



Teacher Lesson Plan Idea

Arkansas State Symbols

FRAMEWORK(s): H.6.K.2, H.6.1.2, H.6.2.2, H.6.4.1, H.6.4.2.

GRADE LEVEL(s): Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 4th grades and any resource or ESL students needing re-teaching.

TASK: Students at kindergarten level will be able to identify and explain the relationship of the state symbols tree, insect and beverage to our state's history.

Students at 1st grade level will be able to identify and explain the relationship of the state symbols flower, bird, fruit/vegetable, folk dance, and instrument to our state's history.

Students at 2nd grade level will be able to identify and explain the relationship of the state symbols gem, mineral, rock, mammal, and anthem to our state's history.

Students at the 4th grade level will be able to identify and explain the relationship of the state motto and the state seal to our state's history.

APPROXIMATE TIME: 2 – 3 class periods

MATERIALS:

A set of the 14 coloring sheets showing Arkansas state symbols and seal for each student; (depending on the grade level and the sheets are provided with this lesson). You may obtain free paper copies of the "Arkansas Activity Booklet" from the Secretary of State's Office - (501) 682-1010.

A copy of the Arkansas State Symbols: Teacher's Information Sheet(included)
Red, white, and blue construction paper and stapler
Crayons, scissors, and glue for students

PROCEDURE: This lesson is designed to help elementary (kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 4th grades) and special needs students learn the official state symbols of Arkansas, the state motto, anthem, and state seal

as well as their place in Arkansas's history. By making booklets of the official state symbols, they will also get to practice their coloring, cutting, and pasting skills. Students can refer back to their booklets in the future as they learn more about Arkansas.

1. The students will learn the Arkansas state symbols according to their grade level and color a different state symbol each day. The teacher may have already assembled the correct number of sheets of construction paper into a booklet or have the students assemble their booklet after they complete the unit of study on Arkansas state symbols.
2. Each day, after the students have finished coloring their symbol, discuss the day's symbol using the Arkansas State Symbols: Teacher's Information Sheet. Show the class or have them locate on an Arkansas state map the area of the state that is historically represented by that symbol, if appropriate (example: locate Murfreesboro as the site of a diamond mine).
3. Have the students cut and paste the day's symbol into their booklets and title the page accordingly, or have them paste the symbol onto a sheet of construction paper and title the page to later be assembled by the student into a booklet.
4. Depending on the grade level and the ability of your students, you might want to discuss briefly how the different symbols were selected and voted on by the state legislature. You might also want to have the students write one or more facts about the various symbol on the page with the symbol as they develop their booklet.

Evaluation: Evaluating student's booklets can be done after they have completed them or at the end of each day. You might want to design a written test with questions about each of the state's symbols that were studied by the grade level or have students write sentences about the meaning of each state symbols studied.

ENRICHMENT:

1. Students can share their booklets with other classes, parents, or other school personnel at an appropriate time.
2. Students can pick one or more of their favorite symbols and give a written or oral report about them.
3. Have students suggest and justify symbols different from the ones we now have.
4. Have students research other surrounding state's symbols to find out which, if any, have the same symbols as Arkansas and why it was chosen.
5. Incorporate math by having the class make a patchwork quilt from the colored pictures of the state symbols and display in the classroom, hallway or other appropriate place in the school building.

Sources:

"Arkansas Online Activity Booklet," from the Arkansas Secretary of State's website:
<http://www.sosweb.state.ar.us/activity.html>. This site has more information you might find useful for

your class. Paper copies of the “Arkansas Activity Booklet” are available from the Secretary of State’s Office: (501) 682-1010.

Sutherland, Diann. *The Arkansas Handbook*. Little Rock: Fly-By-Night Press, 1996. (source of “additional information”)

Arkansas State Symbols: Teacher’s Information Sheet

State Tree: The pine was adopted as the Arkansas State Tree by the General Assembly of 1939. The loblolly and shortleaf pine are varieties of southern yellow pine found in our state. Both varieties may grow to be 100 feet tall and can be found in the two National Forests - the Ouachita National Forest and the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest.

