



# OUR FLAG

UNITY FOR ALL



# Lesson Plan: Stars of Persuasion

## Convincing with Ideas & Design

**Grade Level:** 3rd-5th

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Topic:** Persuasive Writing & U.S. Flag History (Eisenhower and the 50-star flag)

### Learning Objectives

- Students will become familiar with the use persuasion.
- Students will describe how President Eisenhower received ideas for the U.S. flag when Alaska and Hawaii became states.
- Students will use persuasive writing and visual design to propose their own U.S. flag.

### Standards Alignment

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.1 / W.4.1 / W.5.1 ELA:** Write opinion pieces supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- **SS.1.1.1. Social Studies:** Understand how symbols (like the U.S. flag) represent historical changes and national identity.

### Materials

- Lesson slides found at <https://eisenhowerfoundation.net/page/our-flag>
- Images of student-submitted flag designs to Eisenhower (It is optional to print out designs for students to have in front of them from pages 5-16, and/or to project them within lesson slides).
- "New Flag Score Sheet" page 4 - one per student
- White paper / construction paper
- Colored pencils, crayons, or markers
- Persuasive letter templates on pages 17-18 - one per student

### Lesson Procedures

#### 1. Hook / Connection Examples:

- Use slide 2: Ask for oral answers to, "Think about a time you tried to persuade someone to use your great idea." Examples: what to watch on tv, convincing parents about bedtime, picking dinner, going to a concert or party.
- Review that persuasion means **explaining your idea and backing it up with compelling reasons**.
- Direct students to share their example with a classmate and to develop the discussion with, "What did you say to convince them?" and "How did you try to make them understand your idea?"

#### 2. History Connection

- Use slide 3 to show images of early U.S. flags → 13-star, 48-star, 50-star.
- Direct students to look closely and find the differences. Prompt their answers with, "What do you notice about the stripes?" and "What do you notice about the stars?"
- Direct students to discuss with a classmate, "How has the flag changed over time and why do you think it change?"



- Use slide 4 to introduce Eisenhower and ask students what they think needed to happen when Alaska and Hawaii became states (the flag needed to be updated from 48 - 50 stars).
- Use slide 5 to explain that thousands of people sent in their idea of what the new flag design should be, that correspondence to/from the POTUS becomes part of their archival records and a primary source record of America's history. Introduce or review the vocabulary: archival records, primary source.
- Slide 6: Hand out copies of the "New Flag Scoresheet" (page 3 of this lesson plan) and provide directions for flag analysis.
- Use slides 7-9 and/or pages 5-16: Go through slides of examples a few times and direct students to fill out chart. Depending on the time available, discuss each design and record a class vote for the favorite.

### 3. Creative Challenge

- Use slide 10 to inform students about U.S. territories, in particular, Puerto Rico
- Slides 11-12 provide the challenge, "What if Puerto Rico became a state today? How would our flag need to change?"
- Provide paper and direct students to create their new flag design. Encourage creativity (rearrange stars, add symbols, keep stripes, etc.).

### 4. Persuasive Writing

- Use slide 13 and pages 17-18: Students write a letter to the president persuading him or her to adopt their design. Page 17 is for a rough draft; page 18 is for the final draft.
- Letter must include:
  1. Statement of Claim in the introduction and conclusion (I would like you to ...)
  2. Reasoning - At least 3 reasons (My flag is the best because...)
  3. Support. Each reason needs to reference to the design (I included the color...)

### 5. Assessment

- Formative: Class discussion, participation in flag design vote.
- Summative: Persuasive letter + flag design graded with a simple rubric (20 points total):
  - Design completed with thought and effort (0-5)
  - Statement of Claim (0-2 points)
  - At least 3 reasons given (0-3 points)
  - Support for each reason (0-3 points)
  - Re-statement of Claim (0-2 points)

### 6. Extension / Differentiation

- Younger/struggling writers can be given sentence prompts
- Advanced students can research a U.S. territory and include why it deserves statehood.
- Display student flags in a classroom or hallway "Flag Gallery Walk."



# NEW FLAG SCORE SHEET

Each flag you examine was mailed to President Eisenhower to consider. Look closely at the 12 designs provided to you and fill in the chart below with your observations.

