

“The Star-Spangled Banner”
by Francis Scott Key

Version 1

Oh, say, can you see by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

Version 2

Oh, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, thro' the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there.
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

Version 3

Oh, say, can you see by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there,
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

Questions:

1. What are the differences between the different versions?
2. How does changing the punctuation change the meaning?
3. Which version is the most grammatically correct?
4. On the back of this paper, write a sentence-by-sentence translation of the song into modern, teen English. There will be no rhyme or meter, but the meaning of the poem will be clear. Here are the sentences you should “translate”:
 - A) Oh, say, can you see by the dawn's early light what so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming, whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight o'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?
 - B) And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air, gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
 - C) O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?
5. What is the narrator asking as the song ends?