

The Statue of Liberty

A Symbol of Freedom

Prompt

Create a Grade 4 Social Studies text aligned to the New York State social studies standards and WIDA standards about the history of the Statue of Liberty. Include information about the origins of the statue, its construction, and the materials it is made of. Design the lesson for English Learners at the Emerging levels of English proficiency. Include scaffolds such as visuals, vocabulary lists with definitions, and English-Spanish cognates. Leverage students' literacy skills in Spanish through bilingual vocabulary supports. Highlight key vocabulary terms in bold and include 3-5 comprehension questions at the end.

Introduction

The **Statue of Liberty** is one of the most famous **symbols** in the United States. It stands on **Liberty Island** in New York Harbor. For more than 130 years, the statue has welcomed people coming to America. It represents **freedom** and **democracy**.

Key Vocabulary

Learn these important words:

| Word | Definition (Meaning) | Spanish / Español |
|------------------|--|----------------------|
| symbol | Something that represents or stands for an idea | símbolo* |
| freedom | The power to do, say, or think what you want | libertad* |
| democracy | A type of government where people vote and make decisions together | democracia* |
| gift | A present; something given to someone | regalo |
| sculpture | A three-dimensional work of art; a statue | escultura* |
| copper | A reddish-brown metal | cobre |
| torch | A light that is carried in your hand | antorcha |
| immigrant | A person who comes to live in a new country | inmigrante* |

* These words are cognates - they sound similar in English and Spanish!

The Origins: A Gift from France

The Statue of Liberty was a **gift** from the country of **France** to the United States. France wanted to celebrate the friendship between the two countries and honor America's 100th birthday in 1876.

A French **sculptor** (artist who makes statues) named **Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi** designed the statue. He wanted to create something that would show the world what America stood for: **freedom** and **democracy**.

 *Did You Know? The statue's full name is "Liberty Enlightening the World."*

Building the Statue

Building the Statue of Liberty was a huge project! It took many years and many workers to complete.

How It Was Built:

1. **First**, the statue was built in **France** between 1875 and 1884.
2. **Then**, it was taken apart into 350 pieces and packed in **214 crates** (large boxes).
3. **Next**, the crates were shipped across the **Atlantic Ocean** on a boat to New York.
4. **Finally**, workers put all the pieces back together on **Liberty Island**.

The statue was completed and **dedicated** (officially opened) on **October 28, 1886**.

What Is the Statue Made Of?

The Statue of Liberty is made from special **materials** that help it stand strong, even in wind and rain.

| Material | What It Does |
|----------|---|
| Copper | The outer skin of the statue is made of copper. Copper is a reddish-brown metal. Over time, the copper turned green because of a chemical reaction with air and water. This green color is called a "patina." |
| Iron | Inside the statue, there is a strong iron framework (like a skeleton) that holds up the copper skin and keeps the statue standing. |

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Steel | In 1986, some of the iron was replaced with stainless steel to make the statue stronger. |
|--------------|--|

⌚ *The statue was not always green! When it was first built, it was shiny copper brown. It took about 20 years for the statue to turn completely green.*

Important Facts About the Statue

- **Height:** The statue is **305 feet tall** from the ground to the top of the torch (that's as tall as a 30-story building!).
- **Weight:** The entire statue weighs about **450,000 pounds** (225 tons).
- **The Torch:** Lady Liberty holds a **torch** in her right hand. The torch represents **enlightenment** (knowledge and learning).
- **The Tablet:** In her left hand, she holds a tablet with the date **July 4, 1776** written on it. This is the date of American independence.
- **The Crown:** The crown has **seven spikes**. The seven spikes represent the seven continents and seven seas of the world.
- **Broken Chains:** At the statue's feet are **broken chains**. These represent freedom from oppression (being treated unfairly).

Why the Statue of Liberty Is Important

For more than 130 years, the Statue of Liberty has welcomed millions of **immigrants** arriving in America by ship. For many people, seeing the statue meant they had reached a place of **safety, opportunity, and freedom**.

Today, the Statue of Liberty is one of the most famous **symbols** of America. It reminds us that America is a place that values **freedom, democracy**, and welcoming people from all over the world.

⚡ *More than 4 million people visit the Statue of Liberty every year!*

Comprehension Questions

Answer these questions to check your understanding:

5. Which country gave the Statue of Liberty to the United States as a gift?

Answer: _____

6. What is the outer skin of the Statue of Liberty made of?

Answer: _____

7. Why did the statue change from brown to green?

Answer: _____

8. What does the Statue of Liberty hold in her right hand?

Answer: _____

9. What does the Statue of Liberty symbolize or represent?

Answer: _____

Visual Support: Parts of the Statue

Draw and label these parts of the Statue of Liberty:

- The torch
- The tablet
- The crown with seven spikes
- The broken chains at her feet

[Teacher Note: Provide students with an outline drawing of the Statue of Liberty for labeling, or have them draw their own representation.]