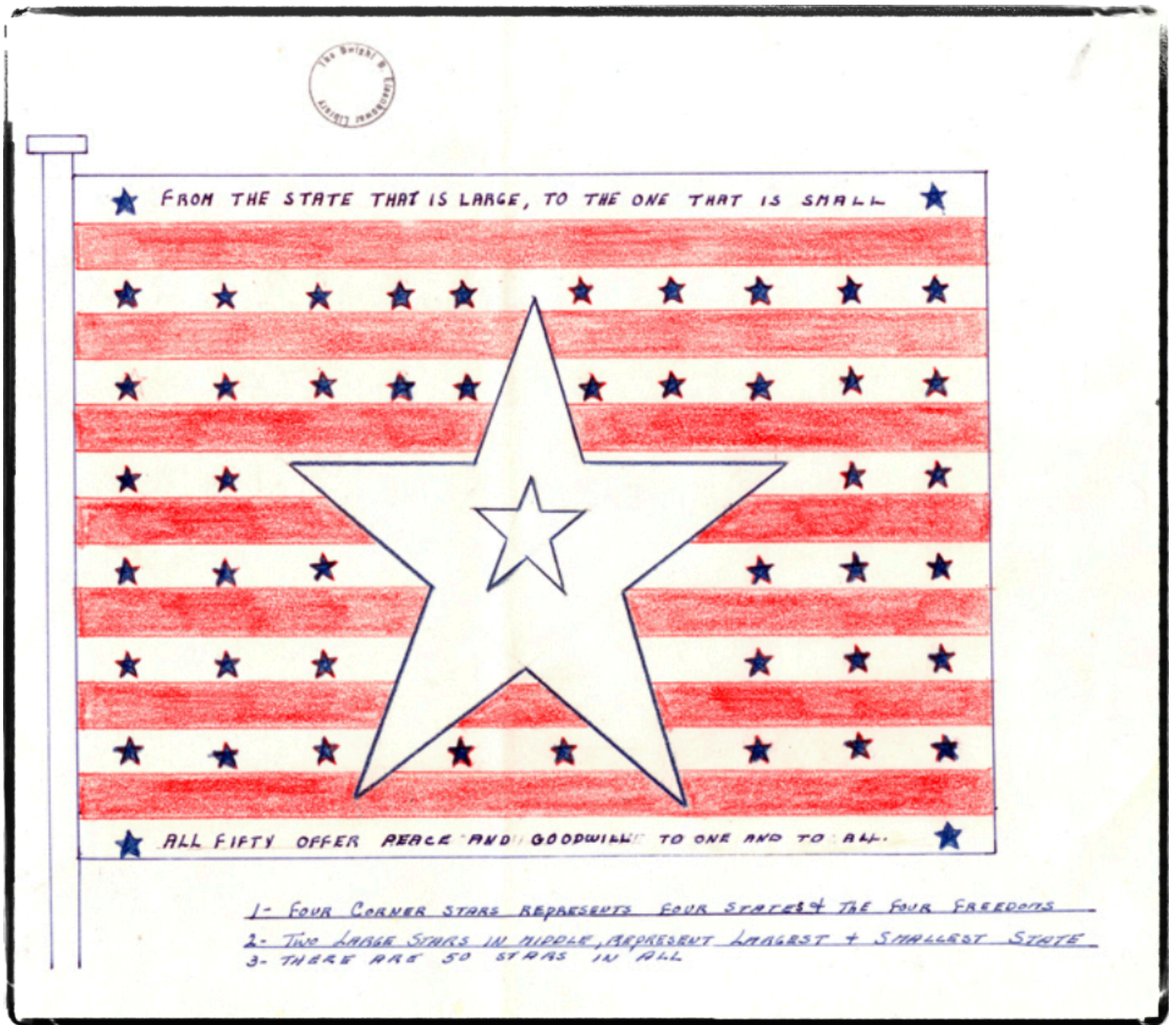
## WHAT ARE YOUR OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE:

Design #	STRIPEs	STARs	SYMBOLs	LETTERS OR WORDs	COLORs
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					

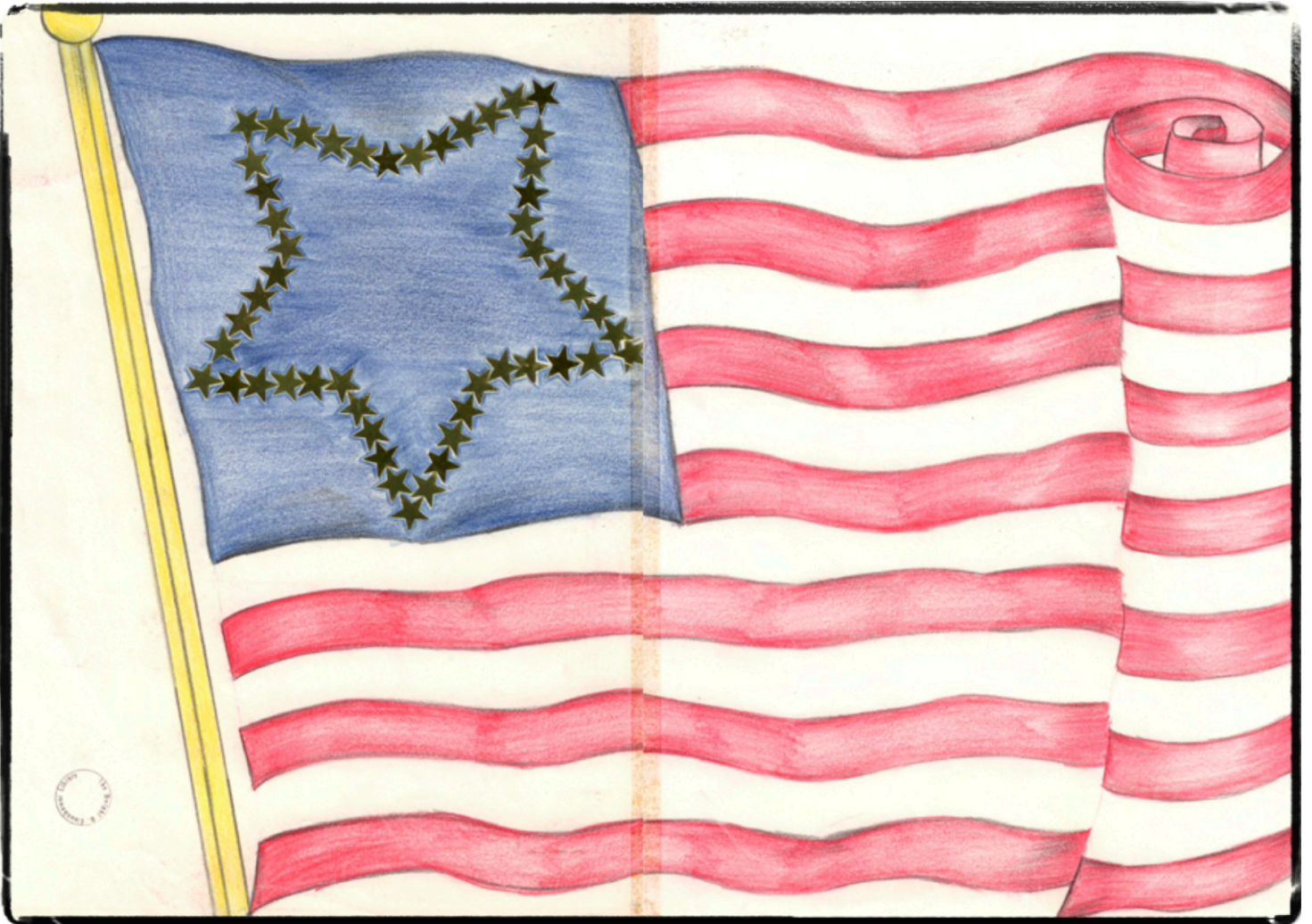
Choose the number of your favorite design and explain why you chose it below.

