Overview
This lesson teaches students that the *Pledge of Allegiance* is a national symbol. Students will discuss ways of saying the *Pledge of Allegiance*, develop vocabulary, and use word recognition strategies to locate words. This is a thirty-minute lesson with an optional extension activity.

Standards
**History**
Benchmark 3, Indicator 1: The student recognizes the United States flag, *Pledge of Allegiance*, and bald eagle as important national symbols.

**Common Core ELA**
**Reading**
- RL.1.4: The student will ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.

**Speaking and Listening**
- SL.1.1a: The student will participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
  a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others with care, speaking, one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).

Objectives
**Content**
- The student will understand that the *Pledge of Allegiance* is a national symbol.
- The student identifies ways in which people show respect in pledging allegiance to the United States flag.
Skills
- The student will participate in a discussion of the ways people say the *Pledge of Allegiance* following appropriate rules for listening and speaking.
- The student uses word-recognition skills to identify key words in the text.

Essential Questions
- What is a pledge?
- How is the Pledge of Allegiance a symbol for our nation?
- How do people show respect for our country when saying the Pledge of Allegiance?
Lesson Plan
Day 1

1. Ask students what they are doing when they say the *Pledge of Allegiance*. Point out that it is the *Pledge of Allegiance* to the flag. Have them point out the American flag in the room.

2. Inform students that they will be viewing actual photos (primary sources) of various groups from different time periods, all saying the *Pledge of Allegiance*. They are to describe what they see in the pictures.

3. Review rules for participating in a discussion, particularly listening with care when someone else speaks, speaking one at a time, and keeping on the topic. To help them speak one at a time, give the person who has the floor a small flag to hold while they speak. They pass it to the next person when they are done. Display the first photo, **Virginia Class**. Photos may be accessed as indicated on the
resource chart and displayed via Qomo or other similar device, or printed out and laminated. Ask them to describe what they see, giving the flag to someone to start the discussion. Are they standing or sitting? What are they facing? How do you think the people feel about what they are doing? The teacher should chart observations, such as, “The children are saluting with their hands to their heads.”

4. Repeat with the second photo, Fifth Grade Class, then the third photo, Oregon Citizens, and the last photo, Connecticut Elementary School recording the students observations.

5. Ask students why the behaviors observed were being demonstrated. Ask why people show respect when they say or hear the Pledge of Allegiance. Explain that it is a national symbol, much like the American flag.

6. Pass out copies of the Pledge of Allegiance and highlighters. Work together as a class to identify, highlight and define words that give us clues it is a national symbol (such as “flag,” “United States,” “America,” and “republic.”) Identify one word at a time and be sure each student has located it before giving a signal to highlight it. Give prompts such as, “What letter would that start with?” as needed. Encourage students to ask questions about words they do not know and model framing it as a question. (Example: A student says, “Nation?” The teacher responds, “Are you asking a question?” The student says, “Yes.” The teacher responds, “What is your question?” The student says, “What does ‘nation’ mean?” The teacher asks, “Does anyone have an idea of what a ‘nation’ is?)

7. Review the chart of ways people say the Pledge of Allegiance. Remind them that these were real people in the pictures. Include how your students say it as well. Distribute Worksheet 2—I pledge allegiance... Ask students to draw a picture of themselves saying the Pledge of Allegiance. Allow them to share as time permits.

Assessment

- Observe the students’ ability to take turns speaking, listen to others and stay on topic.
- Evaluate the students’ ability to locate words as instructed.
- Observe student drawings (and comments) for signs of understanding of the Pledge of Allegiance as a national symbol, such as standing while saying it.

For the Teacher

Answer Key

Highlighted words may include: allegiance (loyalty or support for a country); flag; United States; America; republic (a form of government where people choose
others to lead and represent them); nation; indivisible (cannot be broken up); liberty (freedom); justice (fair treatment); all.

Additional Classroom Materials
- Highlighters
- Small American flag
- Chart tablet and marker

Background Information
The Pledge of Allegiance was written by Francis Bellamy in the 1892. When it was recited by James Upham, a co-worker of Bellamy’s, Upham extended his right arm out, palm upward gesturing toward an imaginary flag when saying the words, “my flag.” This became an accepted practice. By 1935, people were becoming uncomfortable with the similarity between this type of salute and the German “Heil Hitler” salute. Many schools began to get rid of this type of salute. In 1942, Congress approved the present day salute of right hand over the heart. (http://historyoftheflag.com)

Extension
Explore the changes in the wording of the Pledge of Allegiance and create a timeline.
- 1923 – changed “my flag” to “the flag of the United States”
- 1924 – added “of America”
- 1954 – added “under God”
The Pledge of Allegiance

I pledge allegiance to the flag

of the United States of America,

and to the republic for which it stands,

one nation under God, indivisible,

with liberty and justice for all."
Name ______________________

I pledge allegiance to the flag...