



TeachersFirst **READING TREKS**

Blue Sky White Stars

[TeachersFirst Reading Treks Link](#)

Synopsis of Book

This almost wordless picture book *Blue Sky White Stars*, written by Sarvinder Naberhaus and illustrated by Kadir Nelson, celebrates the United States' heritage as reflected in the colors of the American flag. Each stirring two-page spread of vibrant paintings depicts a period in American history and the diversity of its people. The poetic language full of homophones evokes the country's cherished ideals. Perfect for a patriotic holiday or celebration or a thoughtful discussion about the United States' history and government for older children.

Using a TeachersFirst Reading Trek to Explore This Book

TeachersFirst Reading Treks are a way of creating a virtual field trip of resources about a piece of literature or text using the My Maps feature of Google Maps. To motivate and enrich student reading, teachers and students can reference this visual collection of web resources and images as they relate to a book.

TeachersFirst has done the hard work for you! Use the activities in this Instructional Guide and the accompanying Reading Trek as you and your students explore this book. And, if you feel inspired, you (or your students) can create your own Reading Trek about this or another book!

Grade Level & Content Areas

Grades PreK-3rd for reading aloud, or older students for individual reading. English language arts, reading, fine arts, social studies, including history and geography. RL = 3rd grade, Lexile = 400

Common Core State Standards for MS/HS

Reading

- **Literature** (key ideas and details; craft and structure)
- **Informational Text** (key ideas and details; craft and structure)

Writing

- **Text Types and Purposes** (to support claims with evidence)
- **Research** (to build and present knowledge)

ISTE Standards for Students

- (1) Empowered Learner: Students leverage technology to take an active role in choosing, achieving and demonstrating competency in their learning goals, informed by the learning sciences.
- (3) Knowledge Constructor: Students critically curate a variety of resources using digital tools to construct knowledge, produce creative artifacts and make meaningful learning experiences for themselves and others.
- (6) Creative Communicator: Students communicate clearly and express themselves creatively for a variety of purposes using the platforms, tools, styles, formats and digital media appropriate to their goals.

National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

- **Theme: CULTURE**
- **Theme: PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENTS**
- **Theme: TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE**
- **Theme: POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE**

National Core Arts Standards for Visual Arts

- **CREATING**
- **RESPONDING**

Using the Reading Trek in Class

1. While reading the book to the class, display the Reading Treks map on an interactive whiteboard and discuss places the text, colors, and pictures represent.
2. Have students research more about the book using the Reading Trek as a webquest.
3. Research the history and symbolism of the United States flag as depicted in the book. Find pictures in other print materials or digital media that represent the flag colors and symbols. Use [this resource guide](#) or [video](#) to get started.
4. In each layer, have students explore the different places, such as geography, history, and culture.
5. Show [this video](#) of a kindergarten class reading the book. This video resides on YouTube. If YouTube is blocked at your school, see the tips below. Then have the class or small groups create a video or other media production of a book or poem. See these movie making app suggestions: [Biteable](#), [wevideo](#), or [Rawshorts](#).

Additional Activities

1. Have students write a poem or draw a picture of the U.S. flag or other [familiar symbols](#).
2. Have students create their own personal flag in a medium of their choice.

3. Discuss immigration by having children explore their family's history. Students can ask family members about the stories of their ancestors that came to the U.S. and then share them with the class.
4. Have the whole class create a classroom [Google My Map](#) or a bulletin board map of the origins of the students around the world and in the U.S.

Helpful Resources

- [Sarvinder Naberhaus Website and Blog about *Blue Sky White Stars*](#).
- [Kadir Nelson Website](#)
- [TeachingBooks Kadir Nelson Resources](#)
- [Video of Sarvinder Naberhaus Reading *Blue Sky White Stars*](#)
- [Horn Book, Calling Caldecott Blog, *Blue Sky White Stars*](#)
- [TeachersFirst CurriConnects Book List - Maps](#)
- [OK2Ask: Mapping Across Content Areas with Google](#)
- [OK2Ask: Seeing is Believing: Make Literature Come Alive with Google Lit Trips](#)

*If your district blocks YouTube, the videos may not be viewable. You could always view them at home and bring them to class "on a stick" to share. Use a tool such as Freemake Video Converter, [reviewed here](#), to download the videos from YouTube.