My favorite design is \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

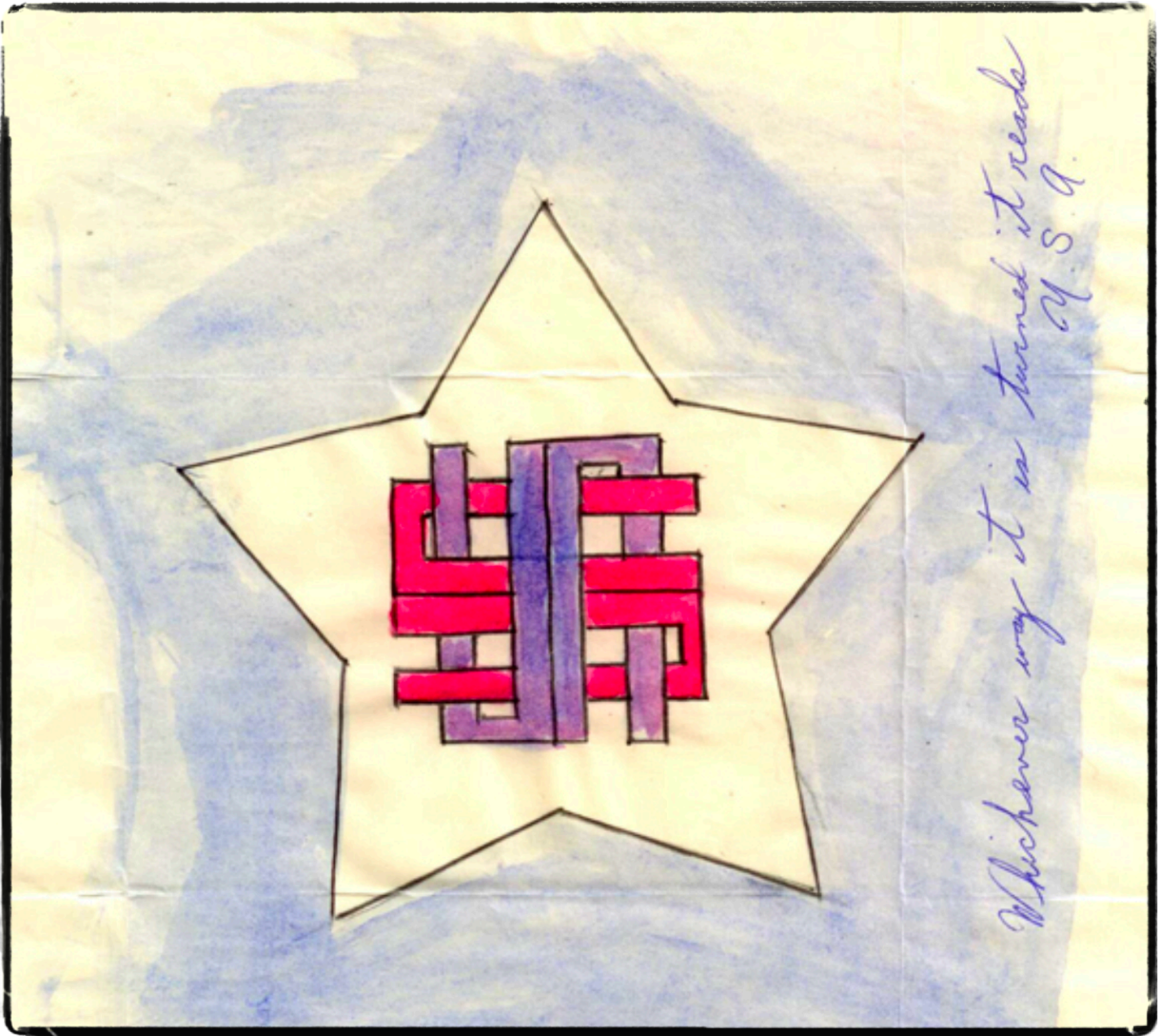




