

# State Studies, 2

Course Title, Description  
State Studies, 2

Course Classifications  
ST SS

This course is designed to familiarize students with their own state history by focusing on geography, economy, governmental structures, significant individuals, wild life, and recreational locations. Through this research-based study, students will look at the various economic, social, and political influences that have shaped the region into the unique area of the present. Various local individuals from the past and their contributions to the community and the state will be studied as well as how the geography of the region influenced its story. Students will be expected to research, write, and create a notebook that increases understanding of and connection to their regional history.

## Objectives may include:

- To collect both detailed and factual information regarding the state
- To describe the state's physical features, historic landmarks, recreation areas, heritage, government, important individuals, plants and animals
- To explain the settling patterns of the state
- To compare the contributions of different nations that settled in the state
- To know how the natural resources have influenced the development of industries
- To examine the components of state, county and city government
- To be familiar with the state political and geographic map, county maps, and city boundaries
- To stay current on city, county and state news

## Activities may include:

Students research and gather information on various topics associated with the state, county, local history and government from which a notebook will be compiled. There are twelve separate categories of information to be gathered. The notebook should include at least two pages on each of these topics:

First, draw an outline map of the state; this will be added to as the state study progresses.

### 1. General information

Tell how the state got its name, the union entry date, order of admission, square miles of area, population now, 5 largest cities and their population, state's nickname, state motto, state flower, state tree, state bird, state song, and picture the state flag. Write 100-200 words on interesting information you learned about facts on the state.

### 2. State Wildlife

Describe 3-4 mammals, birds, amphibians, and fish found in the state. Include pictures and tell where they live. Describe 3-4 flowers, trees and plants found in the state. Tell where they thrive best and include pictures of them.

### 3. Natural Resources

Describe the natural resources located in the state. Include information about the economic impact of the natural resources. Which resources were once important and which resources are important now? (300 words minimum) Draw in the natural resources on your map. Design a key.

### 4. Industries

A state's industries are usually closely related to its natural resources. Tell about the major industries and where their centers are. Explain the important exports of the state and the existence

of water routes for trade. Locate and label the major ports and industrial cities. Indicate them on the map key.

### 5. Parks and Recreation Areas

Describe special attractions in the state that draw tourists. Include pictures and historical information. Locate these areas on the map. Or prepare your own state tourist attraction brochure, complete with pictures and descriptions.

### 6. Native American Heritage

Write about the Native Americans who lived in the state before the settlers arrived. Describe their culture, and history. (300 words) Include pictures of their typical living arrangements, homes, dress, celebrations, and food gathering. Label their dwellings on the map.

### 7. Important people of the state.

Summarize the story and contributions of 5 people who have made a positive difference in the state's history. Include a picture and at least 50 words on each individual.

### 8. Time Line of State History

Create a time line that includes 20 important events that made up the history of the state. Provide enough information to make the timeline understandable for any reader.

Activities, continued...

**STATE LEVEL GOVERNMENT****9. Governor**

Write about the current governor of the state. Include a picture, information as to when he was elected and some personal information about him. (200 words)

**State Senators and State Representatives**

Name the senators and representatives who are elected to the state legislature. Explain and compare their responsibilities as law makers. Learn the lawmakers who represent your family. Contact their offices for information on issues they support and for pictures to mount in the notebook.

**How a Bill Becomes a Law**

List the steps explaining how a bill becomes a law. Make your information understandable.

**COUNTY GOVERNMENT****10. Your county**

Name the county you live in. Which city is the county seat? Explain the offices of county government and name the individuals who hold those elected positions.

Obtain pictures of the county officials to place in the notebook. Tell about the law enforcement agency for the county. Where are the court rooms? The jails? Outline and label all the counties on the map.

**CITY GOVERNMENT****11. Your city or town**

Explain the history of the city in which you live (or the closest city), including the date or year it was founded. What is involved in "incorporating" a city?

Describe the city law enforcement agency. Visit the office to obtain pictures, brochures, and information about their programs and policies. Who is head of the city government? Is there a city council? Name the head officials of the city, obtain pictures. Learn and tell the responsibilities of the different positions of city government. Make a simple map of the city, labeling your government buildings, jail, schools, churches, parks, police stations, hospitals, fire departments, courthouse, airport, and other important locations.

**12. Newspaper Articles**

Cut out five newspaper articles about current issues in each of these government levels: city, county, state. With a highlighter, mark the important information in the articles. Write a short summary of the article's main points.