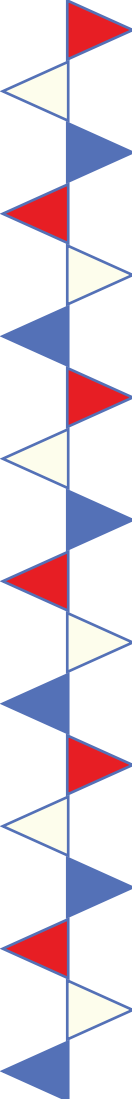


Examine the Song "My Country 'Tis of Thee"

"My Country 'Tis of Thee" is an American patriotic song. Samuel Francis Smith wrote the song in 1831. It was the unofficial national anthem of the United States before the official adoption of "The Star-Spangled Banner" in 1931. It's not surprising that the tune in "My Country 'Tis of Thee" is from the British national anthem "God Save the King/Queen." We cannot be sure if Smith knew about this connection at the time.

Smith wrote this child-friendly version of the song based on older versions from Europe. The idea was to have children sing a song that was easier to understand than other patriotic songs. The first time students sang "My Country 'Tis of Thee" was on July 4, 1831. They sang it at a children's choir performance at the Park Street Church in Boston, Massachusetts.

"My Country 'Tis of Thee"




My country 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.
Land where my fathers died!
Land of the Pilgrim's pride!
From every mountainside,
Let freedom ring!

My native country, thee,
Land of the noble free,
Thy name I love.
I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills;
My heart with **rapture** fills
Like that above.

Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees
Sweet freedom's song.
Let mortal tongues awake;
Let all that breathe **partake**;
Let rocks their silence break,
The sound prolong.

Our father's God to Thee,
Author of liberty,
To Thee we sing.
Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light;
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God, our King!



Vocabulary Terms

patriotic: showing love that a person feels for their country

'tis of thee: it is about you

rills: a small stream cut in the surface of rocks or soil

thee: you

thy: your

Name _____

Date _____

Examine the Song “My Country ‘Tis of Thee”

Directions: Use the text and the song to help you make inferences and answer these questions.

Quote or refer to the texts in your answers.



1. Use context clues to determine the meaning of the word *rapture* in the second verse.
2. Why is it “unsurprising” that the tune of this song is similar to the British national anthem?
3. Why does the author describe “My Country ‘Tis of Thee” as a patriotic song?
4. The author says “Let all that breathe *partake*” in the third verse. What does the author want?
5. Why would the song mention God and “Protect us by Thy might” in the fourth verse?
6. What is the theme of the song “My Country ‘Tis of Thee”?