

MY STATE

A printable unit study by Lyn Hack and Karen Caroe
I have gotten permission from the Author herself to list this! Thanks Karen!

Introduction

Almost every state requires homeschoolers to study state history at some point. This Unit Study is designed to help you study your state (or any state) the Funschooling way---with Unit studies! You may choose a chronological or topical study. This unit study will cover Civics, History, Geography, Language Arts, Applied Math, Science, and Art.

****NOTE:** We highly recommend that your unit study culminate with the creation of a MY STATE notebook. Each student can make their own or make one as a family. Lyn made her notebook in loose-leaf with plastic page protectors. She intends on using it as a travel guide for future field trips, study trips, day trips and vacations.

RESOURCES

MY STATE NOTEBOOK by Abeka. www.abeka.com

State Theme Units by Instructional Fair, Inc. Available from Educational Supply stores.

MY STATE by Evan-Moor available from Educational Supply stores and some mail order catalogs.

The Backpack--a mail order catalog. Phone:919-244-0728. Or visit their website:www.thebackpack.com.

GETTING STARTED

- 1) As a family, brainstorm. Make a list of all the things you want to know about your state. Keep your list handy to add questions as you begin to investigate and research.
- 2) Information Scavenger Hunt. Draw a "web" and fill in all the places you might find information about your state. (Primary sources, secondary sources, guest sources, Libraries, Chamber of Commerce, City Hall, Field Trips, Museums, Cultural Centers, the Internet, Visitor Centers, etc.)
- 3) Categorize your Brainstorm list (chronological or topical) These will probably become the "chapters" of your book.

CIVICS

Start your notebook with FACTS-AT-A-GLANCE. You will collect this information as you study your state. Include the following information: State name, Capital city, State nickname, State motto, State flower, State bird, State tree, State song, name of Governor,

U.S. Senators, U.S. Representatives, number of Electoral votes, Largest Cities by population and/or area, year to join the union, location (what US region), major industry, manufacturing, crops, National parks, National memorials, amazing facts, Historical sites, endangered species, historical facts, famous people, State wonders (waterfalls, lakes, volcanoes, etc), State monuments, Annual events, Tourist attractions, Climate, Average temperatures in January and July, Name and address of State Tourist Information Center.

HISTORY

- 1) Begin a Historical Timeline of your State.
- 2) Learn about the first inhabitants, pioneers, and settlers.
- 3) Research your family roots in your state.
- 4) What did your state go through to become a U.S. state.
- 5) How was the government of your state in it's beginning?
- 6) Visit historical sites near you.
- 7) What are some of the major state and U.S. events that have been important to your state?
- 8) Write a paper or do a skit about your favorite time period for your state. In the paper, tell why. In the skit, perform a specific event during that time period.
- 9) Make a game (Geosafari, cards, Jeopardy, etc) with information about your state's history.
- 10) Visit a museum that has artifacts from your state.

GEOGRAPHY

- 1) Make a salt-dough map of your state putting in hills, rivers, etc.
- 2) Begin a detailed map of your state with counties and cities.
- 3) What are the border states of your state.
- 4) Use a state road map to determine the best route and mileage from one place to another. Remember, the shortest route might not be the best route.
- 5) Plan a trip (even if you don't take it) to several destinations.
- 6) Locate major waterways and bodies of water. What communities are on or near the water.
- 7) Locate other geographical sites: volcanoes, waterfalls, deserts, mountains, etc. How does the topography of the land effect the lifestyles of the people living near them?
- 8) What time zone are you in? Is your state in more than one time zone?
- 9) What can you learn about your state's weather?
Average rainfall, temperatures, etc.
- 10) Locate your City on a map. Do a Facts-At-A-Glance page for your city.

LANGUAGE ARTS

- 1) Read some Legends and Tall Tales about your state. How do you think they got started? Are there elements of truth?

- 2) Write short "articles" for each chapter in your notebook.
- 3) Design a Travel Brochure that would make people want to come visit your state.
- 4) Read a Biography of someone famous from your state.
- 5) Practice research skills as you hunt up information for your Facts-At-A-Glance. (Mom's, this is a good time to teach footnotes, bibliographies, and other forms of documentation used in research papers.)
- 6) Write a letter to the Chamber of Commerce or State Tourism Bureau asking for information about your state.
- 7) Learn to spell the names of cities and important places.
- 8) Make a list of surnames that are unique to your state/area. What is the origin of the names?

APPLIED MATH

Note: This math is not intended to replace a standard math curriculum. It is meant to apply skills to which your child(ren) has already been introduced.

- 1) Using a state road map, figure distances to create a mileage chart from your city to other destinations.
- 2) Take a survey of people you know to find out their ancestral roots. (Spanish, German, English, Native American, etc.) Make a bar graph.
- 3) Take daily temperature readings throughout the course of your Unit Study and graph or chart them.
- 4) Find out your state sales tax and practice figuring out how much tax you would pay on specific items.
- 5) Use percentages to determine the rate of population growth in your state over the last 100 years.
- 6) Find out how far it is from one end of the state to the other. North to South and East to West. Given the speed limit, how many hours/days would it take to cross your state?

SCIENCE

- 1) Take a field trip to a state park or nature center.
- 2) What endangered species are native to your state.
- 3) What plants are native to your state.
- 4) Does your state have any conservation or recycling programs.
- 5) Plant and indoor or outdoor garden of native plants. Learn about "heirloom" seeds.
- 6) Go birdwatching and try to find your state bird.
- 7) Find your state tree and flower.

ART

- 1) Use different medium to sketch the flag, bird, flower etc. for your Facts-At-A-Glance chapter.
- 2) Design a billboard to entice people to come visit your state or a specific location in your state.

- 3) Create a political cartoon about a current issue in your state.
- 4) Try your hand at photography as you visit different places. Learn to "compose" your pictures to get the best effect.
- 5) Press flowers and use them to decorate your notebook.
- 6) Do tree rubbings of different native trees.
- 7) Collect leaves from native trees.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- 1) Try planning a meal using recipes typical of your state (or region).
- 2) Go for a "penny toss" drive and see some new territory. Heads=turn left, Tails=turn right. (Going straight ahead is the driver's choice.)
- 3) Interview a senior citizen who is a native of the state.
- 4) Write a true-false or multiple choice quiz of what you've learned.
- 5) Make a crossword puzzle or wordsearch with vocabulary words about your state.
- 6) Make a time capsule of your state now.

This Unit Study barely touches the surface of what can be done in studying your state. The goal is to have fun while learning. If you are new to unit studies, give this one a try. You'll be amazed at how much your children will retain!

For questions, comments, and suggestion, Please e-mail me at MomCaroe@aol.com.