



The United States Lesson Plan

Introduction:

- Without using a map, ask students to name as many states that they can. As they are calling them off, make a chart of the states that they are citing.
- Tell them that they are going to learn about The United States and play a great game called Top Trumps and learn about the differences and similarities of the states and what they are known for.

Suggested lesson procedure:

Lesson 1

This lesson will familiarize the students with the United States.

- Divide the class into pairs
- Give a pack of the TOP TRUMPS **The United States** cards to each pair.
- Ask the children to lay the cards out face up either on their desks or on the floor.
- Give instructions such as “Find the state where you live”. Students find and hold up the corresponding cards as fast as they can. Once the children are familiar with the names of the states on the cards, ask individual children to take turns calling the names for their classmates to find.
- Create a “State wall”. (Students are more apt to use the “state wall” if they are involved with the creation of the wall. You can also have a large blank map of the United States that the students can fill in as the states are called out.)

Lesson 2

- Tell the children that they are going to use **The United States** cards to play TOP TRUMPS.
- Divide the class into groups of 3-6.
- Explain that each group needs only one pack of cards to play the game. Ask the children to put any extra packs to one side or turn them into you.
- To start the game, shuffle and deal all the cards face down. Each player holds their cards so that they can see the **top** card only. The player to the dealer's left starts by reading out a category from the **top** card (e.g. Indiana: Population: value 6 million).
- The other players then read out the same category from their cards. The one with the best or highest value wins, and that player collects all of the top cards, including their own, and moves them to the bottom of their pile. It is then their turn again to choose a category from the next card.
- If two or more cards share the top value and this will frequently occur with this set of cards, then all the cards are placed in the middle and the same player chooses again from the next card.
- Using a different category, the game is repeated until all of the cards are used.
- The person with all of the cards at the end is the winner!

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.3

Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.4

Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a *grade 4 topic or subject area*.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.7

Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

Lesson 3

Using the informational text on each TOP TRUMPS **The United States** cards, have the students work in groups to find the answers to the questions listed on the attached worksheet. This will give them additional information as they gain an understanding of the differences and similarities of the different states in the union.

Lesson 4

Writing is a tool that students can use to understand and dissect important facts and allows them to translate complex ideas into words and language. It helps create the bridge between content knowledge and understanding. A wide variety of writing assignments and activities move students from being passive learners to become actively engaged in social studies. Examples include social studies journals, free writes, vocabulary journals, observation reports topic analysis, diagrams, posters, brochures, charts and more.

Lesson 4 will provide an opportunity for students to use their writing as a means through which they are able to articulate complex regional facts, themes, and terms and synthesize concepts.

Regional Flipbook Project: The United States is divided into five regions. Divide your class into five groups, each representing one of the five regions: Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Southwest and West.

Utilizing the information from the TOP TRUMPS **The United States** cards along with other digital and print resources, the students will become familiar with the five regions of the United States as they work on a regional flipbook project. Give the students sufficient time to gather their information so they feel comfortable with their understanding of the region.

Have students make a group flipbook by taking four sheets of paper (preferable construction paper) and stagger them leaving 1/2"-1" at the bottom of each. Fold up the bottom, lining up the sheets leaving 1/2"-1" in the middle and press repeatedly until a sharp crease is formed. Insert staples in the crease. Each tab will be labeled.

You can choose your own areas for regional study, but I recommend these:

- regional name on cover
- states included in the region (a map if possible)
- location and climate
- geography (Describe a physical and human feature)
- cultural landmark (Think of what tourists would visit to learn more about the region)
- historical event or interesting fact

- a famous person and their accomplishment(s)

Student groups should be able to determine if they want each student to work on a particular area or they all work together as they research their region. (Conferencing is important at this time as it provides a form of assessment that is interactive and immediate. It can also allow you to model the best strategies for organizing either the group or the work product. Your informal feedback should guide the students in the direction of meeting the criteria for the assignment and answer any questions that they may have.)

Students should complete the flipbook and be prepared to share content for the next lesson.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.4

With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.A

Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings, and illustrations) when useful to aiding comprehension.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.D

Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.7

Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.7

Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.9

Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Lesson 5

Author's Chair: The Author's Chair strategy (Karelitz 1982; Boutwell 1983; Calkins 1983; Graves 1983) provides student writers with feedback on their writing as students engage effectively in collaborative discussions and presentations. It has also been called peer conferencing. The focus of the Author's Chair strategy is to provide feedback to students on their writing. This includes acknowledging its good qualities, making specific suggestions for improvement and asking thought-provoking questions of student authors so they produce writing, in this case a research report, in which the development and organization are appropriate for this assignment. The following activity is a version of the author's chair but completed in groups and not to assess writing strategy necessarily, but rather to share content that was discovered in their group's research.

Activity:

- Ask groups to come together to share their completed flipbooks.
- When all groups have had the opportunity to share their project, discuss similarities and differences pertaining to the regions until students have an excellent understanding.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.D

Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1.A

Come to discussions prepared having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.9

Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.



