



What do the seven points on the Commonwealth star represent?

What shapes are the flags of Switzerland, Vatican City and Nepal?

The flag of Belize is famous for which colourful fact?



# FLY THE FLAG

Pictures: iStock/ Oleh Svetiukha/ emarto

## Colours, crosses, stars and stripes of all types

DO flags interest you?

We think they are very interesting, and so do a lot of other people, because there are flag societies all around the world.

These are groups of people who come together to share knowledge and find out more about flags.

The history of what we recognise as flags today, a piece of cloth with a distinctive design and colours, dates back thousands of years.

You might therefore think that the study of flags, which is known as vexillology, would have existed for a long time also.

But the term vexillology was coined by American Dr Whitney Smith in the late 1950s.

Dr Smith founded the Flag Research Centre in Boston, USA, in 1962, and many other flag associations have been established since then.

Vexillology comes from the Latin word *vexillum*, which was a square flag carried by Roman soldiers.

A person who studies flags is



called a vexillologist, and a person who designs flags is a vexillographer.

One popular use of flags is to represent countries.

If you watched the Olympics in Tokyo you would have seen many different flags.

Some of these are older than others, and some nations have adopted elements of other flags.

The flag of Denmark is the oldest national flag still used, and the cross design was adopted by several other Nordic countries - Norway, Finland, Sweden and Iceland.

The flag of the Netherlands is

the oldest tricolour flag (red, white and blue in this case), but it inspired several other nations' flags, including France, Russia, Italy and Mexico.

The flag of Turkey was the inspiration for flag designs in several other Muslim nations.

The National Flag of Australia, pictured above, features the Union Flag (Union Jack) of the United Kingdom in the top left corner.

Other former British colonies have also included the design on their flags.

Australia's version also has a large white seven-pointed star (the Commonwealth star) and

five smaller stars that represent the Southern Cross constellation.

Its original design was chosen in 1901 from entries in a competition.

The winner's prizemoney of £200 was split between five people - whose designs were almost identical - and Ivor Evans, a 14-year-old, was among the winners.

The National Flag of Australia, is of course not the only one people associate with this country.

The Australian Aboriginal flag, designed by artist Harold Thomas in 1970 to represent the Aboriginal people of Australia and their spiritual connection to the land, is also recognised as an official 'Flag of Australia'.

The top half of this flag is black to symbolise Aboriginal people.

The red in the lower half stands for the earth and the colour of ochre,

which has ceremonial significance.

The circle of yellow in the centre of the flag represents the Sun.

**Your challenge** is to design a flag that represents your school.

Children's University Tasmania members can earn stamps in their passports for this challenge, at the discretion of their school coordinator.

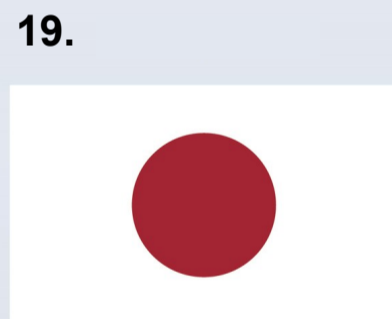
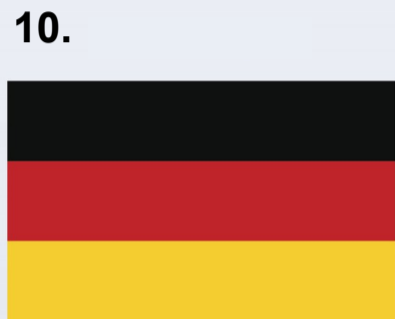
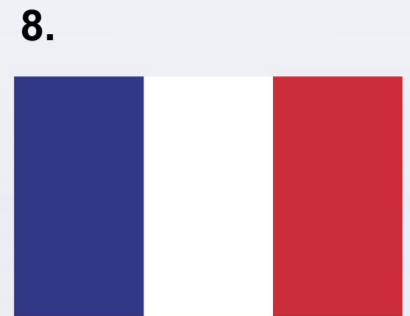
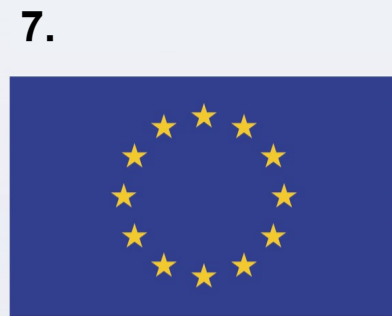
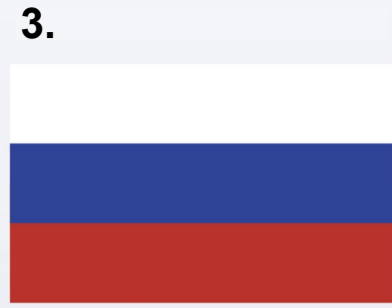
To help you design your flag, vexillologist Ted Kaye has developed five principles of a good flag.

