

Trail Guide to U.S. Geography

A Teacher's Manual
With Daily Geography Drills

Cindy Wiggers

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To my son, Alex, who is ever so diligent to bring to any project I embark upon, excellence and creative qualities. Working with you is one of the highlights of my career. Thank you for your faithfulness.

I am grateful for faithful prayers and valuable input from Debbie Strayer. Her insight in developing learning skills helped make the revised edition even more user-friendly.

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What's New in the Second Edition

Trail Guide to U.S. Geography was originally written in 2003 and has generally been updated prior to each reprint. Updates included correction of any errors, rewording for clarity, and changes to coincide with adaptations that occurred with the recommended almanac or atlas reprints. However, the 2015 version includes sufficient changes, improvements, and new required atlas to establish it as a second edition.

In this second edition I have adapted the grade levels associated with the trail markings to represent, elementary, middle school, and high school grades. Students following the high school trail will no longer need a separate additional almanac, therefore all levels use the *Desk Atlas of the United States* to find answers to the daily atlas drills.

This atlas was designed for use with the *Trail Guide to U.S. Geography* and provides interesting features and information about each state.

Features of the *Desk Atlas of the United States* include:

- Political, physical, and thematic maps of the U.S.
- Washington, D.C., section
- State maps with interstate highways marked
- Geographical terms
- An almanac section

Other changes to the Second Edition of *Trail Guide to U.S. Geography* are:

- New Trail Blazing assignments
- New QuickStart Section to get started before reading through all the instructions
- New questions for students to learn to calculate mileage using the map scale
- Elimination of calculation type of questions using data from an almanac
- Instructions for using the optional Student Notebook Pages
- Integration of history using *Profiles from History* biography Trail Blazing assignments

The Student Notebook Pages companion resource has also been updated to work with the second edition changes. Be sure to match copyright dates for these two products. Older versions of the Student Notebook pages will not match up to this second edition 2015 *Trail Guide to U.S. Geography* text.

It is my sincerest desire that these changes serve to improve upon the vision and concepts developed a decade ago when I first wrote this book and that its effect is an even more user-friendly educational tool.

—Cindy Wiggers

INTRODUCTION

This book is one of a series of three Geography Trail Guides, all written with the busy teacher in mind.

Each Geography Trail Guide is flexible, provides progressive skill development for students in third grade and up, and makes learning geography fun and memorable. With a little guidance the first two or three weeks, most students will work independently the remainder of the year.

The Geography Trail Guides are designed to encourage a student notebooking approach to learning. By the end of the year students will have compiled a thorough, colorful record of their geography journey that they will be proud to keep and show their own children in years to come.

Define Your Objectives

There are a variety of ways to use this three-part manual. Determine your goals for teaching geography, and place students on the trail that meets your objectives. These three sections are explained in the following pages.

- *GEOGRAPHY TRAILS* – five-minute atlas drills
- *POINTS OF INTEREST* – mapping, research, and projects
- *GEOGRAPHY THROUGH LITERATURE* – Lewis and Clark Expedition

Take a hike on the Geography Trails by following one of three trail markers and having students answer questions using a U.S. atlas. You'll find the answer key for all three trails starting on page 133. Step off the trail for Points of Interest where students make their own maps and blaze a trail with a wide assortment of hands-on activities and research projects. For added interest students can call or write state tourism departments for maps, brochures, and state information. Tourism department addresses and toll-free numbers can be found in any almanac or in *Cantering the Country*, a literature-based U.S. geography unit study curriculum.

Wrap up the year on an adventure with the Lewis and Clark Expedition by reading *The Captain's Dog: My Journey with the Lewis and Clark Tribe*. This unit study provides mapping, vocabulary, and additional activity choices combining literature with U.S. geography. You might consider using the Lewis and Clark unit as interesting summer reading project.

If you wish to simply introduce some geography this year, or to lay a foundation for a future in-depth study of U.S. geography, or if your objective is to reinforce and review the topic, the five-minute atlas drills will meet your goal. You may opt to just assign mapping this year. Or if you purchased this course to teach a thorough U.S. geography course or to inspire students to learn about the states, geographical features, and more, plan to incorporate all three parts into your lesson plans.

