

## THE NATIONAL FLAG OF BELIZE

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The red, white and blue flag of Belize is a symbol of the unity of our nation. Prior to Independence the People's United Party (PUP) proposed a blue flag with the Coat of Arms in a white circle. Because of the close association of the flag with the PUP, public opinion was divided as to its suitability to act as a unifying symbol. The United Democratic Party (UDP) did not propose a flag, but called for a flag that could rally all citizens, regardless of their political affiliation. As a consequence, the bi-partisan National Symbols Committee invited citizens to submit designs for a National Flag. The design selected by the Committee is a royal blue flag with one horizontal red stripe at the top, one at the bottom, and a white circle with the Coat of Arms in the center.



The shield of the Coat of Arms is divided into three sections by a vertical line and an inverted V. The base section represents a ship in full sail on waves of the sea. The two upper sections show tools of the timber industry in Belize: a paddle and a squaring axe in the right section and a saw.

Supporting the shield are two woodcutters, the one on the right holding a beating axe over his shoulder in his right hand, and the one on the left holding a paddle over his shoulder in his left hand.

Above the shield rises a mahogany tree. Below the shield is the motto scroll. A wreath of leaves encircles the Coat of Arms. The motto says: "Sub Umbra Floreo", meaning "Under the shade I flourish".

flourish." The Coat of Arms embodies an important aspect of the history of Belize, as the mahogany industry formed the basis of our economy in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Answer the following questions based on the information about the flag of Belize.

Choose whether the statement is true or false.

1. The White, blue red and green are a symbol of unity    T    F
2. Before independence the PUP had a flag that was blue with the coat of arms in the middle. T  
F
3. The people were very happy with this blue flag.    T    F
4. The UDP had their own flag which was red and the coat of arms in the centre.    T    F
5. The shield of the coat of arms is divided into three sections.    T    F
6. The Coat of arms has two men, a tree, beating axe, a paddle, squaring axe and a ship in full sail. T    F
7. The two upper sections show tools of the timber industry in Belize: a paddle and a squaring axe in the right section and a saw. T    F
8. The tree is a mango tree representing the timber industry.    T    F
9. "SUB UMBRA FOREO" means "Under the shade I flourish".    T    F
10. The coat of arms tells about Belize's history as Mahogany was Belize's main industry in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.    T    F