Names _____

The United States

Lesson 3 Quiz

1. The United States Naval and the National Institute of Health are in this state. _____
2. This state is 1489 miles from the District of Columbia and was admitted to the Union in 1876. _____
3. In this state, people can never be more than 6 miles away from a natural water source. The name is from the Algonquin meaning "large water". _____
4. This state is the home to Mount Rushmore. _____
5. This state is one of the most isolated places on Earth and James Cook was the first explorer to visit. _____
6. While still a colony, this now state took a leading role during the American Revolutionary movement. _____
7. Known as the "*Beaver State*", this state is a land of topographical extremes. _____
8. This state is well-known for its coal mining and its recreational sites for caving rafting and fishing. Its state bird is the cardinal. _____
9. This state was admitted to the Union in 1959 around the same time as Hawaii. _____
10. This state is the leading producer of cheese and ranks first in paper product production. One of its most popular museums is located of Lake Michigan. _____
11. The Grand Canyon, a 277-mile long crevice carved over millions of years by the Colorado River is found in this state. _____
12. The only state where diamonds can be mined for a small fee. _____
13. The Gold Rush, 1848-1855, attracted over 300,000 people to this state to seek their fortune. Thirty-eight million people live in this most heavily populated state in the union. _____

14. This state is one of the centers for study and enjoyment of Native American and Hispanic culture and history. It is known as "The Land of Enchantment". _____
15. This state is known for its diverse population with 180 different nationalities here. Its population is 19 million and has the most populated city in the United States. _____
16. This state has the highest point in the United States and was the first colony to vote for independence from Britain. _____
17. The Gateway Arch in this state symbolizes America's western movement. _____
18. Having a population of three million people, this state became part of the United States due to the Louisiana Purchase from France. _____
19. Known as the "sunflower state: due to the fact that its state flower is the sunflower, it was originally known for its cattle and cowboys in the 1800's. _____
20. This state is well-known for hosting the longest-running horse race in the United States. _____
21. Beal Street in Memphis and the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville can be found in this state that was admitted to the union in 1812. _____
22. One of the largest states in the union, the state bird is the mockingbird and its state flower is the bluebonnet. _____
23. This state is known for its enthusiastic sports that feature motor sports, NFL football and NBA basketball teams. _____
24. As the birthplace of the Wright Brothers who invented the first airplane and John Glenn, the first American to orbit the Earth, it is located on the shores of Lake Erie. _____
25. One of the greatest multi-cultural states, this state is known for its celebrations such as the annual Mardi Gras _____
26. The most densely-populated state in America, it is home to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.

27. With 77,420 square miles, this state has over 45 million acres in farms. _____
28. After the 13 original colonies were formed, the "Green Mountain State" was the first to join to join the union as a state in 1791. _____
29. The Liberty Bell, our national symbol of liberty, is housed in this state. _____

30. The site of the famous Indian War at Little Bighorn, today it is home to Glacier and Yellowstone Parks. _____
31. This state is rated number 1 in the nation for having the best ski areas. In addition, its capital is named for the largest salt water lake in the western hemisphere. _____
32. This state is located in the heart of the granite peaks of the White Mountain National Forest.

33. With thirty-nine Indian tribes here, this state is one of the leaders in promoting and protecting Native American history and culture. _____
34. This state was the site of the first English settlement in America. _____
35. Founded in 1701, Yale University, one of the most prestigious academic institutions in the world, was founded here. _____
36. With only three counties, this is the second smallest state in the union, but the first ratify the United States constitution. _____
37. This state has the second largest agricultural industry in the nation, but it is better known for its beautiful weather and amusement parks. _____
38. This northwestern-most state is the only state to be named for a United States president. _____
39. With buffalo grazing the wide-opened spaces, this state is made up of 90% sparsely populated farmland and is known as a refuge for those who seek peace and quiet. _____
40. America's smallest state _____
41. Named after the Mississippi River which borders it, it was in this state that President Teddy Roosevelt took pity on a wounded bear while hunting creating the very famous Teddy Bear! _____
42. Most of the state is comprised of desert and shares the Hoover Dam with the states of Arizona and California. _____
43. In the 1960's, this state was at the center of the civil rights movement led by Dr. Martin Luther King. _____
44. Apart from Alaska, this is the second northernmost state in America. _____
45. This state is nicknamed "The Equality State" because it was the first state to give women the right to vote, to serve on juries and hold public office. _____
46. This was the founding state of the Confederacy during the American Civil War. _____

47. Thirteen million people reside in this state and four of our presidents have a strong connection to it: Ronald Reagan, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant and Barack Obama. _____
48. This state has the largest number of French speaking households in America. Ninety percent of the land is forested. _____
49. It was one of the original states of the confederacy and has a carving on Stone Mountain that depicts three of its important figures: Stonewall Jackson, Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. _____
50. This state is known as the "Gem State" and has some of the country's most scenic sights. The National Forest Service has control of 60% of this state's land.



The United States

Answer Key to Lesson 3 Quiz

1. Maryland
2. Colorado
3. Michigan
4. South Dakota
5. Hawaii
6. Massachusetts
7. Oregon
8. West Virginia
9. Alaska
10. Wisconsin
11. Arizona
12. Arkansas
13. California
14. New Mexico
15. New York
16. North Carolina
17. Missouri
18. Iowa
19. Kansas
20. Kansas
21. Tennessee
22. Texas
23. Indiana
24. Ohio
25. Louisiana
26. New Jersey
27. Nebraska
28. Vermont
29. Pennsylvania
30. Montana
31. Utah
32. New Hampshire
33. Oklahoma

34. Virginia
35. Connecticut
36. Delaware
37. Florida
38. Washington
39. North Dakota
40. Rhode Island
41. Mississippi
42. Nevada
43. Alabama
44. Minnesota
45. Wyoming
46. South Carolina
47. Illinois
48. Maine
49. Georgia
50. Idaho