However you use *Trail Guide to U.S. Geography*, from the *GEOGRAPHY TRAILS* daily atlas drills to the *POINTS OF INTEREST* and the *GEOGRAPHY THROUGH LITERATURE* unit, your students are sure to enjoy a memorable geography experience.

—Bon Voyage!

Additional Note:

How to teach geography is covered in detail in *The Ultimate Geography and Timeline Guide*. If you need more direction regarding the subject of geography, if you want more mapping assignments, or if you plan to incorporate more U.S. history studies with geography, get a copy of this book. Besides being a basic teacher refresher course, it includes numerous reproducible notebook pages, literature, science, and history units, and a whole section on using timelines.

QUICKSTART

This QuickStart section is an overview of the instructions that follow. I recommend you read all the instructions when you get the chance, but you can get started before that by reading these two pages.

There are three kinds of assignments:

• **Geography Trails** (daily atlas drills) • **Points of Interest Mapping** • **Points of Interest Trail Blazing**

The Trail Blazing section provides twenty or more assignment choices each week for your students. Copy the handy Student Reference Sheet from page 121 and keep it in the front of the notebook for convenience.

This curriculum guide can be used in different ways according to your personal objectives. If you want to spend one day a week studying geography, you might consider doing the Geography Trails (atlas drills) and Mapping (outline map activities) only. Those who plan on spending more than one day will add assignments from the Trail Blazing section depending upon how many days you have set aside.

The Trail Blazing section provides a dozen or more assignment choices each week. In addition there are a number of projects that can be done for each state or region. These are listed on a handy Student Reference Sheet on page 121. Copy it to keep in the front of the Geography Notebook for convenience.

Selecting Levels

Grade levels are provided as a general guideline and are used primarily for the Geography Trails (atlas drills) and Mapping sections. If your student has had little or no experience with studying geography or with reading an atlas, you might want to use the lower level in the range given. Also consider reading level and thinking skills. With all levels, select Trail Blazing assignments with your student's abilities and interests in mind. Students will generally complete the Trail Blazing assignments at their intellectual level, so the Trail Blazing section is not marked by level icons, except for a few High School level choices.

Elementary, 3rd-5th grades

The Elementary level is suitable for most third and fourth graders and for fifth graders who need more experience using an atlas. You may want to consider *Cantering the Country* for students in grades four and under who are struggling readers. It uses a different approach, and can be a better choice for some students. For families or groups with multiple ages, combine *Cantering the Country* for younger students with *Trail Guide to U.S. Geography* for older students who have more solid research and reading skills. Everybody will study the same states together, each in a method more suitable to his current learning abilities.

Be flexible with how your students report what they have learned from Trail Blazing assignments. You may allow a child to give you an oral report if writing is difficult. Or you might want to combine geography with writing by selecting an assignment once a month or so that requires writing a summary.

Middle School, 6th-8th grades

Best for 6th-8th graders. Fifth graders who are skilled with using an atlas may prefer this level.

High School, 9th-12th grades

This level uses the almanac and thematic maps sections of the atlas, in addition to the general state sections, for answering Geography Trails questions.

Geography Trails Hints: Please note the purpose is to gain experience using the atlas, not for memorizing facts. The Answer Key starts on page 133.

Students should create their own Geography Notebook and add to it weekly through the year. For information about making a notebook, see page 9. Also see the Resource List on page 17 for other tools that are needed for use with *Trail Guide to U.S. Geography*.

QUICKSTART

Weekly QuickStart Preparation

Using the Optional *Trail Guide to U.S. Geography Student Notebook Digital Files*

I selected two Trail Blazing assignments for each week, one for each state, and created a Geography Notebook template for those two. If you are using the Student Notebook digital files, these templates are located on the disk or digital file by level and week number. You do not have to assign those two. Feel free to select, or allow your student to select, any two or three assignments or activities for the week. If you choose different activities you can look for a generic template in the appendix section of the digital files for your student to use to report what he has learned.

