



Iowa

State History

~ In a Nutshell ~

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Iowa State History In a Nutshell
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What is the "In a Nutshell" series?

This is a series of concise, easy to understand information on many popular topics. You will find that many of products in this series can also be found as part of larger publications and/or curriculum on the publisher's website. At the end of each book, you will find a list of questions that may be used to help you review the material.

Iowa State History Lapbook Journal Study Guide



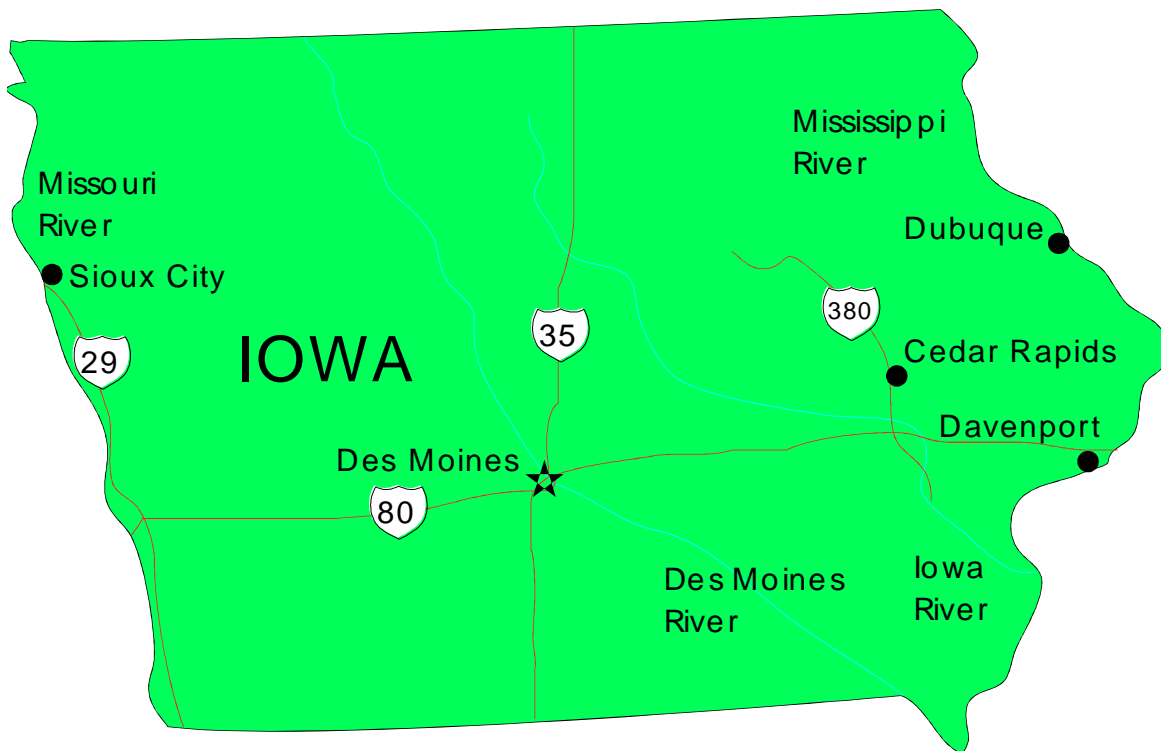
The Great Seal of Iowa

Iowa, the Hawkeye State, with its fertile, rolling prairies, is one of the foremost farming states in the United States. One fifth of the nation's corn harvest is produced in Iowa. Wet springs combined with warm summers create a favorable environment for plantings of corn and soybeans in the state's top-grade farmland. Although agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, Iowa has also encouraged the growth of manufacturing and service industries.

The state of Iowa, originally a territory of Wisconsin west of the Mississippi River, was named after the Iowa River.

The Iowa River was named after the Iowa Indians who lived in the territory. The tribal name "Ayuxwa" was spelled by the French as "Ayoua" and by the English as "Ioway." "Ayuxwa" means "one who puts to sleep."

People who live in Iowa or who come from Iowa are called Iowans.



Map of Iowa – Capital, Major Cities and Rivers

STATEHOOD

On December 28, 1846, Iowa was admitted to the Union as the 29th state.

STATE CONSTITUTION

The Iowa Constitution is the state's fundamental governing document, and includes a Preamble and twelve Articles.

Iowa's first constitution was written when Iowa entered the Union as a state in 1846. It was different from the rules of government in place when Iowa was a territory, and it was different from the constitutions of other states.

In 1857, a new constitution for the state of Iowa was written and approved. Just as the national government had three separate branches, the 1857 constitution set up three branches of government for Iowa: the legislative, the executive and the judicial. The new constitution listed the qualifications for the people in each of these branches of government, and described their duties.

