

History at Home: Marianne, Symbol of Liberty and Freedom

Purpose:

In these difficult times, simple activities can help keep children occupied and provide a sense of normalcy. This activity is about Marianne, a symbol of the French Republic, and liberty and freedom in France. This activity will teach children about an aspect of Mobile's French heritage.



Statue of Marianne in History Museum of Mobile's atrium



Bust of Marianne, displayed in the corridors of the Luxembourg Palace, seat of the French Senate

Info for Parents or Guardians:

You could share a little or a lot of the historical information that follows with children before you start the activity. The vocabulary and historical information given for this activity is geared towards children ages 9 and up. For younger children, speak in more general terms, leave off the vocabulary words and focus mainly on the activity itself. These activities are designed to allow you to utilize materials that you probably already have at home. For the activity, feel free to substitute other materials. You can use crayons, markers, colored pencils, or other art supplies.

Vocabulary:

For ages 9 and up, go over these vocabulary words when you come to them in the historical information below.

1. **terra cotta:** a clay that is hardened by heat and is commonly used for statues, pottery and even roof tiles.
2. **monarchy:** is a form of government that has a single person known as a monarch at its head of state. Most monarchies are hereditary. This means that when the monarch dies, a son, daughter, or other relative becomes the next monarch. Monarchs have titles such as: king, queen, emperor, or empress.



- 3. republic:** a state in which governmental authority is held by the people and their elected representatives, and which has an elected or nominated president rather than a monarch.
- 4. revolution:** a forcible overthrow of a government in favor of a new system.
- 5. Phrygian cap:** a red hat that was given to freed slaves in Ancient Rome as a symbol of their freedom.

History of the Marianne symbol:

You could read this entire section aloud to older children or just read the first and last paragraphs for younger children.

The History Museum of Mobile has a large **terra cotta** statue of Marianne, a French symbol of liberty, in its atrium. This statue came from the roof of the old county courthouse that was located across the street from the museum from 1889 to 1957. The statue may have been removed from the building after a hurricane in 1906.

The origins of the Marianne “goddess of liberty” symbol date back to 1775 when a French artist first painted her as a symbol of French liberty. The image became popular in 1792 when France changed from a **monarchy** to a **republic** after a **revolution**. Marianne was chosen to represent the republic.

She is most commonly shown wearing a **Phrygian** cap, a red hat that was given to freed slaves in Ancient Rome. The hat was a symbol of their transition from slavery to freedom. Sometimes Marianne is depicted as a warrior symbolizing the idea that liberty is something that must be fought for. In other places in France, she is depicted as thoughtful, serious, and in a more serene posture draped in a long tunic. Marianne is displayed in many places in France and holds a place of honor in government buildings like city halls and courts.

The Statue of Liberty in New York harbor was given to the United States by France and is based upon Marianne. That is why the museum’s Marianne statue has many similarities to the Statue of Liberty.

The Museum’s statue, a decorative element on the courthouse that served as a symbol of liberty and a reminder that Mobile was founded by French colonists in 1702.



Marianne statue in Jonzac, France (1894). The sculpture is similar to the Statue of Liberty.



Materials required:

Computer, printer, paper, crayons (or markers, colored pencils etc.)

Activity Directions:

1. Print out the coloring page of Marianne below or if you have access to a printer. If you don't have a printer, you can go to the following website and have your children color the image online. www.supercoloring.com/coloring-pages/marianne-wearing-bonnet-rouge?tag=59209 The author of this coloring page is Nata Silina.
2. Tell kids to be creative and color the image however they like.
3. Take a photo of your child's coloring page, screenshot it or scan it and upload it to a computer.
4. Post the image on the museum's Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/HistoryMuseumofMobile/>



