

Name: _____

Have You Got a Buck?

by Mikki Sadil

Have you ever heard the expression "gotta buck"? It refers to the one dollar bill, and although nobody seems to know how "buck" came to mean a dollar, the term has been around for a very long time. We call bills like the dollar (\$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100) paper money, but they're really not paper. They are made

out of
dollar
That's
If
picture



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The front of the bill is called the obverse side. To the right of George Washington, you'll see the U.S. Treasury Department Seal. On top of the seal is a scale that represents a justice. In the center of the seal is a chevron with thirteen stars. Beneath that is the key to represent authority and trust.

Now turn the bill over. What do you see?



On the reverse side, you will see two circles which represent the Great Seal of the United States. Let's first talk about the left-hand circle. This is actually the back, or reverse side of the Great Seal.

You'll see a pyramid with the front lighted, but the Western side is dark. That dark side means we didn't know much about the West at that time. The Pyramid is uncapped, which means the U.S. was a new country and wasn't completely explored yet.

Inside the capstone of the pyramid is the "all-seeing eye", an ancient symbol of religion. Benjamin Franklin, who helped designed the seal, believed that one man couldn't build a nation all by himself, but a group of men, with the help of God, could do anything.

The Latin words above and below the pyramid mean "God has favored our undertaking," and "A new order has begun." At the base of the Pyramid is the Roman numeral for the year 1776, the year the Declaration of Independence was signed.

Now look at the right-hand circle. This is the front, or obverse side of the Great Seal. In the eagle's beak are the Latin words, "E PLURIBUS UNUM." This means, "one nation made of many states."

Stars and stripes are symbols for our country you're probably familiar with. On the Great seal, there are stars over the eagle's head and stripes on the shield that make up its body.

The eagle holds an olive branch in his right talon, which means that our country strives for peace. It also holds arrows in his left talon, which means we are willing to fight to protect that peace. Notice that the eagle's head is looking to the left, in the same direction of the olive branch. This shows that our country prefers peace over war.

Have you noticed the number *thirteen* comes up a lot? Some people consider 13 an unlucky number, but it's really a symbolic number for our country. The United States was started from 13 colonies and there were 13 original states. Our flag even has 13 red and white stripes on it. On the reverse side of the one-dollar bill, you will notice lots of thirteens:



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So the next time one of your friends talks about how the number 13 is unlucky, ask him to take out a dollar bill, and show him what *thirteen* really means to an American!

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Have You Got a Buck?

1. What does the picture to the right show?
 - a. the front side of the dollar bill
 - b. the obverse side of the Great Seal of the United States
 - c. the reverse side of the Great Seal of the United States
 - d. the back side of the Great Seal of the United States
2. On the front of the dollar bill is a picture of...
 - a. the Great Seal of the United States
 - b. several presidents
 - c. the Seal of the Treasury Department
 - d. an eagle and a pyramid
3. What does the eye on the back of a dollar bill symbolize?
 - a. the importance of the Egyptian pyramids
 - b. our country's preference for peace
 - c. the president looking over our country
 - d. religion
4. What does the Latin phrase, "E PLURIBUS UNUM" mean?



5.



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Have You Got a Buck?

Match each vocabulary word on the left with its definition on the right.



- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1. _____ buck | a. language spoken by ancient Romans |
| 2. _____ fibers | b. large building with a square base and triangular sides |
| 3. _____ chevron | c. slang term for a dollar |
| 4. _____ obverse | d. symbol shaped like a V or an upside-down V |

5. _____
6. _____
7. _____



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- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 8. _____ Treasury | h. front side |
| 9. _____ olive branch | i. back side |
| 10. _____ jeans | j. the government department responsible for budgeting and managing our country's money |

ANSWER KEY

Have You Got a Buck?

1. What does the picture to the right show? **b**
- a. the front side of the dollar bill
 - b. **the obverse side of the Great Seal of the United States**
 - c. the reverse side of the Great Seal of the United States
 - d. the back side of the Great Seal of the United States



2. On the front of the dollar bill is a picture of... **c**
- a. the Great Seal of the United States
 - b. several presidents
 - c. **the Seal of the Treasury Department**
 - d. an eagle and a pyramid

3.



4.

5. Describe the symbolism of the arrows and the olive branch. Also, explain why the eagle's head is looking to the left.

The olive branch is a symbol of peace. The arrows are a symbol for war, showing that we will fight if necessary. The eagle is looking to the left to show our preference for peace.

ANSWER KEY

Have You Got a Buck?

Match each vocabulary word on the left with its definition on the right.



1. **c** buck
 2. **g** fibers
 3. **d** chevron
 4. **h** obverse
 5. **i** reverse
 6. **a**
 7. **b**
 8. **j** Treasury
 9. **e** olive branch
 10. **f** jeans
- a. language spoken by ancient Romans
 - b. large building with a square base and triangular sides
 - c. slang term for a dollar
 - d. symbol shaped like a V or an upside-down V
 - e. symbol for peace

