

Alaska Flag Song Ornament



Music is a great way to learn and remember things; for example, you can remember the alphabet by singing the ABC song. Kids and adults can remember the symbolism behind the Alaska flag by singing the song "Alaska's Flag". Make an Alaska flag ornament and sing the song together!

Materials Needed:

Flag Ornament printable (or draw your own), scissors, crayons or colored pencils, yarn or string. *Optional:* Hole punch.

Instructions:

Step 1: Cut out and color a flag ornament.

Step 2: Use a hole punch or scissors to make a small hole at the top of the ornament.

Step 3: Tie yarn or string through the hole. Cut it shorter for an ornament, or make it longer for a necklace.

Step 4: Sing the Alaska Flag song together:



Eight stars of gold on a field of blue,
Alaska's flag, may it mean to you,
The blue of the sea, the evening sky,
The mountain lakes and the flowers nearby,
The gold of the early sourdough's dreams,
The precious gold of the hills and streams,
The brilliant stars in the northern sky,
The "Bear," the "Dipper," and shining high,
The great North Star with its steady light,
O'er land and sea a beacon bright,
Alaska's flag to Alaskans dear,
The simple flag of a last frontier.

Watch a video of the Alaska Flag Song:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLunSyrGXco

Alaska Flag Song Ornament Printable

Alaska's Flag

Words by Marie Drake

(based on Benny Benson's flag design)

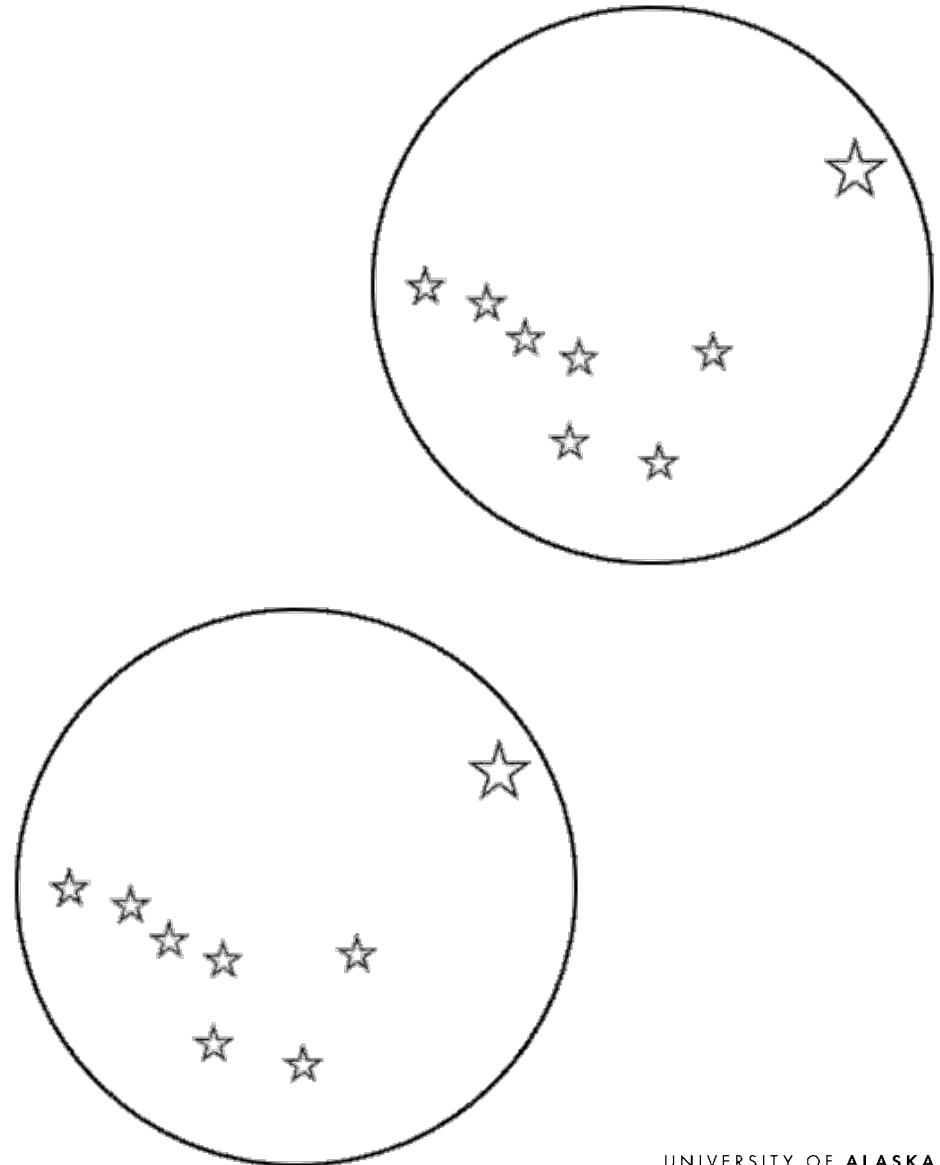
Music by Elinor Dusenbery

Adopted as Alaska's official song in 1955

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The Story of Alaska's Flag

In 1927, the Alaska Department of the American Legion held a contest for children in grades 7-12 to design an Alaska flag. Benny Benson, a 13-year-old living in an orphanage in Seward, submitted the winning design.

The design showed the seven stars of the Big Dipper (part of the constellation Ursa Major), pointing to Polaris, the North Star. Benson explained, "The blue field is for the Alaska sky and the forget-me-not, an Alaskan flower. The North Star is for the future state of Alaska, the most northerly in the union. The Dipper is for the Great Bear, symbolizing strength."

Benson was born in Chignik, Alaska. His mother was Aleut and Russian, and his father was Swedish. When he was three years old, his mother died, and Benson and his brother were sent to live at an orphanage. After graduating from high school, Benson used his \$1000 scholarship from winning the flag contest to study diesel engine repair. He settled in Kodiak and worked as an airplane mechanic. He died in 1972.

In 1935, Marie Drake wrote a poem about the flag, based on Benson's explanation. Elinor Dusenbury later composed music for the poem, and in 1955 it became Alaska's official song.



Benny Benson's contest submission.
Alaska State Museum, courtesy of vilda.alaska.edu



Benny Benson holding the Alaska flag.
Alaska State Library, courtesy of vilda.alaska.edu

Read more about the Alaska flag and Benny Benson:

alaskahistoricalsociety.org/discover-alaska/kids-page/benny-benson-an-alaska-kid-who-made-history/