

My country is an engineering achievement, a bridge over which you can cross the chasm of despair.

America is an architecture with which you can build the tower of your dreams. My country is a sculptor's hammer and chisel with which you can fashion yourself into the person you aim to become.

America is an art of living through which you can reach higher, think bigger, grow greater, and live deeper than anywhere else on earth.

\*For international use, you may wish to substitute an international poem for "America," or change "America" to "My Country."

E. Challenges to be Written:

Either alone or with the help of the Director or Ragger who is tying your Rag, write down a list of things you will work on as your personal challenge for the blue rag. (Turn in this list to your Camp Director.)

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YMCA  
RAG/LEATHER PROGRAM  
STUDY GUIDE FOR  
THE BLUE RAG

For campers 12 years of age and over who are accepting the challenge of loyalty to God, Country, One's best self, and the Ragers' Creed.

A. "Ragers' Creed" (to be memorized)

I would be true, for there are those who trust me;  
I would be pure, for there are those who care;  
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer,  
I would be brave, for there is much to dare.

I would be friend to all – the foe, the friendless;  
I would be giving, and forget the gift;  
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;  
I would look up, and laugh, and love and lift.

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## B. Devotion to God

"Live your life while you have it. Life is a splendid gift. There is nothing small in it. For the greatest things grow, by God's Law, out of the smallest. But to live your life to the fullest, you must discipline it. Make your thoughts, your acts, all work toward the same end, and not self, but God's."

## C. "Myself"

I have to live with myself, and so  
I want to be fit for myself to know;  
I want to be able as days go by,  
Always to look myself straight in the eye;  
I don't want to stand, with the setting sun,  
And hate myself for things I've done.

I can never hide myself from me,  
I see what others may never see;  
I know what others may never know,  
I never can fool myself, and so  
Whatever happens, I want to be  
Self – respecting and conscience free.

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## D. "America"\*

America is a unique way of life, Symbolic of the creative arts.

America provides the brushes, oils, pigments, and canvas on which you can paint your life as you want it to be. You choose your own colors, form, design, and pattern.

America is any tune you want to play with fife and drum, fiddle or horn, to establish the beat and rhythm of the upward march to high goals.

America is a book in which you set down your Life by the way you live it. You are the principal character. You LIVE your own biography. You are free to be hero or villain, great or mediocre.

America is a stage, and the role you play in the drama of life is up to you.

America is a sports arena, and the rules are written so everyone has a chance to win.

Revised 10/14

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