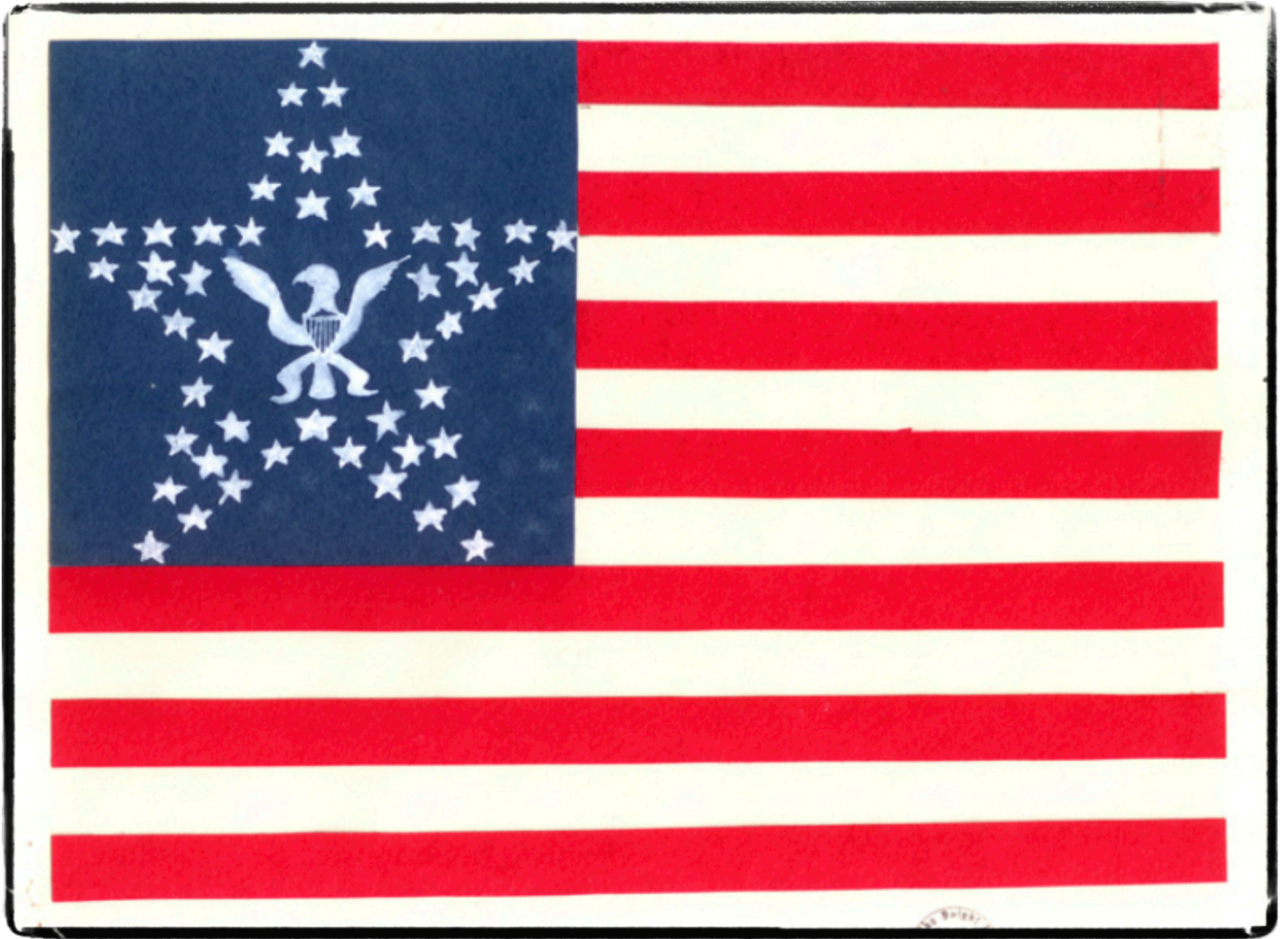




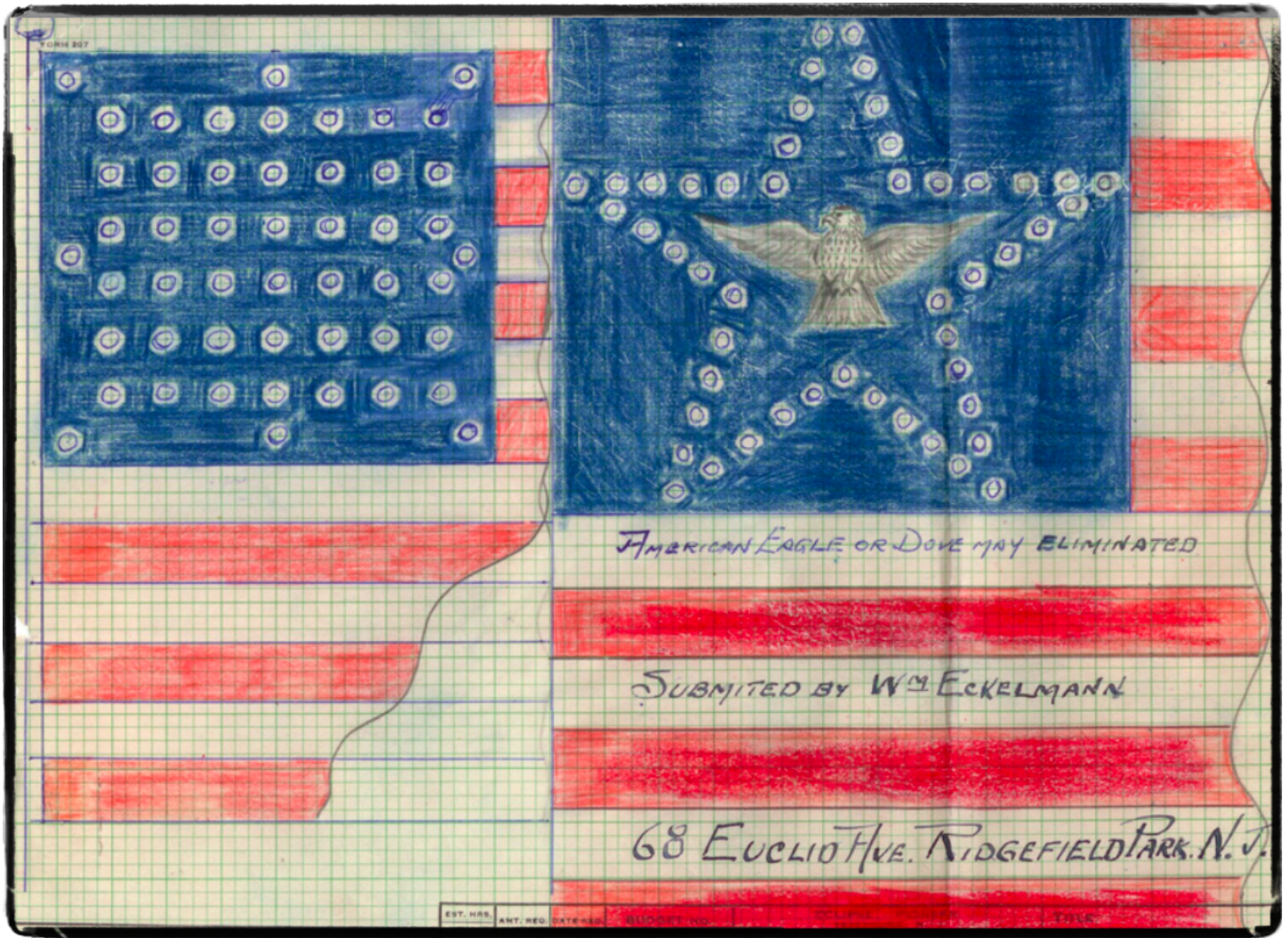








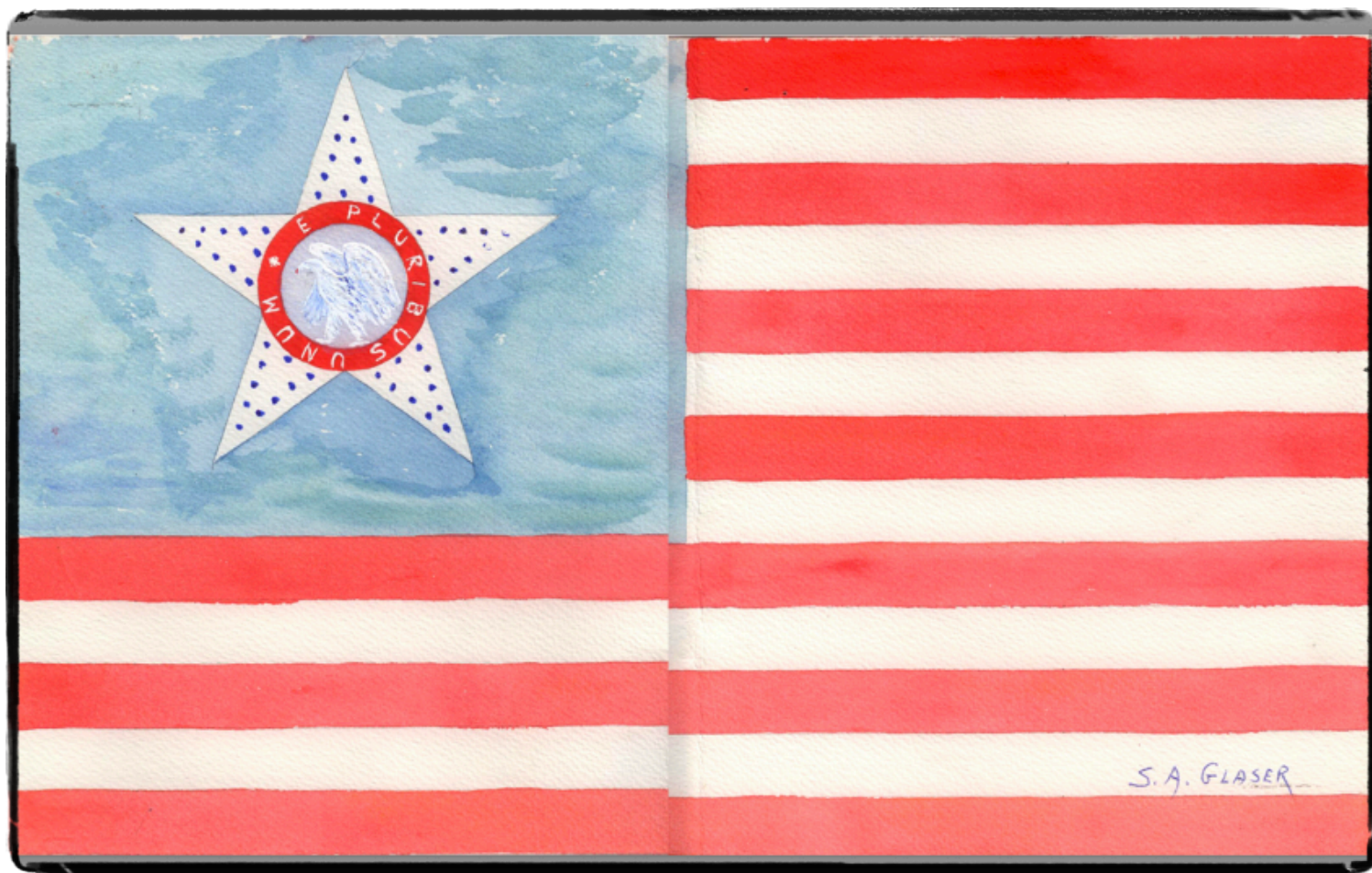