1. Select two or three Trail Blazing assignments for the week. Some assignments will not take long, so feel free to add another assignment if time allows. High School students may need to do more than three.
2. Print pages for the week from the disk or digital file.
 - Appropriate Geography Notebook pages associated with your selections
 - Geography Trails page
 - Map(s)

Without the Digital Files

Select two or three Trail Blazing assignments for the week. Some assignments will not take long, so feel free to add another assignment if time allows. High School students may need to do more than three. If you are not using the printable files students will simply use lined notebook paper. They can read their Geography Trails questions from this Teacher's Manual, or you can write them out if you wish. Print or copy the maps for the states covered each week. See the Resource List for outline maps.

General Lesson Plan

Day 1

Geography Trails – Answer two questions using the atlas.

Points of Interest – Use outline maps and the atlas as reference to complete the mapping assignments.

Days 2–4

Geography Trails – Answer two questions using the atlas.

Points of Interest – Trail Blazing assignments. An assignment can take one to three days to complete.

Day 5

Complete Trail Blazing assignments and make a presentation to the family.

See the Sample Schedule on page 18 for other lesson plan options.

INSTRUCTIONS

Regions

This course addresses state studies by dividing them into seven geographical regions. According to Webster’s dictionary a region is a “large and indefinite part of the surface of the earth.” Therefore, the U.S. can be divided in a variety of ways. For the purpose of this study the following regions and the states comprising those regions are:



New England	Maine Massachusetts	New Hampshire Vermont	Connecticut Rhode Island
Mid-Atlantic	New York New Jersey	Pennsylvania West Virginia	Maryland Delaware
Southern	North Carolina Virginia Alabama Mississippi	Kentucky Tennessee Arkansas Louisiana	South Carolina Georgia Florida
Midwest	Ohio Michigan Iowa Missouri	Indiana Illinois North Dakota South Dakota	Wisconsin Minnesota Nebraska Kansas
Southwest	Oklahoma Arizona	New Mexico	Texas
Rocky Mountain	Montana Idaho	Wyoming Colorado	Utah Nevada
Pacific Coast	Washington Oregon	California Hawaii	Alaska

INSTRUCTIONS

Making a State Notebook

This curriculum manual is based upon a student notebook method of study. Each week students add to their Geography Notebook, developing a priceless record of their U.S. geography study for the year. A few important helpful hints to share with students to establish this notebook follow:

- Use your best penmanship.
- Add to the notebook each week.
- Include drawings, reports, pictures, maps, charts, and reproducible sheets from the appendix.
- Keep the notebook in a safe place where it will not be misplaced or damaged.
- Show your notebook to others, look at the notebooks of others, and tell them how nice their notebooks are. Look at other books for inspiration. Let your notebook provide others with good ideas.
- Be creative. Your notebook will reflect your interests and abilities.

Organizing the Geography Notebook

Set up a three-ring binder with the following eight sections:

- New England
- Mid-Atlantic
- Southern
- Midwest
- Southwest
- Rocky Mountain
- Pacific Coast
- Geography Terms

You may decide to add other sections, such as one for Lewis and Clark, later.

Regional Divisions in the Geography Notebook

Place two maps in the front of each regional section of the Geography Notebook:

1. Outline map of the U.S. with the region shaded (This map shows the region in context.)

Make seven copies of the U.S. outline map, one for each of the seven regions. Label each map in the margin with the name of the region. Shade the appropriate states that make up the region.

2. Outline map of the region itself

Make one copy of the outline map of each of the seven regions from *Uncle Josh's Outline Map Book* or CD-ROM (or print from the Student Notebook digital files – see the next section for information on this optional supplemental resource). Shade the region map with the physical features, using the physical map of the United States in the atlas as a reference. Label each state.

Completed mapping assignments, reports, and projects will be inserted into the correct region of the notebook behind these two maps.

Core Projects

There are four core projects for the Geography Notebook:

- States of the Union
- Signature State
- State Your Questions
- Face the Facts (completed for the region)

You can use the same project for each state or mix them up for variety. If your students include at least one of these three assignments for each state, or the “Face the Facts” project for each region, in their notebooks, they will have the foundational data for all fifty states by the end of the year. Select any other projects according to interest, abilities, and time available, and place them in the notebook in the appropriate region section.