The constitution of 1857 is Iowa's current constitutional governing document and to date has been amended 46 times.

PREAMBLE: *WE, THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF IOWA, grateful to the Supreme Being for the blessings hitherto enjoyed, and feeling our dependence on Him for a continuance of those blessings, do ordain and establish a free and independent government, by the name of the STATE OF IOWA, the boundaries whereof shall be as follows:*

STATE GOVERNMENT

In Iowa government, as at the national level of government, power is distributed among three branches: legislative, executive, and judicial. The legislative branch creates laws that establish policies and programs (Iowa General Assembly web site: www.legis.iowa.gov); the executive branch carries out the policies and programs contained in the laws; and the judicial branch resolves any conflicts arising from the interpretation or application of the laws. While each branch of government has its own separate responsibilities, one branch cannot function without the other two branches.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Iowa Constitution established the state's lawmaking authority to a general assembly consisting of a Senate and a House of Representatives. The Iowa General Assembly is often referred to as the "Iowa Legislature" or simply the "Legislature."

Legislative Districts

The Iowa Senate consists of 50 members. Each Senator represents a separate geographic area of the state. This area is called a district. There are 50 Senate districts in Iowa.

The Iowa House of Representatives consists of 100 members. As with the Senate, each Representative serves a separate district. There are 100 House districts in Iowa, two within each Senate district.

Every Iowan is represented by one Senator and one Representative in the General Assembly. Since the districts are all of nearly equal population, all Iowans are represented equally in the General Assembly. Senate and House district boundaries are redrawn every 10 years to reflect changes in Iowa's population as determined by the U.S. Census Bureau. This process is known as redistricting.

Legislator Terms, Election, Qualifications

All Senators and Representatives are elected by registered voters within the district. Senators are elected to four-year terms. Representatives are elected to two-year terms. Elections take place every two years, and half of the senators (those representing even-numbered districts are elected in presidential election years and those representing odd-numbered districts are elected in mid-term election years) and all of the Representatives are elected every two years.

Legislator qualifications include the following: A person must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of Iowa for at least one year, and a resident of his or her district for at least 60 days prior to election. A Senator must be at least 25 years of age by the date of office placement, and a Representative must be at least 21 years of age by the date of office placement.

Legislative Sessions: Each General Assembly consists of two years. The Iowa Constitution requires the legislative sessions of each General Assembly to convene yearly on the second Monday in January. Even though the session may be more or less days, per diem expenses extend up to 110 calendar days during the first year of the General Assembly (odd-numbered years) and up to 100 calendar days during second year of the General Assembly (even-numbered years).

Leadership

To maintain organization, the Senate and House each adopt a set of rules for their respective members and a set of joint rules for certain actions between the two chambers. Additionally, the Senate and House each elect their leaders to make decisions on day-to-day business. This leadership consists of presiding officers and the majority and minority floor leaders.

Presiding Officers: In the Senate, the presiding officer is the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate's powers include referring bills to committee, recognizing members during debate, and making procedural rulings.

In the House, the presiding officer is the Speaker of the House. The Speaker's powers include appointing members to committees, naming committee chairpersons, referring bills to committee, and making procedural rulings.

The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, each serve a two-year term (full length of the General Assembly) and are chosen by members of their respective majority parties prior to the start of the legislative session. They are elected formally by the entire membership at the start of the session.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

While the legislative branch makes the laws in Iowa, the executive branch carries out the laws. The executive branch is headed by the Governor.

Governor's Term, Qualifications

The Governor is elected to a four-year term. To be Governor, a person must be at least 30 years old by the time of election, and must have been a U.S. citizen and a resident of Iowa for at least two years before the election.

Duties of the Governor

As chief administrator of Iowa's government, the Governor is responsible for the various state departments and agencies. The Governor appoints department and agency heads and other state officials not elected by the people. The Governor appointments are generally subject to approval by the Senate.

The Governor takes final action on all bills passed by the Iowa General Assembly. The Governor has three options: sign the bill, veto the bill (or item veto an appropriations bill), or take no action. In the case of a veto, the Legislature may override the veto with two-thirds of the members of each chamber voting to reconsider and pass the bill a second time. If, during session, the Governor does not sign or veto a bill, it becomes law after three calendar days (except Sundays). Bills received by the Governor during the last three calendar days of session shall be signed or vetoed within 30 calendar days.

Each year, the Governor reports to the General Assembly on the financial condition of the state and makes recommendations on how the state's money should be spent. The Governor has the power to call a special session of the General Assembly.

