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History Standard: Understands how democratic values came to be and how they have been exemplified by people, events, and symbols

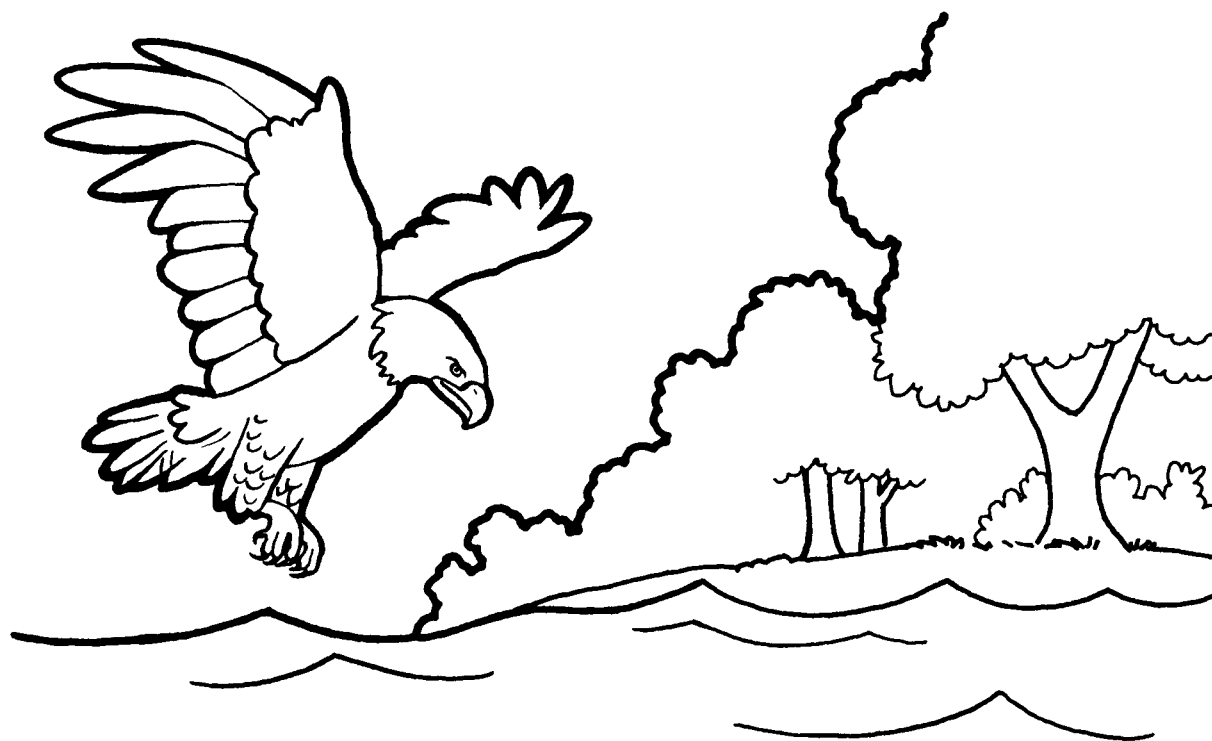
Benchmark: Knows the history of American symbols

The American Bald Eagle

A symbol stands for something. The U.S. flag is a symbol of our country. When you see it, you think of America. The American bald eagle is another U.S. symbol. It was picked in 1782. This beautiful bird lives only in North America. It's strong, and it can live up to 50 years. That's quite a long time for a bird.

The American bald eagle is not bald. It has white feathers on its head. The rest of its feathers are brown. The food it likes best is **salmon**. So it lives near streams and rivers. That makes it easy to catch the fish.

A male and female will stay together for life. Each year they use the same nest. Each year they have one or two eggs. Taking care of their hungry babies is a lot of work. Both of the parents take turns finding food. When one goes hunting, the other watches over the nest.



The American Bald Eagle

Comprehension Questions

Fill in the circle next to the best answer.

1. **The American bald eagle is a symbol for**

- (a) South America.
- (b) North America.
- (c) the U.S.A.

2. **What happens last?**

- (a) The eagles pick mates.
- (b) The eagles take turns finding food.
- (c) One or two babies hatch.

3. **What is odd about the American bald eagle's name?**

- (a) It makes you think that eagle doesn't live a long time.
- (b) It makes you think the eagle's head is bald, but it isn't.
- (c) It makes you think that the eagle lives in North America.

4. **Salmon is a kind of**

- (a) mouse.
- (b) snake.
- (c) fish.

5. **Why is it important that the bald eagle can live for 50 years?**

- (a) The people who picked it as a symbol wanted America to last a long time, too.
- (b) We don't want to pick a new symbol more often than every 50 years.
- (c) The bird has to get old before it gets bald.

6. **Picture an eagle catching salmon. How does the eagle grab its prey?**

- (a) with its feet
- (b) with its wings
- (c) with its head

7. **Do you think the American bald eagle was a good choice for a symbol? Explain.**
