

Betsy Ross made her living as a seamstress, and had many customers. She sewed many things, including clothes, blankets, and curtains. Each day, she would start with a pile of cloth and create things people paid her to make for them. Everyone knew she would do a wonderful job, so they came to her home and asked her to make many items for them. Business was so good, and as she began to get very busy, Betsy hired me to help. I am an experienced seamstress, so I can sew very well.

On my first day, three men came to her home and asked if she could make a flag. I listened to them talk with great interest. One of them was named George Washington. I had heard of him, and now here he was right in front of me. He came to the store in May. I remember it very well because it was my birthday that day. Washington was leading the army, but the army did not currently have a flag. The army was fighting for freedom, but at the time no one knew if we would win.

The men showed Betsy Ross a drawing of the flag of the new country. It had stars and stripes. I said, "Silver stars would be great." Betsy said, "No, it will be too difficult to make those. The flag should be red, white, and blue." So we set to work that day.

We worked on the flag for a solid month. It would be very big. In addition to sewing the flag, we had to do other work, too. Betsy said we had to make more clothes to get money. We were making the flag as a present, which meant we would not be paid for the flag.

Finally the flag was complete, so George Washington sent someone to come get it. He opened it up and said, "This is it. This is just what we need to inspire the army." He did not show it anyone yet, though. He kept it for a special day.

On July 4<sup>th</sup>, the army flew the new flag. That was the first Independence Day. On that day, the United States said it was a new country. It had a new flag. We were not there, but we heard about it later.

The army had to fight more battles. Just saying they were independent did not make it true. The war went on for 7 more years. We worried. We made more flags. In all those battles, soldiers saw that flag. Still, it was difficult to win.

When the war ended, the country started. I was proud when I saw the flag. I didn't just make a flag. I was part of making the United States.

## Identify and Analyze Tone, Mood, Voice, Plot, and Setting – Historical Fiction

Questions developed by Center for Urban Education for use by Chicago Public Schools 2008-2009.

*Choose the best answer for each question.*

1. What is happening when the story begins?

- a. The United States is a new country.
- b. People want to start a new country.
- c. Betsy Ross is a leader.
- d. George Washington is President.

3. How does the writer tell you how the seamstress feels?

- a. She is proud.
- b. She tells the story.
- c. George Washington praises her.
- d. Betsy Ross thanks her.

2. What word tells about what the flag means?

- a. colorful
- b. symbolic
- c. different
- d. new

4. How does the writer make it clear that people did not know what would happen?

- a. The seamstress says that.
- b. Betsy Ross is worried.
- c. The flag is important to battles.
- d. The United States is just beginning.

5. *Write your own answer to this question. Why do you think the writer had the seamstress explain what happened?*

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### **TEACHER NOTES: Develop Students' Skills: Exercise Thinking**

These questions have not been validated, so decisions about student's achievement should not be made based on their responses. They are intended to exercise skills. Recommended activities include: students work in pairs to choose the best response; give students the questions without the responses so they generate their own answers; students make up additional questions; students make up questions like these for another passage.

**Answers:** *You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.*

Item	1	2	3	4
Answer	b	b	b	a

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.  
To make it interesting because she was there.