

Patriotic Holidays

UNIT STUDY GUIDE TO AMERICAN CELEBRATIONS

Memorial Day

Flag Day

Independence Day

Veterans Day

**By
Amanda Bennett**

Table of Contents

Unit Studies — The Easy Way	7
Getting Started	9
Introduction	11
Amanda’s Tips on Search Engines	13
Memorial Day	14
Introduction	
Learning Plan Overview	
Favorite Books	
Lesson Plans, Day 1–Day 5	
Additional Internet Sites	
Flag Day	41
Introduction	
Learning Plan Overview	
Favorite Books	
Lesson Plans, Day 1–Day 5	
Additional Internet Sites	
Independence Day	66
Introduction	
Learning Plan Overview	
Favorite Books	
Lesson Plans, Day 1–Day 5	
Internet Sites	
Veterans Day	92
Introduction	
Learning Plan Overview	
Favorite Books	
Lesson Plans, Day 1–Day 5	
Additional Internet Sites	
Appendix	120
West Point Cadets Prayer	
Preamble to the Constitution	
Patriotic Obligation	
A Congressman’s Prayer	
Benjamin Franklin -- Motion for Prayers	
George Washington -- Speech Delivered to His Army	
Other Notable Speeches	
Patriotic Holidays Notebook Pages	134

Introduction

America – a word that thrills my heart when it is mentioned, a name that we should all hold dear in our hearts – and remember what it really is to be an **AMERICAN!** Our country has been through so much in recent years, threatened by dark forces across the globe, and rising to face and challenge these threats time after time. We have so much to be thankful for, and so many opportunities to show our thanks and display our patriotism. With four American patriotic holidays, we've got wonderful opportunities to share this pride and knowledge of American history with our children – the future of America.

Written with this in mind, *Patriotic Holidays* uses a unit study approach to simplify the concepts while exposing the students to so many important ideas from American history. Covering Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, and Veterans Day, each holiday study takes one week and can involve the whole family.

In all of my travels and talks with families and children across the country, I have noticed that many of our children have never been exposed in a memorable way to the idea of patriotism — of pride in our country. Many families today don't make a regular practice of flying the American flag on special American holidays.

So many of the children that I talk to don't know how to honor the American flag, not knowing that our flag should never touch the ground or that there are special rules for displaying the flag. When I think of all of the stories that I've heard over the years about our flag and what it has meant to our soldiers in battle, I am saddened to see that the younger generation is unaware of what the flag means or, thanks to those soldiers, what freedoms we enjoy in America.

As a parent, I want to make sure that we teach our children about these important things — about the honor and the sacrifice of others in generations past and in those currently serving in the military, who purchased our freedoms and then protected them with their own lives. I want to renew our love of country, appreciate all of the freedoms that we enjoy, and remember the price that has been paid by brave Americans in generations past and present.

These four studies have been created to do just that in an enjoyable and interesting format. For the week before each holiday, the family can work together -- learning and reading and sharing. By the time each holiday arrives, it should have a whole new meaning, and family memories can be made that will last a lifetime.

While preparing for these special days through this study, you and your family will learn more about American history in a lively and interesting way. Here are some of the things covered in the studies:

- Overview of American history — the wars and events that have created and protected our independence
- Study the lives of the patriots and founding fathers — using their biographies to better understand the times, the issues surrounding their battles for freedom, and their sacrifices
- Gain a better understanding of our freedoms and rights — guaranteed in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as written by our founding fathers
- Learn about our country's patriotic symbols and their history
- Appreciation of God's gifts and blessings on our country

In this day and age, there are so many children who are unaware of the real meaning of these holidays. They think that Memorial Day marks the beginning of summer, and many are even unaware of Flag Day or Veterans Day. These young Americans need to know the reasons for these holidays that were created by Americans for Americans to remember their history and their heroes. We need to bring back the patriotic holidays, celebrate them, and remember their true meanings.

We'll be learning all about America's history and patriots, her founding fathers and brave soldiers, her flag and her heroes — remembering that we are, indeed, "One Nation Under God."

Come along and join us on the journey, and may God continue to bless America!

Blessings,
Amanda

Memorial Day – Day One

LOWER LEVEL

Today's Quote

Copy today's quote into your **Patriotic Journal**:

"I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

Nathan Hale, 1776, right before his execution

Words of Wisdom (WOW Words)

Look up the following words in the dictionary and write the words and their definitions in your **Patriotic Journal**. **Website suggestions:** [Webster's 1828 Dictionary](#) and [Word Central](#)

soldier
defend
honor
patriot

Patriots

Using an encyclopedia or Internet site, look up the American patriot, **Nathan Hale**. Why is he considered an American patriot? Write or narrate a paragraph about Nathan Hale for your Patriotic Journal. **Website suggestions:** [Nathan Hale's Biography](#), [Nathan Hale](#), and [One of America's First Spies](#)

Read and Discover

Look up **Memorial Day** in an encyclopedia, book, or Internet site, then answer these questions. **Website suggestion:** [Origins of Memorial Day](#)

1. Read and discuss the beginnings of this holiday. Notice that the holiday was originally called Decoration Day. Why?
2. There are many towns & people that claim to have started the tradition — which one was given "official credit" for being the first?
3. Did you read about the first "official" Memorial Day? Where and when was it held?

Resources

Here are a few books that explain Memorial Day and its origins. Check with your local library to see what is available in your area. They are all very basic, explaining the origins of Memorial Day and today's holiday.

[Memorial Day \(Carolrhoda on My Own Books\)](#), by Geoffrey Scott.

[Memorial Day \(National Holidays\)](#), by Helen Frost.



Memorial Day – Day One

UPPER LEVEL

Today's Quote

Copy today's quote into your Patriotic Journal:

**“Stand your ground. Don't fire unless fired upon;
but if they mean to have a war, let it begin here!”**

John Parker, April 19, 1775, to his Minute Men at Lexington

Words of Wisdom (WOW Words)

Look up the following words in the dictionary and write the words and their definitions in your Patriotic Journal. **Website suggestions:** [Webster's 1828 Dictionary](#) and [Dictionary.com](#)

**sacrifice
liberty
protect
patriot**

Patriots

Using an encyclopedia or Internet site, look up the American patriot, **Nathan Hale**. Why is he considered an American patriot? Summarize your answer in a paragraph in your Journal. **Website suggestions:** [A Time for Heroes](#), [Nathan Hale's Biography](#), [Nathan Hale](#), and [One of America's First Spies](#)

Read and Discover

Using library books, encyclopedias, or Internet sites, find the answer to these questions and record your answers in your Journal, along with the source of your information (book, encyclopedia, web site). **Website suggestions:** [Origins of Memorial Day](#), [Memorial Day](#), [History of Memorial Day](#), and [Memorial Day](#)

1. What towns or people claim to have held the “first” Decoration (Memorial) Day? Find at least two towns and describe their claim.
2. Why was the holiday originally called Decoration Day?
3. Where and when was the first “official” Memorial Day observation held?