Other Executive Branch Leaders

In addition to the Governor, other elected leaders of the executive branch are the Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Auditor of State, Treasurer of State, Attorney General, and Secretary of Agriculture. All are elected to four-year terms.

Lieutenant Governor

The Lieutenant Governor succeeds the Governor in case of death, impeachment, resignation, removal from office, or other disability. The Governor and Lieutenant Governor are elected as a team. The Lieutenant Governor's duties are assigned by the Governor.

Secretary of State:

The Secretary of State serves as the state commissioner of elections, maintains corporations' records, registers trademarks, commissions public notaries, and preserves original documents such as the Iowa Constitution and Iowa land patents and deeds. The Secretary of State Business Services Division is responsible for filing a wide variety of documents including Uniform Commercial Code financing statements, trademarks, business entity documents, and other statutorily required special filings. The office also supervises Iowa's 99 county auditors in the administration of Iowa's election laws and prescribes uniform election practices and procedures.

Auditor of State

The Auditor of State is required by law to annually examine the books, accounts, and records of every state department and to conduct or arrange financial audits of every local governmental body receiving state funds, including counties, cities, and school districts.

The auditor ensures that government is open and accountable to its citizens by providing independent, accurate, and timely audits of the financial operations of Iowa's state and local governments. The office also conducts reviews of government activities to help ensure they are conducted in an effective, efficient and legal manner. In addition, the office works with government officials, certified public accounting firms conducting government audits, and individual citizens.

Treasurer of State

The Treasurer of State is the keeper of the state's treasury—the depository for funds that have been collected.

The treasurer receives all revenues from state agencies and the federal government and is responsible for all consequent bank relations. The office is the investor and custodian of the state's general fund, the reserve funds, and the road use tax fund. The treasurer accounts for funds on a cash basis and balances regularly with the Iowa Department of Revenue. Also, the treasurer redeems all proper warrants of the state and coordinates state bonding activity regarding the payment of state projects such as prisons and the Iowa Communications Network.

The treasurer meets each month with the banking superintendent and the state auditor to set interest rates to be paid on public funds held in depositories. They also set guidelines and rates for the debt obligation of public bodies in Iowa. The office prepares an annual report of bonded indebtedness of state and local governments in Iowa, and provides below market financing for alternative crops and nontraditional livestock, for targeted small businesses, for the transfer of rural small businesses, for traditional livestock farmers and for value-added agriculture projects.

Attorney General

As head of the Department of Justice and chief legal officer of the state, the Attorney General represents the state and its agencies in court cases, gives legal advice to state agencies, and issues written opinions on questions of law submitted by state officials.

The Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division protects consumers from fraud and ensures fair competition in the marketplace. The division enforces laws that protect the buying public from false or misleading advertisements or sales practices. It also enforces laws that make sure consumers get information to help them make important decisions, like credit disclosure laws that help consumers compare loan offers.

The office also assists in fighting crime, alongside Iowa law enforcement officers and county attorneys. The office also monitors the criminal justice system and recommends changes in state law or policy as they are needed.

The Farm Division serves as the primary legal counsel for nearly all bureaus of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, including all thirteen administrative bureaus, five regulatory bureaus, five laboratory bureaus, and the Iowa Agricultural Development Authority. Also, the division represents the interests of Iowa farmers in litigation in state and federal courts and works with other state attorneys general in multi-state investigations and litigation.

Secretary of Agriculture

The Secretary of Agriculture heads the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, which the Iowa Legislature established in 1923 to encourage, promote, and advance the interests of agriculture and related businesses.

The Department of Agriculture monitors the changing global conditions in agriculture. They also promote Iowa's interests in the global market economy by increasing Iowa's agricultural market share, both domestic and foreign, and remove unnecessary barriers to agricultural trade.

The department develops and encourages agricultural education and new avenues for Iowa producers to market their products, increasing the independent farmers' impact on the market. The department strives to add value to Iowa agriculture by developing new products, which create a link for Iowa farmers with consumer-ready markets. The department also works to preserve Iowa's soil and improve water quality and protects consumers and producers by assuring the quality of Iowa agricultural products and animal health.

JUDICIAL BRANCH

While the legislative branch of government makes the laws and the executive branch carries out the laws, it is the judicial branch that interprets the laws and settles conflicts involving the laws. In Iowa, the laws are interpreted by a court system consisting of two levels: district (trial) courts and appellate courts. For judicial administrative purposes, Iowa is divided into eight districts, with trials held in each judicial district.

