

Join the national conversation!



Word Generation - Unit 2.10

Focus Words

recite | allegiance | signify | principle | conclusion

WEEKLY PASSAGE



Students across the country **recite** the Pledge of Allegiance daily: *I pledge **allegiance** to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.*

In 2002, a father in California sued the government. He said that he did not believe in God. His daughter should not have to say “under God” in school every day. Many people agree with him. They point out that the “separation of church and state,” is a law. This means the government cannot teach or support religion. They say this language in the Pledge is not fair. It **signifies** to students who do not believe in God that their belief is wrong.

Other people think that taking “under God” out of the Pledge would destroy tradition. About three-quarters of the United States population is Christian. Others follow religions like Islam and Judaism that are also based on belief in one God.

Supporters of the Pledge say the phrase does not teach a specific religion. They say it just reflects the **principles** of most Americans. A belief in God is

part of the U.S. tradition. People swear on the Bible when they go to court. “In God We Trust” appears on our money.

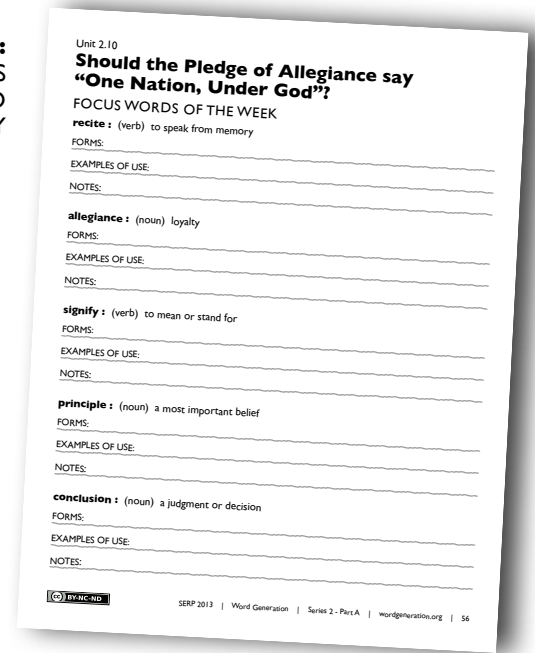
The Supreme Court reached the **conclusion** that teachers and students who disagree with the Pledge have the right not to say it, but they did not say the Pledge should be altered.

Do you think allowing people to remain silent is an acceptable solution? Should reciting the Pledge be a requirement in schools? Or should the phrase “under God” be taken out of the Pledge of Allegiance?

TEACHER - Discussion Questions

- ▶ Do you think about the meaning of the Pledge when you recite it?
- ▶ What does the Pledge signify for you?
- ▶ Do you feel allegiance to other groups or institutions besides the United States?
- ▶ Do you think the Supreme Court reached the right conclusion when they said individuals can choose to recite or not recite the Pledge?

PLEASE NOTE:
THE STUDENT VERSION OF THIS
PAGE IS FORMATTED
DIFFERENTLY



Unit 2.10

WORD CHART FOR TEACHERS

This chart is not in the student book. It is a resource for teachers to support students in the use of the focus words each week. Students are provided one page in each unit immediately following the weekly passage with a basic definition printed and space for taking notes.

Word	Meaning	Forms			Related Words
		Inflectional	Basic Word Classes	Prefixes/ Suffixes	
recite	(v.) - to speak from memory	recites reciting recited		recitation recitative	cite citation incite
allegiance	(n.) - loyalty	allegiances (pl.)			liege
signify	(v.) - to mean or stand for	signifies signifying signified	sign	significant significantly signifier significance	design assign resign
principle	(n.) - a most important belief	principles		principled	prince
conclusion	(n.) - a judgment or decision	conclusions		conclude concludes concluding concluded conclusive conclusively	inclusion seclusion claustrophobia

Should the Pledge of Allegiance say “One Nation, Under God”?

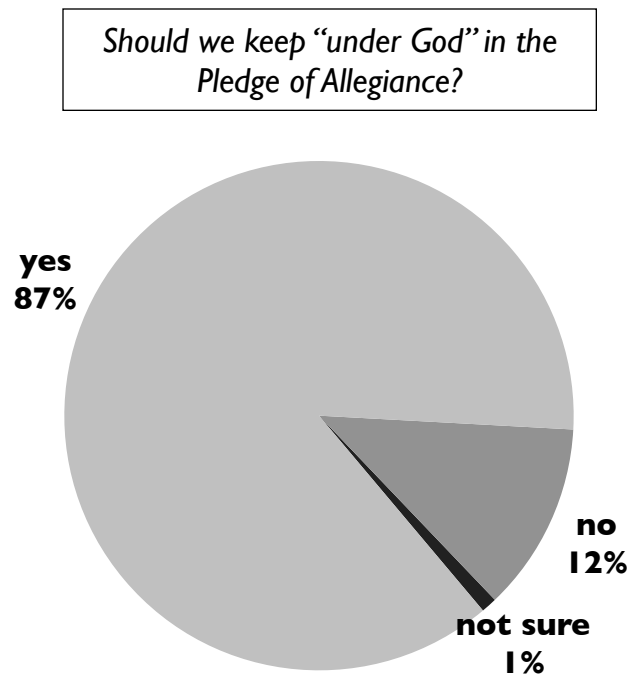


PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

Reciting the Pledge of **Allegiance** is meant to bring Americans together. The **conclusion** of the Pledge, “... with liberty and justice for all,” refers to two important American **principles**: the right to personal freedom and the right to be treated fairly.

