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Grade 2-3
Social Studies

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this project is to teach the students about the fifty states of America. The students will learn the capitals and locations of the states. They will also study the population, mottos, flags, and interesting historical facts about each state. In order to enhance their learning experience, the students will do fun projects that will be presented to the class. The students will become comfortable with working on a computer and their knowledge about the United States will increase greatly!

CONNECTION TO THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS:

No. 1 Knows and understands how to use maps, globes, and other graphical tools to acquire , process and report information. The students will be required to find the location of each state and its capital on a map.

No. 4 Knows and understands the physical and human characteristics of places. The students will learn the mottos of each state. This will help the students get an idea of the ideals and values that each state uniquely possesses. They will also become familiar with the states tree, bird, and flower. This helps to describe the physical characteristics of each area.

No. 12 Knows and understands the process, patterns, and functions of human settlement. The students will study the thirteen original colonies and the American Revolution. They will learn about the first early American settlements and how the location of the colonies played a factor in the American Revolution.

APPLICABLE TEXAS ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

The student understands the relative location of places.

The student uses simple geographic tools such as maps, globes, and photographs.

The student understand the locations and characteristics of places and regions.

OBJECTIVES:

Students will demonstrate their ability:

To learn the fifty states and their capitals

To become familiar with the states' mottos, bird, tree, flag, and flower.

To know the location of each state on a map.

To become familiar with the Internet.

OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION:

This lesson is specifically designed to help students learn the fifty states and their capitals. Its purpose is do it in a way that actively involves the students with projects that are fun, but also help the child learn about the states of their country. The lesson will

give students the opportunity to learn interesting facts about each state of the U.S. (motto, location, population, bird, important historical figures, etc.) One of the lessons focuses simply on the wonderful state of Texas. It is important that the children learn in depth about the state in which they live. The lesson plan also includes a short study of the country itself and its origin. When this lesson is completed, the students will have received a vast amount of knowledge about the United States as a whole.

PROCEDURES:

This project is designed to be covered over a period of ten days. The full content could not be presented in any less time.

Day 1 Sponge Activity: At the beginning of class each student will be given a blank map of the United States. Students are instructed to label as many states and capitals as they can without using any references. The students will be given about ten to fifteen minutes to complete as many as possible. (Teacher use this time to get teaching materials in order etc.) The first day the amount completed will probably be pretty low! An award will be given to the student who names the most states and capitals. (This reward will be awarded daily) After the fifteen minutes, the teacher will collect the maps. The same exact maps will be returned to the same students each day. As the students' knowledge about the states grows throughout the ten day period, they will be able to complete more of the map. At the end of the ten days, those students who have the whole map completed from memory will receive a prize. [Example: Fifteen extra minutes of recess time] All students are expected to be able to complete the map by the end of the unit. To make this sponge activity more fun for the whole class, the teacher might want to play patriotic music while the students work. [Example: Yankee Doodle, This is my

Country] 

The first day will be used to grab the students' attention and stir their imagination. The lesson will begin by playing the song "The Fifty Nifty States" for the students. Students will look at a map of the United States. We will discuss the history of the country, the capitals, and the National Anthem. The Revolutionary War will be discussed briefly and an overview of the original thirteen colonies will be given. This day is designated to let the children have fun and get excited about learning about their country over the next ten days. The teacher might want to bring cookies in the shape of America, hand out stickers of the American flag, etc. The last fifteen-twenty minutes of will be used to have an open discussion with the students about America. Have the students make a list about all of the things they love about the United States, then have them share it with the class.

Day 2: Sponge Activity: Pass out individual maps of the country that were distributed the previous day and let the students fill in. (Give reward to the student with the most completed!)

Each student will choose one of the fifty states. They can not choose a state they have lived in and urge them to choose one they know very little about. Choosing Texas is not an option! Each student will become an expert on the particular state they chose. They

must be able to name, the state capital, motto, flower, bird, abbreviation, and an interesting fact about their state. They may use encyclopedias, however, if computers are available give the students the web address-<http://www.50states.com/> This site provides wonderful information on each state. Students can look up simply by clicking on the name of the state. Give the students the whole class period to research their state.

Day 3 Sponge Activity: Handout the individual maps once again (At least one state capital will be added on each student's sheet because of the research they did the day before!)

Today students will be asked to make a collage of the state they have researched. The collage will be creatively decorated and it needs to include all of the information gathered from the previous day.

Materials:

- magazines
- scissors
- glue
- markers
- glitter and other decorating materials

If time allows, the remainder of the class period will be used to begin student presentations of their collage. Each student will stand in front of the class with their collage and tell their classmates their information. Before each presentation, the teacher needs to point out where the state that is about to be discussed is located. This activity will help the students to get well-acquainted with each state.

Day 4 Sponge Activity: Same as always!

This day will be used to finish the presentations. When everyone has finished, the collages should be hung around the classroom. Each student will receive a handout of a map of the United States with the capitals already labeled. (Students should be urged to study!study!study!) The map is divided into four regions [Northeast, Midwest, South, and West] Suggest students concentrate on one region at a time! At the end of the class period, inform the students that they must bring something to class tomorrow that reminds them of Texas. Remind them to be creative.