Additional Information: The pine tree is a major resource for the state’s paper industry. There are approximately 200 species of trees native to Arkansas. With the many hybrids, the total comes close to 300, which is a good representation of the nearly 1,200 different trees recognized for the United States. Of the saw timber grown in Arkansas, over 83% is pine, oak, and gum.

State Insect: The honeybee was adopted as the Arkansas State Insect by the General Assembly of 1973. Honeybees carry pollen from flower to flower. The bees also produce honey, which is collected and sold by beekeepers. An old-fashioned beehive is one of the symbols on the Great Seal of Arkansas.

Additional Information: The rhetoric in support of the honey bee compared the bee to Arkansans as diligent, productive, and willing workers. It was also noted that without the honey bees’ pollination of crops, agriculture in the state would be in quite a fix.

State Beverage: Milk was adopted as the Arkansas State Beverage by the General assembly on 1985. Dairy farming is an important part of Arkansas agriculture.

Additional Information: Dairy farming was once a more important part of Arkansas agriculture with 536,000 head of milk cows in 1945. By 1993 the number of milk cows in the state had dwindled to only 64,000 head.

State Flower: The apple blossom was adopted as the Arkansas State Flower by the General Assembly of 1901. Apple blossoms have pink and white petals with green leaves. At one time Arkansas was a major apple-producing state. The town of Lincoln in Washington County hosts the annual Arkansas Apple Festival.

Additional Information: The apple blossom was chosen because at that time Arkansas was known as the apple state and sometimes called “The Land of the Big Red Apple.” At one time Benton County in northwestern Arkansas was the chief apple producing county in the U.S. Today Arkansas ranks 32nd in apple production.

State Bird: The mockingbird was adopted as the Arkansas State Bird by the General Assembly of 1929. The mockingbird can perfectly imitate the song of many other birds.

State Fruit/Vegetable: The South Arkansas Vine Ripe Tomato was adopted by the General Assembly of 1987. The tomato is officially defined as a fruit but is commonly considered a vegetable. The Pink Tomato Festival is held each year in Bradley County.

State Folk Dance: The square dance was adopted as the Arkansas State Folk Dance by the General Assembly of 1991. Square dancers perform a variety of steps set to music, which are usually told to them by a person known as a square dance “caller.”

State Instrument: The fiddle was adopted as the Arkansas State Instrument by the General Assembly of 1985. Otherwise known as the violin, the instrument has been commonly associated with Arkansas folk music and culture.

Additional Information: The “Arkansas Traveler,” the fiddle tune that is the best-known piece of folklore associated with the state, is generally credited to Colonel Sandford “Sandy” Faulkner a prominent Little Rock plantation owner. He claimed the story was inspired by an actual conversation with an Arkansas backwoodsman. The skit soon attained widespread popularity, aided by the play *Kit, The Arkansas Traveler*, which delighted New York audiences in the 1880’s.

State Gem: The diamond was adopted as the Arkansas State Gem by the General Assembly of 1967. Arkansas is the only diamond-producing state in the United States. The Crater of Diamonds State Park, located in Murfreesboro, Arkansas, is the only place in the nation where you can dig for diamonds and keep what you find. More than 70,000 diamonds have been found there.

Additional Information: The Crater of Diamonds State Park is the eighth-largest diamond deposit in the world. Farmer John Huddleston, who owned the property, discovered the first diamond in 1906. In 1972, the property was purchased for development as a state park, and since then visitors have carried home over 18,000 diamonds. Although diamonds are the main attraction, other semi-precious gems and mineral can be found there. The largest diamond found to date is “Uncle Sam” (1924) at 40.23 carats. It was cut to an emerald shape of 12.42 carats and sold in 1971 for \$150,000.

State Mineral: The quartz crystal was adopted as the Arkansas State Mineral by the General Assembly on 1967. Quartz crystals are mined in the Ouachita Mountains and are used in computers and sold to visitors to our state. Sometimes called “Arkansas diamonds,” quartz crystals are not true diamonds.