District (Trial) Courts

Civil and criminal cases originate in trial courts. The Iowa District Court has general jurisdiction of all civil, criminal, juvenile, and probate matters in the state. The Iowa District Court is composed of different kinds of judicial officers with varying amounts of jurisdiction: Judicial Magistrates, Associate Juvenile Judges, Associate Probate Judges, District Associate Judges, and District Court Judges. A civil case arises when one party sues another for damages or to stop or

begin some action. A criminal case results when the Government (city, county, or state) charges a person with a crime.

Appellate Courts

Appellate courts review cases appealed from the trial courts, and they also rule on the constitutionality of laws passed by the Legislature and actions taken by the executive branch.

There are two appellate courts in Iowa: the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals. All appeals are sent to the Iowa Supreme Court. However, the Supreme Court may transfer a case to the Iowa Court of Appeals for consideration.

The Supreme Court

The Iowa Supreme Court, consisting of seven justices, is the highest court of the state. The Supreme Court has the power to review criminal and civil cases decided at the trial court level. The court may also review decisions of the Iowa Court of Appeals.

The Justices of the Iowa Supreme Court are appointed by the Governor from a list of three nominees submitted by the State Judicial Nominating Commission. Supreme Court Justices serve eight-year terms.

In addition to deciding cases, the Iowa Supreme Court is responsible for licensing and disciplining attorneys, promulgating rules of procedure and practice used throughout the state courts, and overseeing the operation of the entire state court system.

Court of Appeals

Appellate courts handle appeals—requests from litigants for a trial court decision to be heard by a higher court. Nine judges form the Court of Appeals. All appellate judges are appointed by the Governor from a slate of nominees selected by the State Judicial Nominating Commission. Appellate court judges serve six-year terms.

U.S. CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

The legislative branch of the United States government makes laws for our nation and raises and distributes money to run the United States government. The most evident part of the legislative branch is the United States Congress. Congress is divided into two parts, called houses. The two parts are the Senate and the House of Representatives. Congress is referred to as a bicameral body because it is made up of two houses. The Latin roots of the word bicameral, "bi" and "cameral," mean two chambers or rooms.

Members of the Senate are called Senators and members of the House of Representatives are called Representatives. Senators and representatives serving in these two bodies are sometimes referred to as congressmen, or women, and sometimes as legislators because their business is to legislate or make laws. The role of the legislative branch is defined in the United States Constitution.

Each state elects people to represent them in the United States Congress in Washington, DC. The citizens of each state elect two senators to represent them in the Senate. They also elect representatives to represent them in the House of Representatives. The number of representatives each state sends to the House of Representatives is not a specific number like the Senate, but is based on the population of the state. The people, that are elected to represent the state's citizens in the United States Congress, are referred to as the congressional delegation.

There are 100 senators in the U.S. Senate. Each is elected to a term, in the Senate, of six years. There are 435 representatives in the U.S. House of Representatives. Each is elected to a term, in the "House," of two years.

The citizens of Iowa elect two people, like every other state, to represent them in the Senate and 5 people, based on Iowa's current population in the most recent federal census, to represent them in the House of Representatives.

STATE SEAL



Creating the Great Seal of Iowa was one of the initial acts of Iowa's first Legislature in 1847.

The state seal is two-inches in diameter and pictures a citizen soldier standing in a wheat field, surrounded by farming and industrial tools. The Mississippi River is in the background, and an eagle flies above, holding in its beak a scroll bearing the state motto (*Our liberties we prize, and our rights we will maintain*). The eagle with streamers is also featured on Iowa's state flag:

STATE CAPITAL (Des Moines, Iowa)

The Iowa State Capitol in Des Moines, signifies the prodigious spirit of Iowa. Built between 1871 and 1886, this magnificent building represents both inside and out, one of the nation's finest examples of 19th century architecture.

Inside, the building features an array of majesty including many different types and colors of marble, works of art, fixtures and carvings in both wood and stone. One of the most commanding features of the building is the towering dome.



The dome, constructed of steel and brick, is externally gilded with 23-karat gold leaf. A belvedere on top of the large dome features a golden lantern at the top. In addition, four smaller

golden lanterns are each attached to copper-covered domes at every corner of the building. These four domes are decorated with vertical lines of intermittent gold, giving each a braided look. The state capitol is truly an impressive Iowa landmark. Each year the state capitol is visited not only by Iowans, but by people from all over the world. The capitol's golden dome can be seen for miles, symbolizing representative government for the citizens of the state.