“Under God” was added in 1954, during America’s Cold War with the Soviet Union. This addition was meant to **signify** that, unlike the Soviet Union, America was a religious nation. To many people, this addition makes sense. Historically, America has been a religious nation. Most Americans are religious believers. But what about atheists? Does the “liberty” promised at the end of the Pledge mean that all Americans, even atheists, should be free to say the Pledge without saying something they don’t believe?

This circle graph shows the results of an AP-Ipsos Public Affairs poll taken in March of 2004.



Option 1: Which of the following statements is true?

- A) Most Americans want “under God” removed from the Pledge.
- B) Most Americans have no opinion.
- C) There are 7 Americans who want to keep “under God” for every one American who wants it removed.
- D) There are 9 Americans who want to keep “under God” for every one American who wants it removed.

Option 2: Three Americans have been selected at random. What is the probability that all three are in favor of keeping “under God” in the Pledge?

Answer: about 66%

Discussion Question: The separation of church and state is an important American **principle**. Asking students to **recite** a daily Pledge of **Allegiance** that includes God is wrong, some say. They say it **signifies** an attack on religious freedom. Is this the right **conclusion**? Or is the Pledge more about history and tradition than about religious belief? Eighty-seven percent of Americans want to keep “under God” in the Pledge. Do you think these Americans are motivated mostly by feelings about religion, or mostly by feelings about history and tradition? Why?

Should the Pledge of Allegiance say “One Nation, Under God”?



THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

Ms. Kahn's class is discussing whether the phrase “under God” should be included in the Pledge of Allegiance.

“The pledge was created over 100 years ago, so we should just keep it as it is because it's a tradition,” said Rafael.

“Well, my grandmother told me that the Pledge of Allegiance she learned when she was young was a little bit different,” says Cory. “Since it has changed at least once, that means it can be changed again!”

“There must have been a reason for it to change. I wonder what it is?” Tyler questioned.

“There have actually been four different versions since it was first created in 1892,” explained Ms. Kahn. “Let's look to see if we can figure out what has changed.”

→ Ms. Kahn projected the different versions on the board for her students to analyze. Complete the activity as if you were one of her students. Examine these four versions and mark the text when you discover how it has changed over the years.

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 1892 | I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the republic for which it stands, one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. |
| 1923 | I pledge allegiance to the Flag <u>of the United States</u> , and to the republic for which it stands; one Nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. |
| 1924 | I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States <u>of America</u> , and to the republic for which it stands; one Nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. |
| 1954 | I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one Nation <u>under God</u> , indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. |

Francis Bellamy originally worded the pledge so that anyone in the world could recite it. The additions made in 1923 and 1924 made it specific to the U.S. so that immigrants would recite it knowing they were to stay loyal to their new country. If you were going to research the reason for the change in 1954, what information do you think would be useful to you?

There is some debate - some records show it was because of communist threat, while others say it was a tribute to former President Lincoln who used ‘under God’ often.

About 60 years have passed since the last change was made to the Pledge, the longest amount of time without change since its creation in 1892. With your classmates, discuss why you think no recent changes have been made.

Should the Pledge of Allegiance say “One Nation, Under God”?



DEBATING THE ISSUE

Get ready...

Pick one of these positions (or create your own).

A The phrase “under God” should stay in the Pledge of Allegiance. It reflects the principles of the majority of Americans.

B The phrase “under God” should not stay in the Pledge of Allegiance. It is not fair to students who do not believe in a single God.

C The phrase “under God” should stay in the Pledge of Allegiance, but students who object to the phrase should not have to say it.

D Individual schools or classes should have the right to decide if they want to include the phrase “under God” in the Pledge or not.

E _____

TEACHER

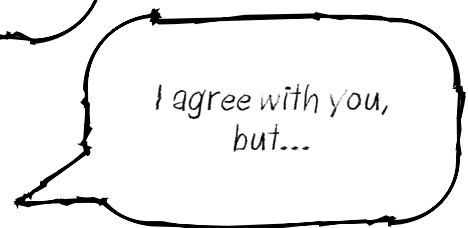
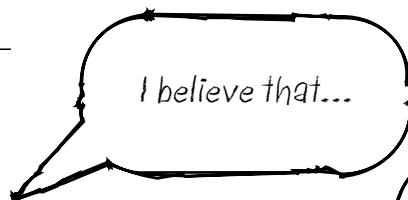
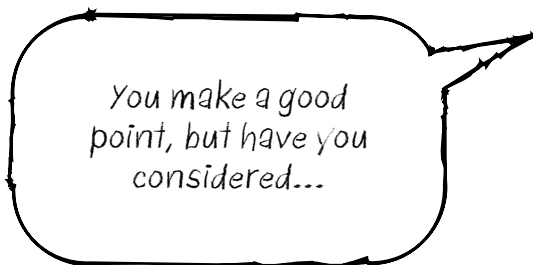
Whatever debate format you use in your class, ask students to use academically productive talk in arguing their positions. In particular, students should provide reasons and evidence to back up their assertions. It may be helpful to read these sample positions to illustrate some possibilities, but students should also be encouraged to take their own positions on the issue at hand.

Get set...

Be ready to provide evidence to back up your position during your class discussion or debate. Jot down a few quick notes:

GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.





Support your position with clear reasons and specific examples.
Try to use relevant words from the Word Generation list in your response.

recite | allegiance | signify | principle | conclusion

Put the writing prompt on the overhead projector (or the board) so that everyone can see it. Remind students to refer to the word lists in their Word Generation notebooks as needed.

- » www.religioustolerance.org/nat_pledg2.htm
- » www.tnr.com/doc.mhtml?i=debates&s=rosenseverino102103
- » www.kidzworld.com/article/2267-pledge-of-allegiance-debate
- » www.firstamendmentcenter.org/rel_liberty/publicschools/topic.aspx?topic=pledge_of_allegiance

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.