Additional Information: Arkansas is the number one producer of quartz crystals in the United States and probably the world. They occur in abundance in the Hot Springs area. Quartz or silica is a hard, usually colorless or white, insoluble mineral. Quartz crystals and veins are a common feature of the Ouachita Mountains region of Arkansas. Arkansas quartz crystals are widely known for the clarity and for their habit of occurring in attractive clusters. Quartz crystals are important in the construction of radio equipment, range finders, direction-finding apparatuses, periscopes, gun sights, polariscopes, and other precision equipment. During World War II Arkansas quartz crystals were used particularly in radio equipment. A large chunk of quartz crystals from Mount Ida in Montgomery County occupies a prominent position at the Museum of Natural History in New York City.

State Rock: Bauxite was adopted as the Arkansas State Rock by the General Assembly of 1967. Bauxite is used to make aluminum, which is used to make cans, aluminum foil, and many other useful products. Arkansas is home to the largest bauxite deposits in the United States, located in Saline County.

Additional Information: At one time Arkansas produced 97% of the nation’s bauxite. In 1887 the state’s first geologist discovered huge deposits of bauxite in Saline and Pulaski Counties. Bauxite quickly became an extremely profitable venture. In 1903 the Pittsburgh Reduction Company of Pennsylvania

(later known as Alcoa) established a company town and named it Bauxite. During the 64 years the company was in business, all inhabitants of the town were employees. The Gann Museum of Benton is the only building in the world made out of bauxite. Bauxite is no longer produced and the mined land is now being reclaimed.

State Mammal: The whitetail deer was adopted as the Arkansas State Mammal by the General Assembly of 1993. The deer raises the white underside of its tail when frightened. Young whitetail deer have a white-spotted red coat, which changes to brownish-gray before the end of its first year.

Additional Information: The whitetail deer is the state's most important game species and lives in all 75 counties. It is one of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's biggest success stories. In the 1920's, fewer than 500 deer remained in the state. Proper management has brought the population back to an estimated 750,000.

State Songs: In 1917, the Arkansas Legislature adopted "Arkansas" by Eva Ware Barnett as our state song. It remained our state song until 1947 when a tiff developed between the state and Mrs. Barnett who held the copyright. The Legislature of 1947 changed the official song to "The Arkansas Traveler" and appointed a committee to draft suitable words and music to be adapted from the old fiddle tune. In 1963, the legislature persuaded Mrs. Barnett to relinquish her copyright to the state and the state re-established "Arkansas" as the official state song. In 1987, following Arkansas' sesquicentennial (150th) birthday in 1986, the General Assembly adopted a few more official songs to commemorate the occasion. They decided to make Mrs. Barnett's song the official state anthem and "The Arkansas Traveler" became our official state historical song. Two new songs, "Arkansas" (You Run Deep In Me) by Wayland Holyfield and "Oh, Arkansas" by Terry Rose and Gary Klaff, were designated as official state songs.

State Motto: "Regnat Populus" The words are Latin for "the people rule."

State Seal: On the shield of our state seal are a steamboat, a plow, a beehive, and a sheaf of wheat, symbols of Arkansas' industrial and agricultural wealth. The Angel of Mercy, the Sword of Justice, and the Goddess of Liberty surround a bald eagle. The eagle holds in its beak a scroll inscribed with the Latin phrase "Regnat Populus", our state motto, which means "The People Rule". The seal was adopted in its basic form in 1864, and in its present form in 1907.

Additional Information: The eagle in the lower half of the circle of the seal holds in his beak a scroll inscribed with the state motto, "Regnat Populus," Latin for "the people rule." He clutches a bunch of arrows in one claw and an olive branch in the other. The breast of the eagle is covered with a shield bearing images of a steam boat, a beehive, a plow, and a sheaf of wheat, symbols of Arkansas' agricultural wealth. The steamboats which traveled rivers were a major factor in the state's early development. Above the eagle is the Goddess of Liberty, holding a wreath in one hand and a liberty pole with cap in the other. The goddess, wreath and pole are surrounded by a circle of stars and rays. The figure to the left of the eagle is the Angel of Mercy, supporting the shield against the breast of the eagle with her left hand. The Sword of Justice is to the right of the shield.

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