These are guidelines for organizing the notebook. Be flexible and feel free to use your own ideas. There's probably no wrong way to put it together. You may decide to include more or less material. If you let the students design their own notebooks with your guidance, they will take ownership and may even do a better job than you ever expected. Let the notebooks serve to reflect each student's character and personality.

Trail Guide to U.S. Geography Student Notebook Digital Files Supplement

Your students can create their own geography notebook from the instructions provided, reproducible maps, and ruled school paper. Or you may wish to use the optional *Trail Guide to U.S. Geography* Student Notebook mentioned

INSTRUCTIONS

in the QuickStart section. The Student Notebook is available online as a digital download or on a CD-ROM. These PDF files are printable notebook pages that form the framework for the Geography Notebook and include:

- Weekly Geography Trails questions with a space to place the answer
- Weekly Mapping assignment lists
- Outline maps needed for each week
- Custom templates for two Trail Blazing projects each week
- Generic templates for completing nearly any other Trail Blazing project


The two weekly Trail Blazing templates correspond to two Trail Blazing assignments found in each week. There are many other choices, so if you did not choose those same two, simply select from the many generic templates a page that would be appropriate for your student to record what was learned from completing the assignment. Print only one or two weeks at a time after you have selected the Trail Blazing assignments. If you print the whole file at once you will have many unused pages at the end of the year.

The Student Notebook CD-ROM (or digital download) is an optional resource designed to help simplify creating the Geography Notebook. It can save you time and add convenience. Geography Trails questions are provided separately for each level, and all outline maps used each week are included. The notebook pages are designed as a place for students to put what they have learned from the Trail Blazing assignments. The actual assignments are found in this teacher's manual and are not on the printable student pages.

Geography Trails Instructions

Take your students on a hike down the *GEOGRAPHY TRAILS* section of this book, where they complete daily geography drills in about five minutes. Using the *Desk Atlas of the United States*, you will provide them an opportunity to develop and improve research skills, think logically, and build a geography foundation through daily geoMoments.


Following one of the three *GEOGRAPHY TRAILS* markers, students answer two questions per day, four days a week. The flexibility of the Trail Guide series allows you to take one student through the book for three years or up to three levels of students all at the same time in one year. These three trails are marked according to skill development and topics, not necessarily by age or grade. Take Elementary students down the first trail. Some Elementary level students may not be ready to answer questions by themselves, so plan to do them together. Show them how to find the answers in their atlas.

 Questions on the Elementary trail cover the following topics:

Capitals	Boundaries
Location	Rivers, oceans, gulfs, bays
Mountains	Postal abbreviations
Landforms	State trees
State birds	Cardinal directions (north, east, south, and west)

Please note: Levels are based more on thinking ability and experience in using an atlas rather than age. Grade levels are approximate:

Elementary: grades 3-5
Middle School: grades 6-8
High School: grades 9-12

 Questions on the Middle School trail address some of the topics above, plus:

Area	Time zones (time zone map provided in appendix)
Places	Lakes and other places with water
National parks	Intermediate directions (NE, NW, SE, and SW)
Cities	Measuring mileage

 Students who follow the High School trail address these additional topics:

Agriculture and industry	Economy	State comparisons
Population	Landforms	Climate and weather

INSTRUCTIONS

Calculating Mileage

A number of questions for the High School and Middle School levels make use of the mileage scale in the map legend. Calculating mileage is pretty simple once you have given your students these basic instructions.

1. Use the straight edge of a small piece of paper or index card. Line up the starting point and ending point for the distance you are measuring to the edge of the paper.
2. Make a short mark on the paper corresponding with these two points.
3. Move the paper to the distance scale in the map legend and line the starting point on the paper with zero on the scale.
4. If the distance you are measuring is longer than the scale, mark off with longer lines the full distance on the scale and label that line with the distance. Move the paper, lining up the long mark to the zero point on the scale, and continue to measure until you have the full distance.

If you are measuring on a curved line, try to adjust your paper to turn with the curves. This method will give you a number that is fairly close to the accurate distance. In checking with the answer key, your student may not have the exact answer. Please do give full credit if the answer is close, perhaps within 10-30 miles depending upon how long a distance they are measuring.

