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The Colonies

Stars and Stripes
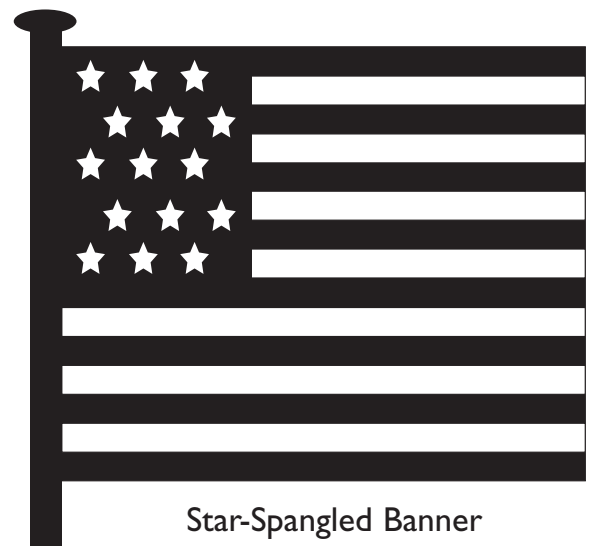
Star-Spangled Banner

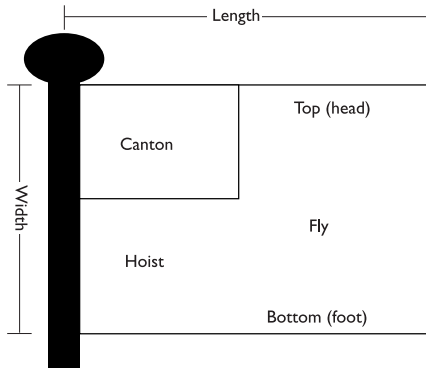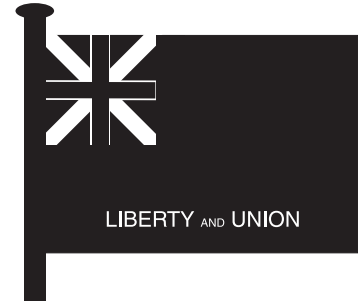1. Identify the original 13 colonies.

2. Identify the first two states to join the Union.

3. Research those two states and write the admission dates next to the state name.

Name _____

Taunton Flag

The Taunton flag first flew in Taunton, Massachusetts, in 1774. The Union Jack with the words *Liberty and Union* were sewn into the scarlet field.

William Moultrie Flag

This flag of blue, designed by William Moultrie, with the white crescent in the canton, and white type *Liberty*, spoke simply to the message of the revolution. This flag was flown over Fort Sullivan during the British attack on June 28, 1776.

Gadsden Flag

This was a bright yellow banner with a coiled rattlesnake in the field with the words *DON'T TREAD ON ME* emblazoned across the bottom. The rattlesnake, a symbol on several revolutionary flags, represented the colonial readiness to strike against the British.

Bunker Hill Flag

This flag displayed St. George's red cross in the canton with a pine tree in the first quarter of the cross. The pine tree, also minted on all Massachusetts' coinage, symbolized the tree under which the famous Sons of Liberty met.

Taunton Flag, 1774

William Moultrie Flag, 1776
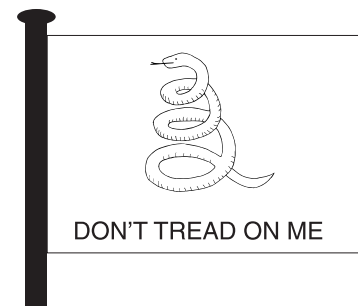
Gadsden Flag, 1776
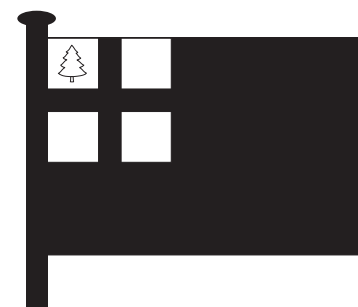
Bunker Hill Flag, 1775

A Brief History of the Flag of the United States

Union Jack, 1606

Grand Union Flag

Stars and Stripes

Star-Spangled Banner

No other symbol of the United States is as revered as the United States' flag and few are as old. Like many of our institutions, the founders of our country borrowed from England to build the foundations of the new government–that was true of the flag as well.

Union Jack

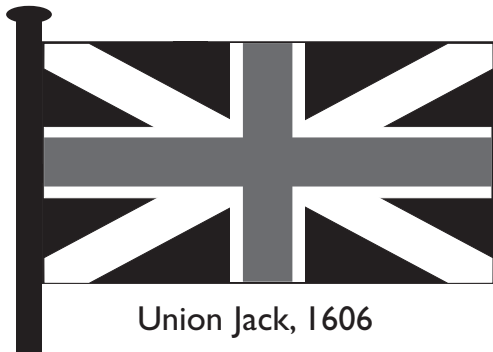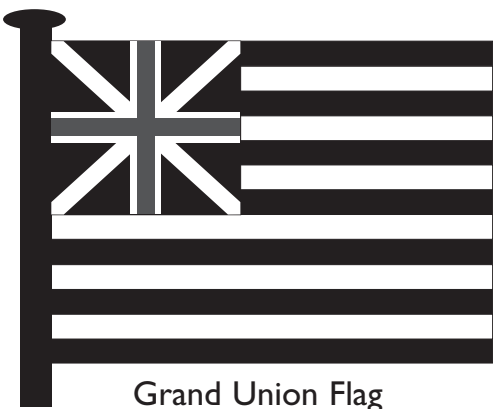The United States began as a colony of Great Britain. Great Britain had a great influence on our history including our flag and its history. The British Union Jack is a mix of two flags–the flag of Scotland (St. Andrew's Cross) and the flag of England (St. George's Cross). In 1606, when England and Scotland became one nation, King James I merged the two to form one flag.

Grand Union Flag

The first flag of the United States, sometimes called the Cambridge Flag, combines the Union Jack of Great Britain with the stripes. The Union Jack in the canton of the flag reminds us of the influence of Great Britain in our heritage. The stripes represent the 13 colonies. Washington raised this flag in January of 1776 at Cambridge, Massachusetts.
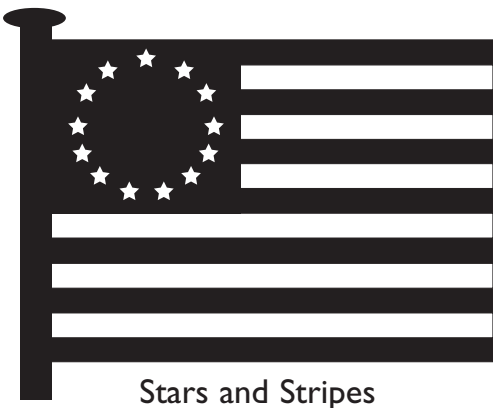
Stars and Stripes

On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress passed a resolution declaring "that the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes alternating red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation." The stars in the field represent only one arrangement that was popular during the revolution.

Star-Spangled Banner

Vermont and Kentucky were the first two states added to the Union after the original 13, When they were admitted not only were two stars added to the flag, but also two stripes. This was the flag of the United States from 1795 until 1818. In April 1818, Congress passed a law returning to the tradition of the United States flag with 13 stripes. Congress realized that adding a stripe with each additional state would soon make the flag an unusual shape. So, Congress provided for a new star to be added for each new state admitted to the Union.