

Picture Your State

Background:

The U.S. Census Bureau collects and organizes a wide variety of population, social, and economic information for the nation and reports these data for many geographic units including states, counties, and blocks. Government officials, businesses, and school districts use these figures to make decisions that affect everyone's lives — including students.

This lesson helps students learn about their state as they collect, organize, analyze, map, and graph a variety of information in “State Facts for Students.” They have the opportunity to examine data about kids their age, as well as a variety of other facts selected to appeal to young students.

Grade Level: 3-5

Objectives and Skills:

Students will

1. Collect, organize, analyze, graph, and map data about the state where they live.
2. Compare their data with other states.
3. Increase their ability to represent and work with numbers through millions.

Standards:

Math – Numbers and Operations, Data Analysis and Probability

Social Studies – People, Places, and Environments

Geography – The World in Spatial Terms, Places and Regions, Human Systems

Estimated Time: One to three class sessions

Tools needed:

1. Student worksheets 1, 2, and 3: “Collect Data About Your State,” “Map Your State,” and “Graph Your State”
2. State outline map. Download from: <http://www.census.gov/geo/www/maps/stco_02.htm> OR use your own outline map.
3. Computer access to “State Facts for Students” <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/kids/>> OR copies of state pages from **State Facts for Students**

Vocabulary: population, state, capital, county, legend

Procedure:

1. Discuss with students the information found in the background. Ask them if they know what the population of their state is. Find out what other historical or interesting information they can

recall. Stress the fact that the Census Bureau collects data about children and businesses in which students would have an interest. Review vocabulary and work with students as a group or assign students to work individually to complete the student worksheet, “Collect Data About Your State.” Access the Web site: < <http://www.census.gov/schools/facts/> >

2. Discuss with students the origin of your state’s name. Locate your state on the United States map and discuss the state’s history, geographic features, and important locations. Point out the capital, largest city, and second largest city. Indicate any interesting information regarding these cities — the name, location on a major waterway, etc.).

Tell students that states are divided into counties and identify the county in which they live. Highlight any interesting information about the origin of the name, economic activity, current events, etc., of their county.

Disseminate the “Mapping Your State” worksheet to the class and assign students to work in groups or individually to complete the worksheet. Students will need a state outline map to complete this task. You may access an outline map at <http://www.census.gov/geo/www/maps/stco_02.htm>.

3. Note the neighboring states and indicate to students any interesting comparisons that can be drawn between their state and neighboring states. (Ex. Our neighboring state has many mountainous areas, fewer people, and fewer businesses than we do.)

Tell students that the “Graph Your State” worksheet asks them to make graphs containing information about their states and compare it with other states.

Assign students to work in groups or individually to complete the worksheet.

Extensions: Have students collect data from 10 students about one characteristic found in “State Facts for Students.” We suggest: persons per family or how students get to school. After students collect the information, they should compile the appropriate statistic from their survey set and present the information in numerical or graphical form. They may then compare it to the information for their state and the nation.

Assessment: Assign students to use the information they have learned to create a postcard about their state to send to a student in another state. Students draw or collect images from the “Fun Facts” information to decorate the front of the postcard and use statistical information in their brief message on the back of the postcard telling the addressee why he/she should visit or live in the student’s state.

Collect Data About Your State

Use the “State Facts for Students” information to collect data about your state.

1. My state is _____.
2. My state is the ____ largest state in the United States.
3. The population of my state is (*in numerals*)_____.
4. The population of my state is (*in words*)_____
- _____.
5. Between 2000 and 2009 my state gained/lost (*circle one*) _____ people.
6. There are _____ children my age in my state.
7. The average family size in my state is _____. There are _____ people in my family.
8. Between 2000 and 2009 the change in number of boys and girls my age in my state was:
(Use + or - sign.) _____ boys _____ girls
9. Between 2000 and 2008 the number of amusement parks in my state increased/decreased/stayed the same (*circle one*).
10. Between 2000 and 2008 the number of dentist offices in my state increased/decreased/stayed the same (*circle one*).
11. Write a sentence explaining why you think the number of dentist offices changed.

- _____.
12. Write a statement telling how people in your state get to work.

13. How do you get to school?

14. Give an example of how one of your state symbols is used. (Examples: The name of the baseball team in Baltimore is Maryland’s state bird, Orioles. New Mexico’s license plate says “Land of Enchantment,” the state nickname.)_____
- _____.

Mapping Your State

Use the “State Facts for Students” page and a state outline map to label the following information for your state.

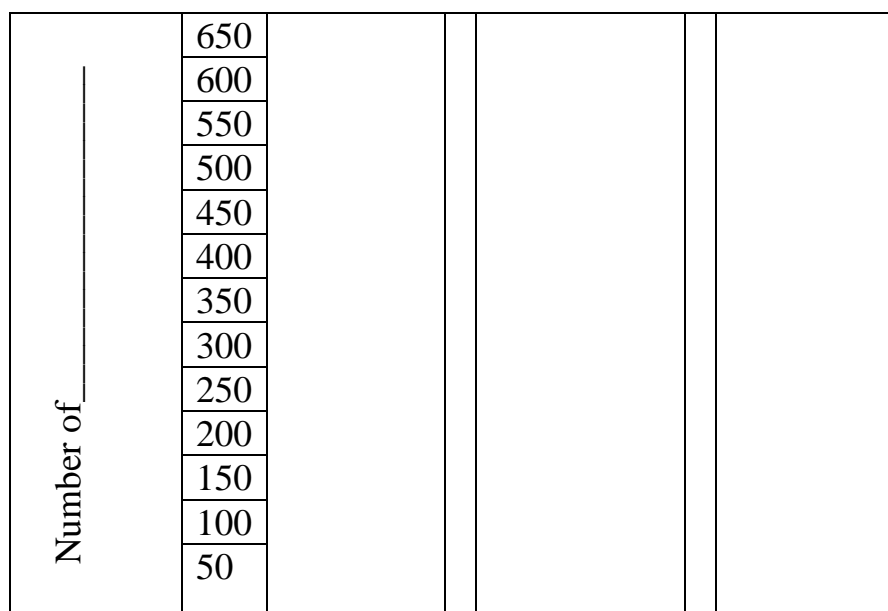
1. Write or trace the name of your state on the top of the page using a colored crayon or marker.
2. Write the population of your state in the legend.
3. Mark the location of the capital of your state with a star. Write the name of the capital next to the star. Add the star and its meaning to the map’s legend.
4. Is the capital the largest city in your state?
5. If the capital is not the largest city, find the location of the largest city on the map. Mark it with a filled-in circle. Write the name of the city next to the circle. Add this information to the map legend.
6. Mark the location of the second largest city in your state. Mark it with an open circle. Write the name of the city next to the circle. Add this information to the map legend.
7. Locate the county where you live. Select a symbol to represent your home or town. Label it on the map and add this information to the map legend.
8. Write or highlight the names of the states that border your state.
9. Select one border state and find its population. Does this state have more, fewer, or about the same number of people as your state? (Indicate with a +, -, or = sign next to the state’s name on the map.)

Graphing (Picture) Your State

Create graphic images of data for your state from “State Facts for Students.”

1. Select two other states to compare with your state: _____ and _____.
2. Use the following grid to draw a bar graph comparing the number of toy stores or pet and pet supply stores in your state, and your two comparison states. Create a title that explains what your graph shows. Use the data for 2008.

Title: _____



(Your State)

(State 1)

(State 2)

3. In the space below, draw a line graph to show the change in population over time. Use the information from the “History” section of the State Facts for Students.
4. Select a category from “State Facts for Students” that interests you. Draw a graph using that information.