Answer Key

The Answer Key for each trail starts on page 133. All efforts have been made to ensure accuracy. Please report any errors to the publisher, and corrections will be made upon the next printing.

Points of Interest Instructions

This section, divided by **Mapping** and **Trail Blazing**, provides weekly hands-on assignments and opportunities for research and reporting. There are more projects than any one student could possibly complete during the week, so don't even think about making your students do them all! Be flexible. Select assignments that fit well with your students' interest and learning styles, or let them choose for themselves. Points of Interest can be used in a variety of ways:

1. Cover the basics of two states each week.
2. Choose one of the two states to study each week.
3. Divide your students into two groups, each studying a different state. Share information in a weekly oral show-and-tell type of presentation.
4. Study one state a week in depth and stretch the U.S. geography course over two years.

Refer to the sample schedules on page 18 for basic weekly lesson plan guidelines.

Mapping

Mapping assignments are a list of items students will draw or label on outline maps. The reproducible maps in *Uncle Josh's Outline Map Book* or CD-ROM are perfect to use for these assignments. You may prefer to use the printable Student Notebook CD-ROM or digital download created to go with this course. If so, you will not need additional maps as they are included in the printable files.

Students will use the same atlas to fill in their outline maps as they use to answer the *GEOGRAPHY TRAILS* questions. Mapping assignments are separated by levels; however, some students may want to do more. If so, please let them! Instruct them to use a star or to underline state capitals. All students who have had little to no experience labeling outline maps will need help the first week or two. Make sure they can "see" the information on the atlas that goes on their outline map. Help them transfer the data and give praise and encouragement freely. For basic guidelines on using maps, read Chapter 3 in *The Ultimate Geography and Timeline Guide*.

INSTRUCTIONS

Trail Blazing

The assignments choices in this section span all levels. Select projects that meet the interests and thinking skills of your students. Trail markings provided for a handful of High School level assignments are included to assist you to know they are too advanced for Elementary level students.

Profiles from History

To integrate U.S. history, students can learn about significant people and their impact upon the development of the United States by reading biographies in *Profiles from History*. This three-volume series is referenced near the beginning of about half of the Trail Blazing sections focusing on individuals from the state or those who impacted the state. The *Profiles from History* series also provides thought-provoking activities such as crosswords and word searches, timelines and timeline figures, discussion questions, and more. These activities serve as a review to reinforce learning.

If you choose to include history with this geography course, assign the biographies when they are given and allow extra time for students to enjoy doing the activities associated with the reading. In addition, you may want to include the timeline activity provided toward the bottom of each Trail Blazing section. This will aid in laying a foundation for understanding our nation's rich history.

Geography Terms

Nestled in the Trail Blazing section weekly is a shaded box identifying two geography terms to define – one for each state that week. Include these definitions in a geography terms section in the student notebook. Students who enjoy drawing may like creating an Illustrated Geography Dictionary. Use the Illustrated Geography Dictionary template in the appendix for this project. Students can use the glossary of geography terms in the back of the atlas for writing definitions.

An especially useful visual aid for recognizing geography terms is the Geographical Terms Chart. It's a color, illustrated picture of geographical terms with physical features labeled right on the illustration. In addition, over 100 terms are defined on the back side. [You can obtain this item from GeoMatters.]

Projects

Projects make learning fascinating and memorable. Instructions for a variety of interesting regional and state assignments follow. These activities are listed on the Student Reference Sheet on page 121. Copy page 121 and place it in the front of the Geography Notebook for handy reference. Remember, do not compel students to do ALL projects on ALL states.

Allowing students to choose their own activities helps foster a positive attitude about doing the work. Some tasks are better suited to the region, some are best completed for a state, and some are appropriate for either. The project instructions that follow are divided by region and state and are written directly to the student.

Regional Project Instructions

On the first week of each new region, select from the list of regional activities for that region. Place a U.S. map with the region shaded and an outline map of the region marked with its physical features as the first two pages of each section of your Geography Notebook. Label each state.

Climate

Write a paragraph describing the climate and seasons of the region. Shade an outline map of the region according to temperature or rainfall in the summer and in the winter, or use it to depict the weather forecast on any given day. Include it after your paragraph and place in the Geography Notebook. Climate information can be found on the climate thematic maps towards the front of the atlas, in many of the state summaries, and through an online search.