Day 5 Opening Activity: Have the students list as many cities in Texas that they can. The student who names the most gets to wear the cowboy hat (provided by the teacher) that class period.

The classroom should be decorated for "Texas Day" 💡 It is a good idea to have a Texas flag up and have Texas, Our Texas playing as the students walk in. Also, have picture books about Texas displayed around the classroom. Use the first half of the class period

as a time for a few students to briefly show what they brought that reminded them of Texas and why. During this class period we will of course discuss the capital, motto, bird, flower, tree, etc, however, the lesson will go more in depth on Texas than any other state. The history of Texas, the Battle of Alamo, and interesting historical figures in Texas will be discussed. The major rivers in Texas will also be presented as well as information on Texas' natural resources. For an added activity that will be fun for the students, have each student close their eyes and draw the shape of Texas as accurately as possible. This will bring a lot of giggles as the students compare their drawings.

Day 6 Sponge Activity: Pass out the same maps of the U.S. the students have been working on and reward the student with the most completed.

This day is used to focus on the rest of the states that were not studied when the students did their collage presentations. Assign each student another state and have them research the same information as before. Instead of making a collage about the state, this time the students will construct make-believe travel brochures.

Materials:

- construction paper (yellow, white, pink, orange)
- markers
- stencils
- map colors
- scissors

The construction paper will be folded in two and the information researched will be included on the inside. Inform the students to resist decorating the front of the brochure. Tomorrow's activity will be a great help in decorating the cover. The closing procedure will include an "around the world" game in which the teacher will hold up flash cards of states and the students will name the capital as rapidly as possible.

Day 7 Sponge Activity: Students continue to work on filling in their states and capitals

map. 

Flag Day- The student will use computers to look up their assigned state's flag for the travel brochure. <http://www.allstates-flag.com/flags/us-co.html> Students will click on their particular state to find a page of the state flag and a little background. The students will then finish decorating their travel brochure by decorating the front with their personal replica of the state flag. The remainder of the class time will be spent presenting the travel brochures and talking about each state. The travel brochures should be displayed around the classroom.

Day 8 Sponge Activity: Students will be asked to compose their own song about America. Students can share their song with the class if they wish.

This day will be used as a review of the states and capitals. Because each state has been fully covered, the kids should have a good concept of the states and their capitals, and their location on the map. The students will play a state-capital question game on the computer at <http://www.awl.com/sf-aw/sfaw/resources/statescapitals/>. This is a

program which will allow the students to click on a state and choose the correct capital out of three choices given.

Day 9 Sponge Activity: Students will be given a list of all fifty states and will be asked to write each state's capital beside it. A timer will be set for eight minutes and all who complete the list in this time will receive a patriotic pencil. Today, the students will complete the internet worksheet. (see attached page)

Day 10 Sponge Activity: This is the students' last opportunity to complete the U.S. state map and their capitals. Students are expected to complete this task! Those who do receive fifteen extra minutes of recess time and their written on a star that will be placed on the American bulletin board.

Because all of the material has been covered, this day's lesson is designed to be fun activity for the students. Each student will make up their own imaginary state. They will design a shape for the state and make up its name, capital, motto, flower and flag. They can create its shape and pretend location in the United States. The students will share their creations with the class and they will vote on the most creative one. The day will end with a states and capitals "around the world" game.

Evaluation/Assessment/Feedback:

The test will include several items about the states. Students must be able to list the capitals of each state. Also, there will be a matching portion between ten states and their corresponding motto. In addition to this, students will be given a blank map in which they must locate each state. Because this material was thoroughly covered in class, the testing should be fairly easy for the students.

Grades will also come from the students' collages and travel brochures. Students will write the most interesting fact they learned from the whole lesson.

Closure: The closing exercise will consist of singing "The Fifty Nifty States" one final time since the students really enjoy this song. We will have a class discussion in which students will read aloud the most interesting fact they chose. Each student will then be given a laminated U.S. map with the capitals labeled to keep for future reference.

Materials:

-Most materials have already been listed in the lesson plan, the only materials needed to be added are computers.

EXTENSIONS:

History could easily be integrated into this lesson plan. The websites used are filled with historical facts about the states. For example, the flag site explains the history behind each flag, which usually has to do with a war.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Ross, Wilma S. Fabulous Facts About the Fifty States. New York: Scholastic Book Services, 1976.

"50 States and Capitals." 1996. <http://www.50states.com/> (April 22,1998)
<http://www.awl.com/sf-aw/sfaw/resources/statescapitals/>

"Fifty States and One District." 1997. <http://www.allstates-flag.com/flags/us-state.html>
(April 22,1998)

Internet Worksheet Exploring the states!

Type <http://www.50states.com/>

Click on the state of your choice

Which state did you choose?_____

What is the capital?_____

What is the latitude and longitude of the state?_____

What is the highest point?_____

Go back to the main page by clicking the back arrow

Click on another state

Which state did you choose?_____

What is the state flower?_____

What is the population?_____

Click on <http://www.allstates-flag.com/flags/us-state.html>

Click on the state you were just researching

List an interesting fact about the flag_____