

Lesson Designed by	Amanda Perschall
Subject/Course	US Civics and Government
Topic	What does it mean to be an American?
Grade Level	9-12

Lesson objectives and goals:

Discuss what it means to be an American.
 Compare and contrast historical writing of students and modern students.
 Create connections between historical topics and modern policies.

AAS primary source material used:

Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver edited by and Edward B. Fellows: “The American Boy” by Francis D. Moulton

Lesson materials and other non-AAS resources:

[Slides link](#)

[Handout link of the images](#)

Lesson procedure/ summary of tasks:

1. Have students brainstorm what they think it means to be an American. Think about place, time period, citizenship status, other factors. What do we do well as America? Where do we have room to improve?
2. Provide background on the source including the AAS, the anthology, and the author as a student of similar age to them.
3. Have students read and annotate “The American Boy”.
4. Have students think how Moulton discusses being an American. What does he include or overlook?
5. Have students return to their earlier writing in light of Moulton. What needs added?
6. Have students think about intersectionality. What barriers exist in modern society? Moulton says “no impediment, save want of moral worth, is placed in the path of the American boy.” How would Moulton’s (or your) writing have been different if you were a different age, race, gender, socio-economic status, citizenship status etc.?
7. Have students think about the American flag and the national anthem. Moulton describes it as “the banner of the Stars and Stripes, that splendid emblem of union, light and liberty”. How does that reflect or not reflect your feelings about the flag and the Star Spangled banner? How does that correlate with flag burning or kneeling during the National Anthem?
8. Have students share their thoughts in a reflective writing piece.