INSTRUCTIONS

Crossword Puzzle

Make a crossword puzzle using a grid. Give clues by the region or the state for words that run across and down. Use places, people, and terms of importance to each state or region as answers. Be sure to number the first box of each word and match the number with the across or down clue. Shade all unused boxes. Copy the puzzle to share with others. Put a completed crossword puzzle in your Geography Notebook according to region and keep an unused copy in the back of that region.

Flashcards

Make a set of flashcards for each region. On one side of an index card draw an outline of the shape of the state. Place a dot or star on the location of the capital. On the back of the card write the name of the state and its capital. Show the card with the drawing facing out. Players name the state or capital.

Option: To aid in remembering other state symbols, list the state's nickname, motto, flower, tree, and bird below the name of the state and capital. Play different rounds naming various topics.

Face the Facts

Make the chart of facts for each region as you study them. Copy the template from the appendix. Place the names of the states in the first column. In the top row place the kind of facts you want to record. Now start filling in the chart. Below is a sample of the Southwest region and population to help you see how to set it up. Use the atlas, student reference sheet, almanac or Internet search.

If you are skilled with using a spreadsheet on the computer you may prefer to make your own chart. A computer-generated spreadsheet will allow you to sort the data to list the states in order by population or area or whatever column you select to sort. Use your thinking skills by comparing information on the charts. It is fascinating what conclusions can be drawn from studying the finished chart. What state has the highest population? Which has the most land area? Are the largest states also the most populated? You can also use this kind of chart to memorize state facts.

Southwest	Area	Population	Population Density
Oklahoma	68,667	3,900,000	57
Texas	261,797	26,400,000	101
New Mexico	121,356	2,100,000	17
Arizona	113,909	6,600,000	58

Salt Dough Map

Make a salt dough map of the region (or the state). Here is a simple recipe.

Ingredients:

2 parts flour
1 part salt
1 part water

Directions:

Mix ingredients together.
If crumbly, add a little more water.

This mixture yields salt dough that can be used to make three-dimensional maps. Use an outline map as your guide. Tape it on the bottom of a piece of cardboard or on a cardboard soda can case. Pile the salt dough on the map, spreading it out to the edges of the land area shown on the map. The dough should be thicker for mountainous regions and lower at valleys and rivers. Use the physical map as a reference to create the terrain. Use a toothpick or other such tool to make crevices or physical detail. Let dry overnight (or a couple of days – depending upon how thick the map is). Paint with tempera paints when map is done.

INSTRUCTIONS

State Project Instructions

States of the Union

Make copies of the “States of the Union” sheet from the appendix. Complete these information sheets weekly for each state or for the states of your choice. Write the name of the state on the line provided and the two-letter post office abbreviation on the line below. Using the U.S. atlas or USA PlaceMap™, find the state facts* and record them in the appropriate place on the sheet. Space is provided for drawings, printouts, or stickers of the state bird, tree, and flower. Shade in the state on the U.S. map in the upper corner of the sheet. State nicknames are included on the Student Reference Sheet.

You can use this sheet for every state and place them together in one report folder to make a “States of the Union” booklet or use it in your Geography Notebook filed according to region.

State Your Questions

Copy the “State Your Question” sheet associated with your trail marker found in the appendix. Answer the questions as you study each state. Shade in the state on the U.S. map in the upper corner of the sheet. Place it in your Geography Notebook according to region.

Word Search

Make your own word search using a grid. First make a list of the names of places, famous people, historical events, animals, plants, foods, or other topics related to the state or region you are studying. Write the letters in each cell of the grid, across, down, diagonally, and in reverse. Share letters from one word with another where they cross in the grid. Fill in the remaining boxes with random letters. Make copies to share. Place both a completed word search and an unused copy in your Geography Notebook by region.

Flags

Draw a picture of the state flag or use flag stickers. Include information on what the colors and symbols mean.

Travel Brochure

Make a travel brochure advertising the beauty, landmarks, and historical sites of the state. Include drawings, pictures, descriptions, and more. Use an 8 ½” x 11” sheet of paper folded into thirds. Or use an 8 ½” x 14” sheet folded into fourths. Make copies to share with others. Find information from the state tourism department, Chambers of Commerce, Internet search, or any of your favorite resources.

