

## July 4 – Independence Day

“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.” Declaration of Independence

Independence Day or the Fourth of July is the birthday of the United States of America. It is the day we celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the formal breaking of ties with England. The Continental Congress actually met on July 2, 1776 to formally declare independence, but it took two days for them to agree on the language of the document. In 1941 the Fourth of July was declared a federal legal holiday. Declaration Day is always celebrated the 4th. Most communities celebrate this special day with parades, picnics, parties and fireworks in the evening.

### Prayer

On this Fourth of July, we thank God for the country we live in. In the United States we can pray to God in any way that we would like. We have opportunities to go to school, to work and to play the games we like to play. Most of all we are able to pray to you, Lord. Today and as we grow older, help us to take care of our country and make it a better place for all people to live. God Bless America! Amen.

### Activities

#### *Fourth of July Discussion*

Talk a bit about the history of our country. Why did people want to leave their homes to come here to live? What did they think would be better about living in America? Who lived here before the Europeans came to this land? What makes the United States different from other countries? What can we do to make this country stronger? Finally, talk about how the children celebrate this day with their families.

#### *Geography*

Put out a large floor puzzle of the U.S. for the children to work on throughout the week. Older children will enjoy talking about the different states and their capitals and the geographic regions of our country.

#### *Flagpole Gathering*

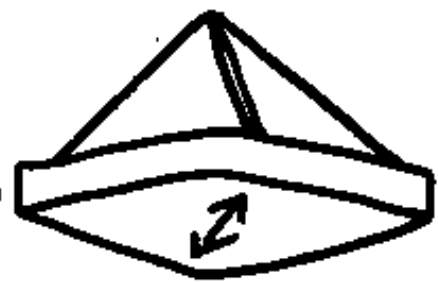
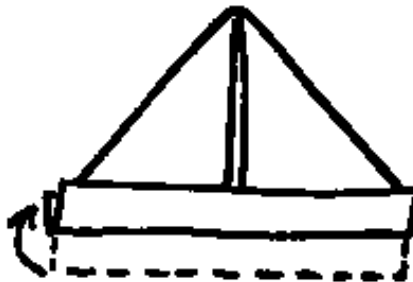
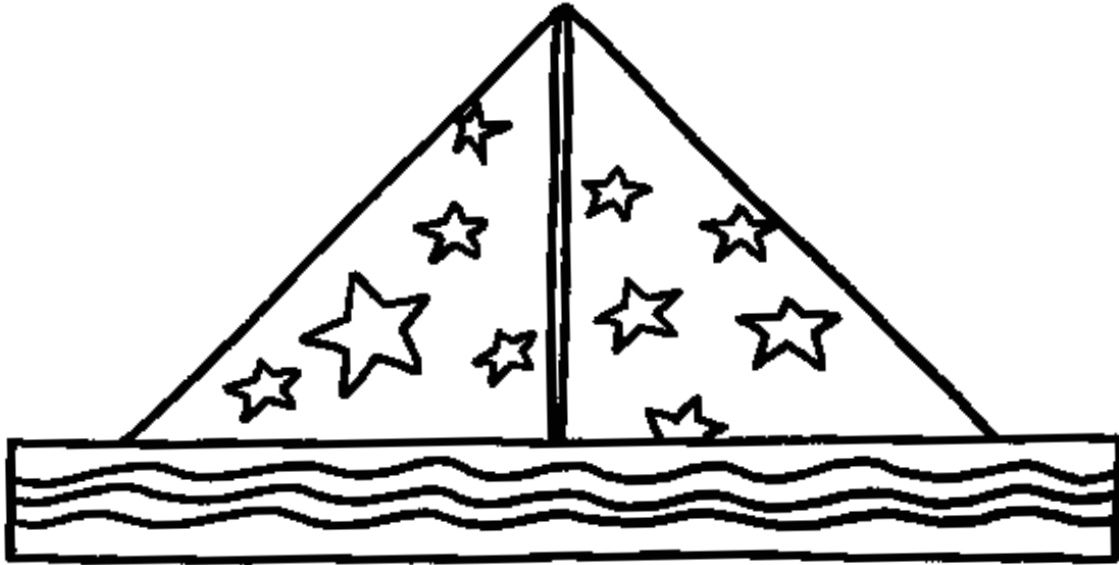
Gather around the flagpole for prayer or snack today. Talk about the symbols on the flag and what they represent.