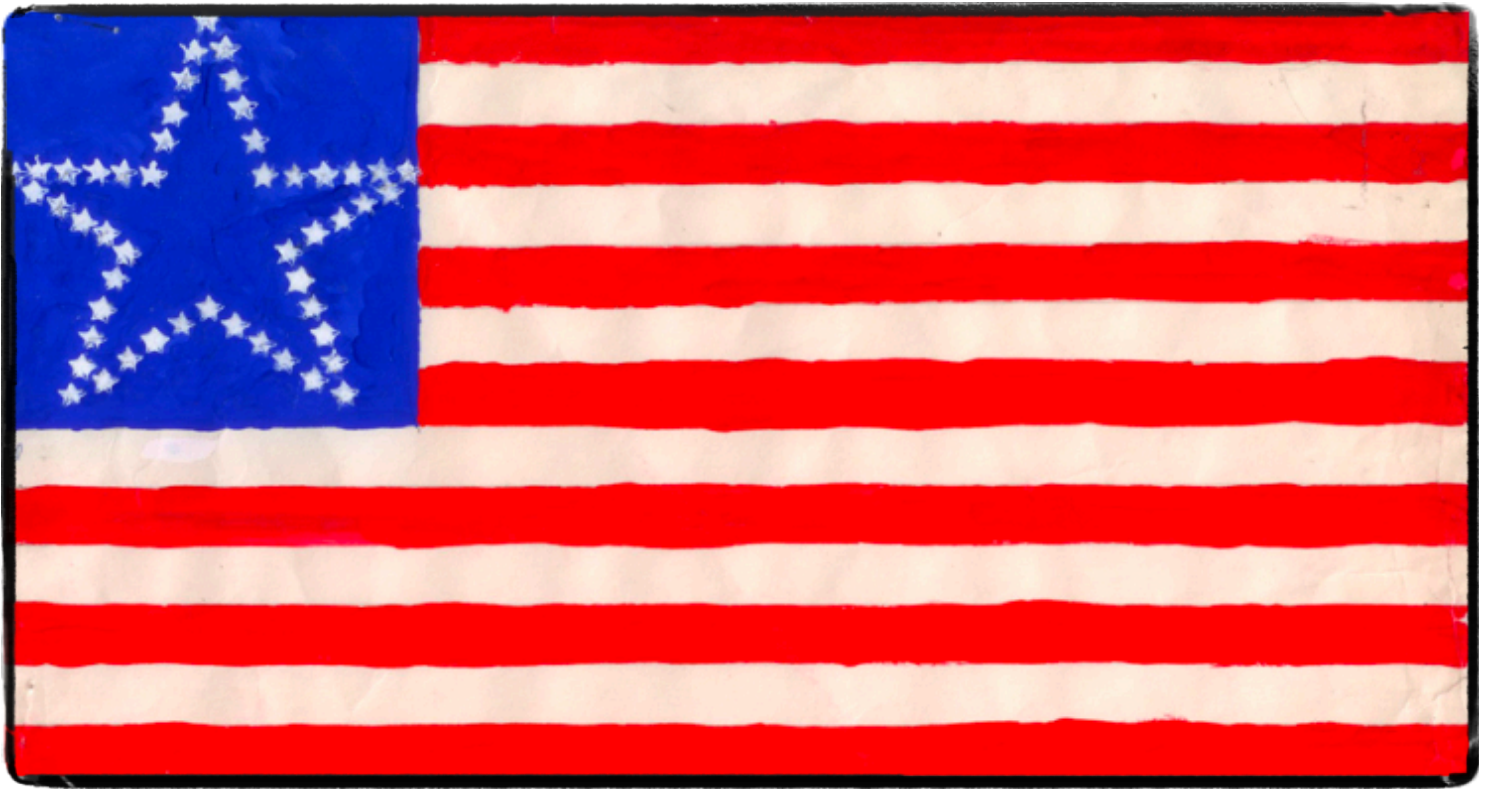




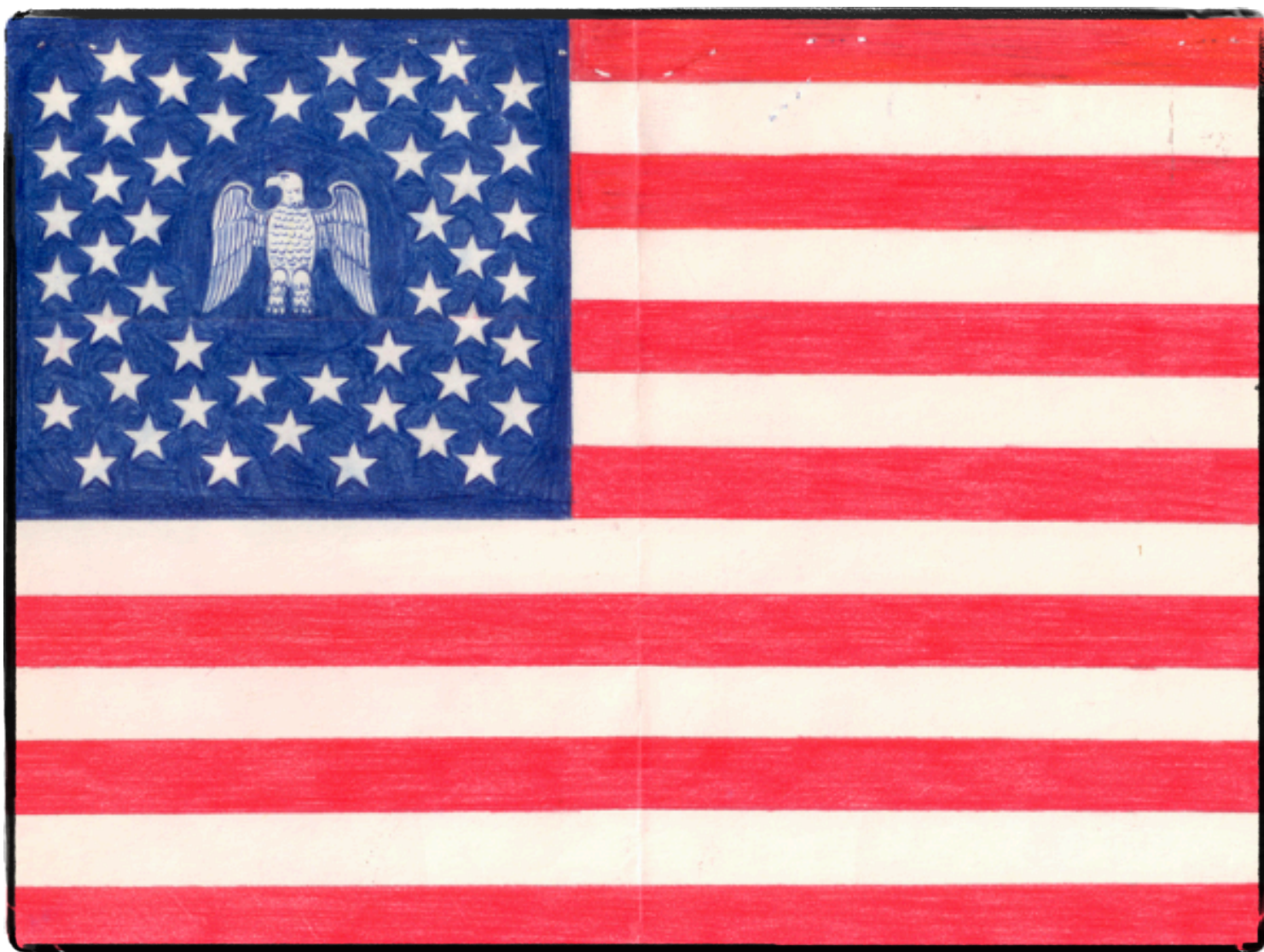