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It is National Science Week and UCTV Alive for Kids is collaborating with the Department of Education to present a series of live shows on food, insects and energy.

Find out more on page 2 of today's edition of *The Wonder Weekly*.



ANSWERS: 1. United Kingdom; 2. USA; 3. Russia; 4. China; 5. Australia; 6. Canada; 7. European Union; 8. France; 9. Spain; 10. Germany; 11. Italy; 12. Brazil; 13. Argentina; 14. United Arab Emirates; 15. Greece; 16. Israel; 17. India; 18. South Korea; 19. Japan; 20. Switzerland.

## Match the flags above to the locations below

- |           |                |        |             |                      |
|-----------|----------------|--------|-------------|----------------------|
| Argentina | China          | Greece | Japan       | Switzerland          |
| Australia | European Union | India  | Russia      | United Kingdom       |
| Brazil    | France         | Israel | South Korea | United Arab Emirates |
| Canada    | Germany        | Italy  | Spain       | USA                  |

Image: iStock/ tkacchuk

## Have some fun with your own design

### From Page 1

These principles are:

1. Keep it simple.
2. Use meaningful symbols.
3. Use two or three basic colours.
4. No lettering or seals.
5. Be distinctive or be related.

In other words: don't make your design too complicated; think about what symbols and colours best represent your school; don't use writing on your flag; avoid copying other flags, but you could use a similar design to show a connection between your



school and other flags (e.g. you might like to include elements from the National Flag).

Of course flags have long been used to represent things other than countries.

A white flag is associated with truce, peace or surrender.

There's also the Olympic flag

with its five rings to represent five continents.

You are no doubt also familiar with the flag, pictured left.

The 'Jolly Roger' - a skull and crossbones image on a black background - is the flag associated with pirate ships, but in reality the designs used by a number of infamous pirate captains during the 1600s and 1700s varied greatly and included other symbols.

They were all quite scary though, and were raised when the pirates had a target ship within firing range to give its captain the opportunity to surrender.

## national science week

The Peter Underwood Centre and the Department of Education Tasmania will be broadcasting the following interactive Zoom webinars as part of National Science Week:

Monday, August 16, 9-10am - A Whole World of Energy (Years 5-6), presented by Evan Franklin. Register: <https://bit.ly/3jDPxZU>

Tuesday, August 17, 9-10am - Can we eat insects? (Prep-Year 2), presented by Shasta Henry. Register: <https://bit.ly/3CuwRo8>

Wednesday, August 18, 9-10am - Can we eat insects (Years 3-6), presented by Shasta Henry. Register: <https://bit.ly/3Cxqq3s>

Thursday, August 19, 9-10am - Can we eat insects (Years 7-10), presented by Shasta Henry. Register: <https://bit.ly/2WZRl0o>

Friday, August 20, 9-10am - Energy sleuths (Years 5-6), presented by Evan Franklin. Register: <https://bit.ly/2VtJFKZ>