#### *Bicycle Parade*

Plan a bike parade. Have the children bring their tricycles and wagons to school and decorate them with red, white and blue crepe paper and balloons, then take a walk around the block. Make paper newspaper hats and give each child an instrument from the rhythm band, and off you go!

*Pompoms*

Make a hand full of fireworks for each child. Collect paper towel or toilet tissue rolls for each of the children. Cover them with red, white or blue paper. Patriotic wrapping paper would also work well. Purchase different colors of shredded mylar – the kind used in gift bags or for bows. Take a handful of the mylar and wrap a piece of tape around the bottom of it to hold in place. It will look



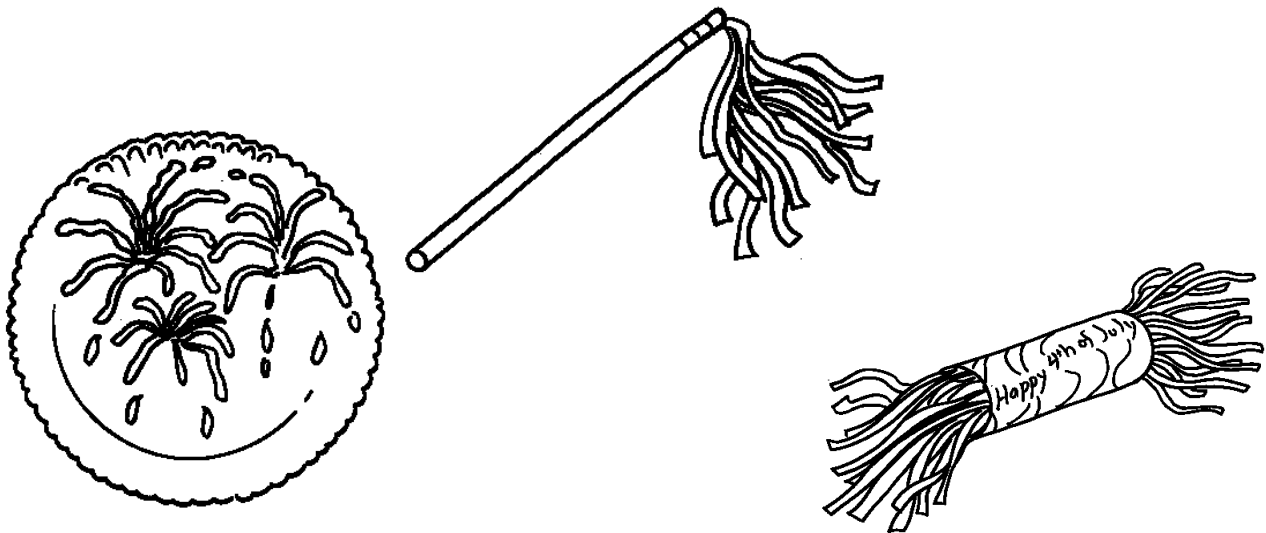
like a miniature sports pompom. With adult help, fasten the taped end of the mylar bundle to the inside of the tube. Fluff out the top of the mylar to make the fireworks. Use the fireworks for a table decoration to shake during the parade or music making. For older children, attach the mylar pompom to the end of a 12" dowel. Wrap duck tape around the dowel to hold in place.

#### *Firework Art*

Draw fireworks with colored chalk on black construction paper. Spray the picture with hair spray or shellac to hold the chalk in place.

#### *Hanging Fireworks*

Draw with glitter paint, or glue colored mylar strips on large black paper plates to make fireworks. Punch a hole at the top of the plate and lace a ribbon through for hanging. Add a card that says, "God Bless America."



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