Capitol Facts:

- Year completed: 1886
- Original cost: \$2,873,294.59
- Dimensions: 363 ft. 8 in. from north to south; 246 ft. 11 in. from east to west
- Number of steps from the second floor to the dome: 298
- Number of different types of marble used in the interior: 29
- Weight of each brass chandelier in the Senate Chamber: 500 lbs.
- Number of crystals in each chandelier in the House Chamber: 5,600
- Number of fireplaces in the building: 24

STATE MOTTO

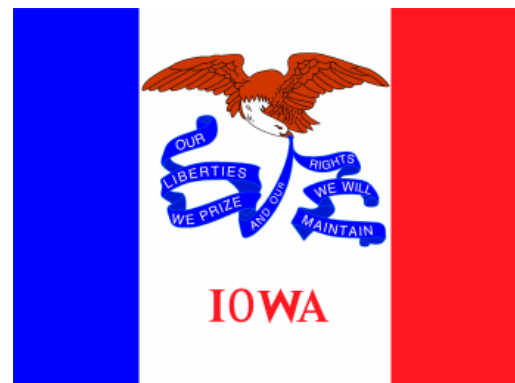
“Our liberties we prize and our rights we will maintain”

The state motto of Iowa was the work of a three-man Senate committee and was incorporated into the design of the Iowa state seal at their suggestion. The motto (*Our liberties we prize and our rights we will maintain*) also appears on the Iowa state flag.

STATE FLAG

Iowa was almost 75 years old before the state banner was adopted by the Legislature in 1921. With memory of the Civil War still fresh in their minds, Iowans had not adopted a state banner because they felt a national banner was the only one needed.

Iowa's flag was designed by the state's Daughters of the American Revolution in response to Iowa national Guardsmen stationed at the Mexican border during WWI that requested an emblem of Iowa to represent their unit.



The flag consists of three vertical stripes: the blue stripe stands for loyalty, justice and truth; the white stripe for purity; and the red stripe for courage. On the white center an eagle carries streamers in its beak which are inscribed with the state's motto: "Our liberties we prize and our rights we will maintain." The word IOWA is in red below the streamers. The eagle carrying streamers also appears on Iowa's state seal.

STATE NICKNAMES

The Hawkeye State

This popular nickname for the state of Iowa is said to have come from the scout, Hawkeye, in James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* published in 1826. According to the Iowa State web site, "Two Iowa promoters from Burlington are believed to have popularized the name." The nickname was given approval by "territorial officials" in 1838, twelve years after the book was published and eight years before Iowa became a state.

The two men responsible for the promotion of this nickname are thought to be Judge David Rorer of Burlington and the newspaper publisher, James G. Edwards of Fort Madison and, later, Burlington. Burlington had been established in 1833 after the Black Hawk War of 1832. Mr. Edwards changed the name of his Burlington newspaper, *The Iowa Patriot*, to *The Hawk-Eye and Iowa Patriot* in tribute to his friend Chief Black Hawk. Judge Rorer is said to have suggested "The Hawkeye State" after finding the name in *The Last of the Mohicans* while Mr. Edwards proposed the nickname "Hawk-eyes" in 1838 to "...rescue from oblivion [sic] a memento [sic], at least of the name of the old chief," Black Hawk.

The Corn State

This nickname pays tribute to Iowa's corn crop. Iowa leads the country in the production of corn. Iowa has also been called the "Land Where the Tall Corn Grows," in tribute.

Land of the Rolling Prairie

Iowa has been referred to as the "Land of the Rolling Prairie" because of the vast rolling prairies that covered the state.

STATE BIRD



The eastern goldfinch, adopted by the 1933 Iowa Legislature and recorded as *Spinus tristis tristia*, is now referred to as the American goldfinch and has been classified as *Carduelis tristis*.

Also called American goldfinch or wild canary, the eastern goldfinch is found throughout Iowa and often stays through the winter months. The diet of the eastern Goldfinch consists mainly of seeds from dandelions, sunflowers, ragweed, and evening primrose.

The male goldfinch has a bright yellow body with black wings and tail, and black on top of his head.

The female's plumage is more muted with an olive-yellow body and dark brown tail and wings (the male goldfinch also displays this same dull plumage in the winter months).

Below, you will find 15 general questions to help review what you have learned. Use the following page(s) for documenting your answers. Older students may choose to write a State Report as well.

Review Questions:

1. List the states and/or bodies of water that border this state.
2. What was the date of statehood?
3. What is the state capital?
4. What is the state motto?
5. Name at least one state nickname.
6. Describe the state flag.
7. What is the state bird?
8. What is the state flower?
9. List at least 5 other state symbols.
10. Describe this state's government.
11. Name the major imports and exports for this state.
12. Describe the weather and climate in this state.
13. List at least 5 famous people from this state.
14. Describe at least 5 significant events in this state's history.
15. What other interesting information have you learned about this state?

Answers to Review Questions:

