

Class Example
Opinion Essay
Showing Evidence

The “Star Spangled Banner”, America’s National Anthem, was penned by Francis Scott Key as a result of a battle in the War of 1812. Fort McHenry was being fired upon relentlessly by British warships and it seemed America would lose this battle. However, after the fighting ended, there appeared through the darkness and smoke, America’s flag flying over the fort signaling an American victory. Francis Scott Key wrote “The Star Spangled Banner” to place importance upon America’s perseverance and strength during a terrible war. Despite the popularity of the national anthem, there are many citizens of the United States who would prefer to change the anthem. I believe the United States should choose a different national anthem, because the Star Spangled Banner is outdated and difficult to sing.

The current national anthem is a very lengthy piece of music. It contains four verses with 16 lines in each verse. Due to the lengthy lyrics, it is extremely difficult to memorize. For example, many elementary school children are required to sing “The Star Spangled Banner,” which takes a lot of time to learn and sing. Even though children only sing the first verse, it is still a struggle to accomplish this feat. Instead of having to memorize a challenging song, our national anthem should be changed to a song such as, “My Country ‘Tis of Thee” or “America, the Beautiful.” These alternate songs only have about 4 stanzas with 4-5 lines per stanza. Therefore, it only makes sense to switch from a long and challenging anthem, to a shorter and easier anthem.

Another reason to change our national anthem is because the vocabulary used is difficult to understand and pronounce. For instance, words such as perilous, vauntingly, and hireling, are very rare in today’s society, and are old 19th century words. In addition, due to the unusual language, people find it hard to connect with the current national anthem. As an example, the first verse includes vocabulary not widely used today. The verse reads, “O’er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?” “Ramparts” and “gallantly streaming” are outdated words, which neither children nor adults recognize. In general, people do not show any understanding of what “The Star Spangled Banner” truly means.

Furthermore, the national anthem needs to be changed because Francis Scott Key composed this anthem during the War of 1812 conveying the feelings of that time. When “The Star Spangled Banner” was written, America was still a new country trying to discover its potential. Many wars were being fought for rights, freedoms, and the pursuit of happiness. In contrast, the America today is not fighting for freedoms with other countries. In this generation, our concentration is focused on what makes America the great nation it is today. The lyrics of “The Star Spangled Banner” does not portray the beauty of our country or the strength of its people. However, the song, “America the Beautiful,” by Katherine Bates and Samuel Ward, describes America’s beauty, the sacrifice for freedoms, and people’s willingness to love their country more than themselves. Another song titled, “My Country ‘Tis of Thee” by Samuel

Francis Smith, also describes within its lyrics the liberties, sacrifices, and beauties of America and her people. Although the “Star Spangled Banner” was very important during its time, America has changed and its anthem needs to be updated.

The “Star Spangled Banner” has been America’s national anthem for many years. It is considered to be outdated and not relevant to the America we have today. There are, however, many who believe that “Star Spangled Banner” is a tradition and belongs to this country and the people who have served and died here. As Americans, we need a real national anthem emphasizing the beauty, power, and diversity of our great country. Therefore, America should change its national anthem.