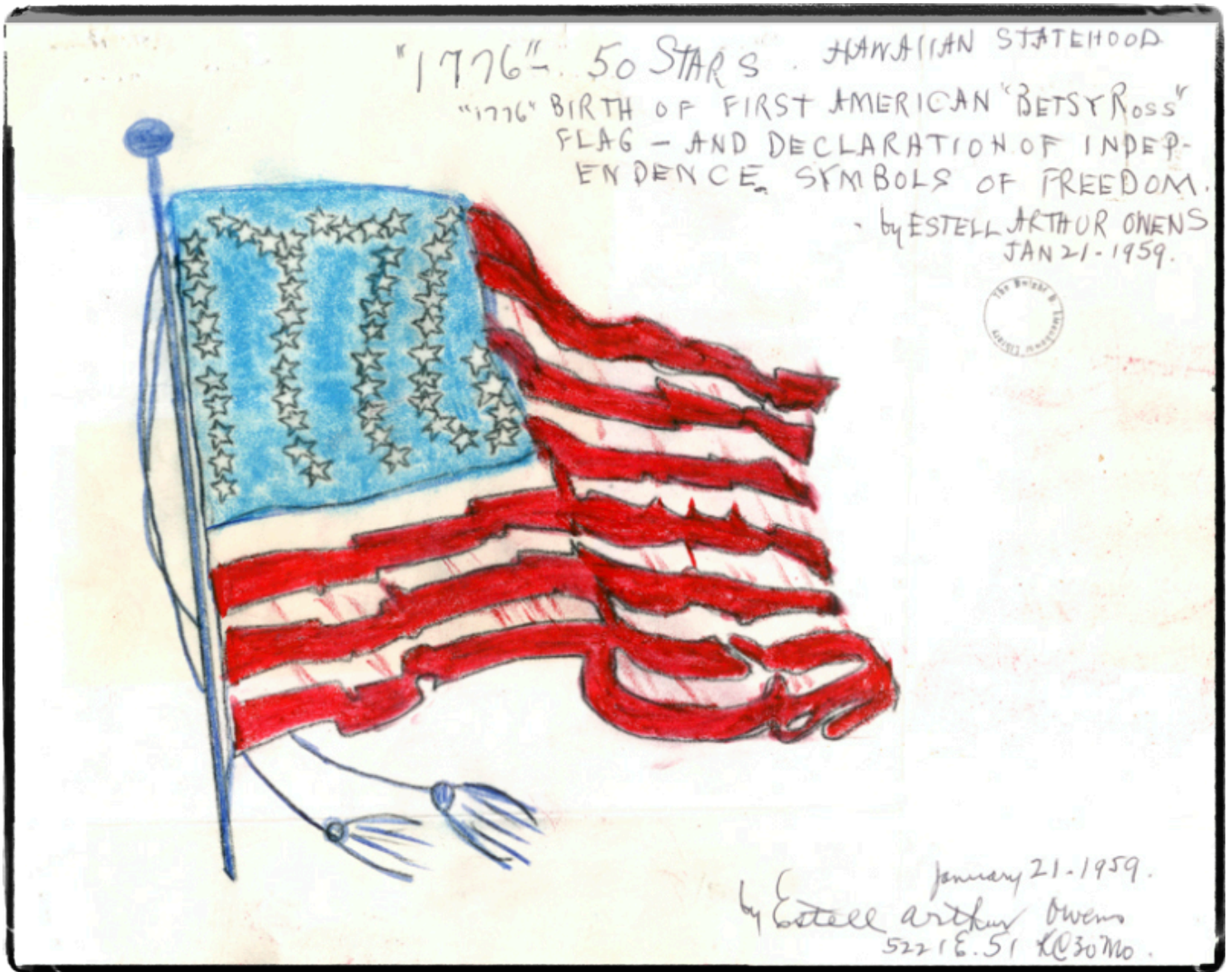




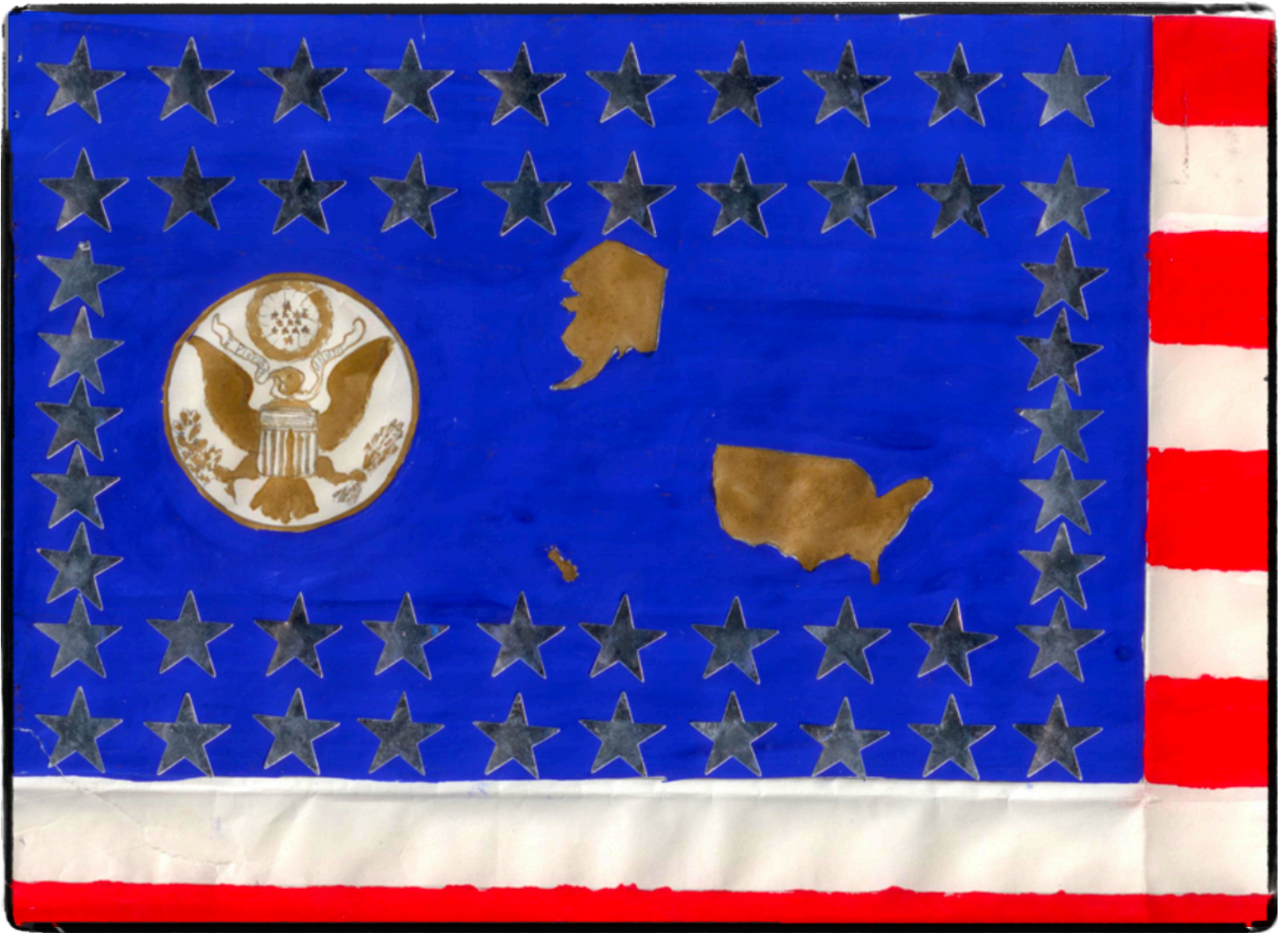














# ROUGH DRAFT

DATE

Dear Mr. President,

State your claim:

Reason 1:

Support:

Reason 2:

Support:

Reason 3:

Support:

Re-state your claim:

Sincerely,





Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal dashed lines for tracing and writing practice.