

U.S. Seal Project

Goal: Students will appreciate how Latin literature has been a source of inspiration for our country.

Objective: Students will learn the national motto for the United States of America, and use this to create a representation of the shield that adorns the United States Seal.

Materials needed: construction paper (red, white, blue), scissors, markers, glue

Preparation (before class): Photocopy seal images on white construction paper or cardboard. You may wish to photocopy the shield on red paper as well in order to help students create stripes.

Teacher Instructions (in class):

1. Discuss the U.S. national motto. *E Pluribus Unum* = “out of many one,” or “one out of many”
2. This phrase is adapted from a poem by Vergil called the *Moretum*. Vergil wrote, “*color est e pluribus unus*” [it is one color out of many].
 - a. Vergil is also the author of the Aeneid, the story of the Trojans who sailed to Italy after the Trojan War to found the Roman race.
3. Teachers may wish to discuss all the places this motto is seen:
 - a. Money: dollars and coins
 - b. Presidential Seal
 - c. U.S. and state seals
4. Allow students to decorate their own shield with the American Bald Eagle.
5. Students should write the motto across the bottom.

Follow Up:

- These shields are a great project for Memorial Day, Veteran’s Day, President’s Day, or any other day celebrating our nation.
- The discussion of the U.S. motto may lead to a search for other Latin mottos found on currency, on state seals, and in the military.
- Teachers may wish to discuss the other Latin phrases that appear on the dollar bill:

- *Novus Ordo Seclorum* [A new order of the ages], also taken from the poet Vergil
- *Annuit Coeptis* [He has favored our beginnings/undertakings]

PLEASE PROOF THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR THIS PROJECT ON P. 92 OF THE HARD COPY.