



# More Than a Song

COOPER  
6th Grade, Homeschool

The Star Spangled Banner is more than our country’s anthem. Although already a moving piece of artistry, it plays an even greater role in my life as a military child. At 5:30 every evening, the hundreds on a military base become one, while standing to respect our great country. The National Anthem is simply a song to many people, but a riveting reminder for military families.

Growing up on a military base provides me the luxury of safety and security. As a result I am able to play outside without a parent tracking my every move. In fact, my parents never need to worry about me, or know exactly where I am. On base, where kids are an ever-present element of the landscape, all my friends are nearby and we can get together easily. Everyone is friendly towards everyone and bullying is unheard of. Frequently, we play for hours without any awareness of time until we hear the first few notes of the National

Anthem. Automatically, we stop, stand, and remain in place for a unified show of reverence to all those who serve and have served. At the conclusion, with no need to explain, we all head back to our houses. Back at home our parents take comfort knowing we’ll be through the door soon.

We respect our military members daily by stopping for the Star Spangled Banner. This small gesture shows we honor the brave men and women of the military, our family. When the Anthem plays, we reflect and think about the people sacrificing themselves to protect us. During this two-minute song, people of all ages on our military base stand together, showing that every single one of us is respectful and grateful. This doesn’t happen outside the military. No one off base understands the feeling of appreciation that ripples through the military child during the Anthem.

*Hoorah!*

Ultimately, the National Anthem serves as a daily reminder to military children that when our parents work well past dinner, they are in the service of others. They see the bigger picture and work to protect their families, other families, and truly, everyone else in the world. Service Before Self. That is the military way. Most children unrelated to the military don’t and can’t appreciate everything that is done for them. Our parents help us see the world as it is. A military lifestyle gives us a greater understanding and we are made better people for it.

During the Anthem, everybody on base willingly stands, paying their respects to the men and women working to sustain peace in America and worldwide. I live on a military base safe from the dangers of the outside world. My parents needn’t worry about me when I go out to play. Though away from home for hours, after the Anthem plays, we all say, “See you tomorrow.”

“ I was really proud on Veterans Day to tell my class that my mom and dad are veterans of the Air Force. I’m also proud that my dad still helps the military and military families in his work, and my mom’s job is helping protect our environment and taking care of poor people around the world. ”

Avery, 3rd grade  
Washington DC

