**America the Beautiful (1913)**

Katherine Lee Bates

**Historical Context**

During an 1893 trip to Pike’s Peak in Colorado Springs, Colorado, English teacher and poet Katharine Lee Bates wrote “America the Beautiful.” The view from the top of the mountain inspired her describe the spacious beauty around her in a patriotic poem. She published the final version in The Boston Evening Transcript in 1913. It was set to the music of composer Samuel A. Ward and became one of the nation's most beloved anthems.

As you are reading or listening, identify the descriptions of what makes America beautiful?

O beautiful for spacious skies,

For amber waves of grain,

For purple mountain majesties

Above the fruited plain!

America! America! God shed His grace on thee,

And crown thy good with brotherhood

From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for pilgrim feet,

Whose stern impassion'd stress

A thoroughfare for freedom beat

Across the wilderness!

America! America! God mend thine ev'ry flaw,

Confirm thy soul in self-control,

Thy liberty in law!

O beautiful for heroes proved

In liberating strife,

Who more than self their country loved,

And mercy more than life!

America! America! May God thy gold refine

Till all success be nobleness,

And ev'ry gain divine!

O Beautiful for patriot dream

That sees beyond the years

Thine alabaster cities gleam,

Undimmed by human tears!

America! America! God shed His grace on thee,

And crown thy good with brotherhood

From sea to shining sea!

1. Which lines evoke images you can visualize?

2. How is this song patriotic?

3. How is this song religious?