

Topic:

Pledging Allegiance to the Flag

Time:

3-4 one hour periods

Grade:

K-4

Core:

K: 6000-0402
1: 6010-0502
3: 6030-0401
4: 6040-0402

Objectives:

1. Students will know what **pledge** and **allegiance** mean.
2. Students will understand they are **promising** to help maintain the freedom of our country.

Procedure:

1. Two of the most difficult words in the Pledge of Allegiance are **pledge** and **allegiance**.
2. Handouts 1 and 2 are short stories about Barney Bear, to be read by the teacher, that help explain **pledge** and **allegiance**.
3. Discuss these words and concepts with the students. They are the essence of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Additional Resources:

Learning to Pledge Allegiance to the Flag
by Jo Anne Elmore

Author: Jo Anne Elmore and Carol Lear

HANDOUT 1

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE WORD PLEDGE?

Barney Bear Learns to Pledge the Flag

Fall had come to the forest. Brightly colored leaves covered the ground, and all the animals were excited to go back to school. Barney Bear gathered up all his new school supplies and put them in his bookbag. On the way to school, he wondered what kind of a school year he would have and if his teacher, Miss Owl, would be nice.

When he got to his classroom, he found his desk with his name written on a card in bright red letters. **BARNEY B**, it said. He took his place and waited quietly for school to begin.

At 8:30 the school bell rang, and finally it was time to start. Miss Owl called the roll, and Barney discovered that many of his friends were in his class. He liked Miss Owl, too. She had a nice voice and seemed very friendly. After the roll, Miss Owl said, "Now, students, it is time to pledge allegiance to the flag."

Barney did not understand. He wondered what a "legiance" was, and why in the world they were going to dust it with furniture polish. But instead of doing that, the class stood very straight and started to say, "I pledge allegiance to the flag . . ." Barney realized that he was being silly. They were not going to dust anything, but he still did not understand what the class was doing.

When the class was finished, Barney raised his hand. "Miss Owl," he asked shyly, "What is the pledge?"

"That is a very good question, Barney, and I'm glad you asked it," said Miss Owl. "A pledge is a promise. When we pledge allegiance to the flag, we are promising to help keep our country free."

Miss Owl went on to explain that our flag is a symbol which stands for the people of the United States of America. She said that many people have given their lives to protect the freedom of the people of our country, and we should be very proud of the United States and of the flag of our nation.

At last, Barney understood. The next day when the class pledged allegiance to the flag, Barney stood very straight and had a warm feeling inside when the class said the words all together.

"Yes," Barney thought, "I am going to like Miss Owl's class." It was good to be able to ask questions and have them answered by Miss Owl. She is a nice teacher, and besides that, she wore "Honey Dew" perfume which was Barney's favorite!

HANDOUT 2

WHAT IS ALLEGIANCE?

The Little Animals Learn About Allegiance

One day Miss Owl's class was talking about the word, **allegiance**. Barney Bear and his friends wondered what the word meant. They heard it every day when the class stood to pledge allegiance to the flag, but they still did not know what it was.

Miss Owl said that allegiance meant being true or faithful to a person or to the flag. When Miss Owl was talking, Randy Raccoon started thinking about a time when he needed someone to be true to him.

On his way to school one morning with his friend Paul Possum, Randy was stopped by Buster Badger. Buster was a bully. He liked to pick on all the little animals who were smaller than he was. He stood in the middle of the path and said, "Randy, unless you give me your lunch, I'm going to beat you up and make you late for school."

Randy was afraid. He knew that Buster was mean and meant what he said. Still, he did not want to give Buster his lunch. He said, "I'm sorry Buster, but you cannot have my lunch." Then he closed his eyes waiting for Buster to make a move.

Paul had been watching the whole thing. He knew how mean Buster could be, and he didn't want to get hurt. Yet he didn't want Randy to go without lunch either. He knew that if he said anything, Buster might hurt him, too. Finally, he stepped next to Randy and said, "Buster, you will have to fight us both to get Randy's lunch."

Buster was so surprised! No one had ever told him no before! Buster was a bully, but he was smart enough to know that he could not fight them both at the same time. So he said, "Oh, just keep your crummy lunch. It's probably no good anyway." With that he went on his way and didn't bother Randy and Paul again.

Randy raised his hand, and Miss Owl called on him. He told the story to the class. Miss Owl was pleased. She said, "When Paul was a true friend to Randy, he was being loyal. The word allegiance also means to be loyal or faithful. When we pledge or promise allegiance or loyalty to the flag, we are promising that we will be good citizens and help our country with its problems. Our country is very large and many people live here. The people in a country are called its citizens. When many citizens live together, sometimes there are problems. A person who is loyal to his country will help to solve some of the problems the country has."

The little animals in the class thought about what kinds of problems they had in the forest. They tried to think of ways in which they could help solve the problems. When they left class that day, they understood better that the word allegiance means being true to our country, and they made a list of things that they could do to be better citizens of the forest.