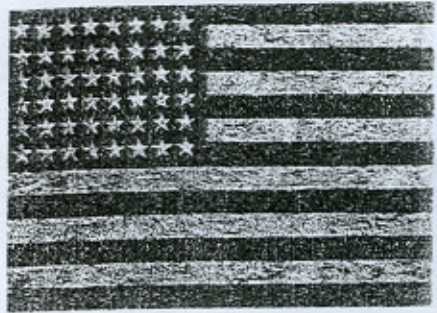


Skills Point



Jasper Johns, Flag, 1955.



The Statue of Liberty.

Philadelphia on July 4, 1776, not only placed the thirteen colonies in open rebellion against the mother country, but also announced the birth of a new nation – the United States of America. The 13 stripes on the American flag represent the original 13 colonies; the fifty stars represent the fifty states. The three colours of the flag, blue, white and red are the same as those of the British flag.

The new nation and her people went westward until they reached the territories occupied by the French! Then the American government bought the Louisiana territory for the sum of just fifteen million dollars. Slowly, the pioneer instinct drove the Americans across the vast western lands in search of a living. Territory after territory, they finally reached the west coast.

The Statue of Liberty, a lovely gift from France, symbolizes the fact that, except for the Native Americans, also known as Indians, the rest of people in the USA come from other countries. America is the melting pot, the land of immigrants. Millions of Chinese, Italians, British, French, Germans,



Ben Shahn, Picking cotton, 1935.

Spaniards, Russians etc. settled in this land over the last four centuries. There were also black slaves, brought from Africa to work on cotton plantations in the south. Therefore, today, every American is a descendant of an immigrant.

b Answer the questions.

- 1 How many states form the United States of America?
- 2 Where is Alaska?
- 3 Where are the Hawaii islands?
- 4 Are the states different? Can you give examples?
- 5 How many were the original United States of America?
- 6 Where and when was the Declaration of Independence signed?
- 7 Why was the Declaration of Independence important?
- 8 What do the stars and stripes represent on the American flag?
- 9 How much did the American government spend to buy the Louisiana territory?
- 10 What does the Statue of Liberty symbolize?
- 11 Why is America called a melting pot?

Project work

Look at the map of the USA on page C/3 and try to find out: the names of the fifty states • the names of the thirteen original colonies • the states with the Rocky Mountains • the states where the Mississippi River flows • the states around Niagara Falls