: