

“Oh, say can you see?” How often have we heard that phrase sung? There is a reason that every sporting event starts with the national anthem. It stands for the pride we have in our country. When I hear the national anthem at a baseball game or a military ceremony, it reminds me how much people are willing to sacrifice for the country. We stand and salute or place our hand over our heart out of respect for those that have died defending our freedom. Right now we’re fighting to keep the national anthem playing at sporting events and ceremonies. Why would you take the thing away that symbolizes our country more than anything else? It symbolizes how much our country has been through to get to where we are today. Also, it reminds me how strong we are as a republic. Our country is a refuge for people looking for a better life. The USA is a free country, we are lucky to live here.

Francis Scott Key wrote the poem that became our national anthem in 1814. He wrote it to give honor to the men that held the flag up during the ferocious battle at Fort McHenry and were willing to give their lives to keep our stars and stripes flying. The national anthem is not mere words on a page, but words that tell a story. It is a story of perseverance and bravery. It is hard to imagine the sacrifices that our past leaders made for our country. The odds against America winning the Battle of Fort McHenry were as great as David conquering Goliath.

The Star Spangled Banner gives me a sense of pride knowing that even over 200 years later, the song still represents what is great about our country. We have freedom that people in other countries can only dream of. We can go to the church that we choose, we can speak out when we disagree and we can vote for the leaders of our country. Imagine what it means to a soldier or a veteran, they go to war to protect our freedoms. When people see our flag or hear the national anthem, they know they’re safe. When you think about all the battles we’ve fought, and all the wars we’ve won, it reminds you how strong we are. I’m proud to live in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Our Founding Fathers created a country using courage and perseverance. The United States of America was born of war and sacrifice. I see the national anthem as a reflection of our nation’s determination to be free, together as one people. When Francis Scott Key wrote the lyrics as a poem, surely the same things were racing through his mind. My step-dad was in the Army, I have heard the national anthem many times at different military events and every time he returned from war. Each time as I listened, I grew closer to the lyrics, understanding the words not just with my mind, but my heart. The music lifts me up when I am weak, reminds me who I am, and gives me strength to pick myself up. I am proud when I hear the national anthem. As every note rings out over the mountains, plains, and deserts of the United States, I am filled with hope and liberty. That is what the national anthem means to me.

Thank you,

Luke