Go Team Go!

Use one of the reproducible forms in the appendix (according to your level). Learn about the places where your favorite sports teams play their home games. Using an almanac, Internet, encyclopedia, or library books, answer the questions on the sheet. Include a drawing or picture of the team logo. Place in your Geography Notebook.

Timeline

Using the timeline template in the appendix, make a history timeline of each state. Put dates along the line and write events in the spaces. For an interesting timeline include pictures and color.

Cook a Meal

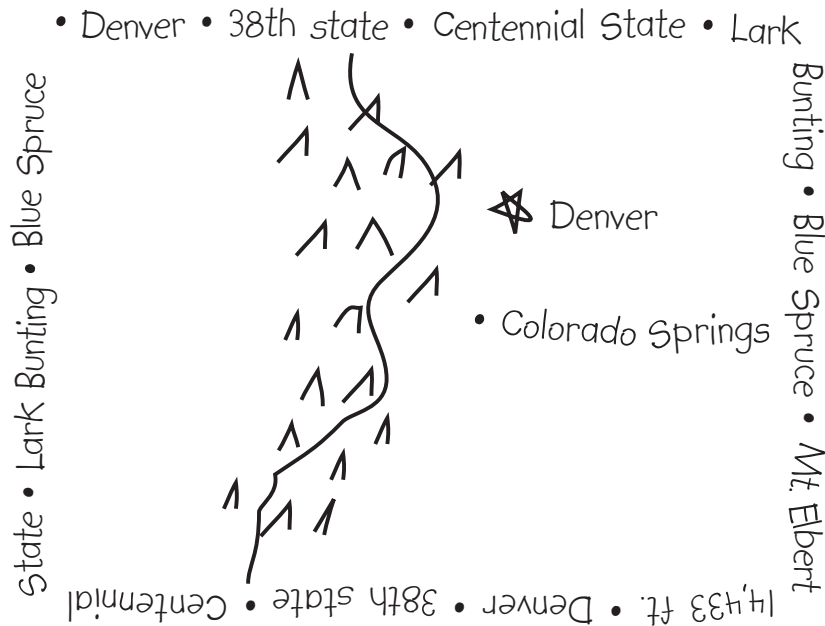
Everyone loves to eat! Prepare and eat food typical of the state you are studying or with ingredients grown in the state. *Eat Your Way Through the USA*, a cookbook by Loreé Pettit, includes delicious recipes for a full meal from each state and additional fascinating food facts.

*State facts are not necessarily the same with every resource. Areas may or may not include bodies of water, populations and population densities change, etc. This is not about memorizing but learning how to find answers with a variety of resources and making comparisons from state to state.

INSTRUCTIONS

Signature State

Make your own outline map of a state by tracing one from an outline map. Here's a twist on it, though - instead of drawing a line around the paper in the shape of the state, write the name of the state around the paper in the shape of the state. Options: write the name of the state • capital • nickname • separated by dots or stars or hearts or whatever may represent the state. Draw and shade the physical features. Add a city or two, a national park, or any other information that interests you. Here is an example of Colorado:



Option:

Fill in the map with a collage of pictures of state symbols, places, and landmarks. Get pictures from travel brochures, magazines, and books. Or copy pictures from books and color with colored pencils. Be creative. Place the images within the signature border of the state and secure with glue stick. Cover entire map with clear contact paper, three-hole-punch the page, and place in your notebook.

Collect Postcards

Collect postcards from each state of focus. Find where the topic of the postcard is located and mark it on a map of the United States. Look for postcard sets with original watercolor art featured in the *Desk Atlas of the United States*, published by GeoMatters. This set is also useful as state flashcards. Optional activity: create your own postcards featuring a place of interest for each state. Copy and send to friends or family members.

Economy and Industry

Write a paragraph or two about how the agriculture, climate, and natural resources are related to one other and how they affect the state's economy. Include an outline map of the state with symbols that show locations of agriculture, products, and industry. This type of assignment would be too difficult for the Elementary level and is marked with the High School symbol as it makes use of deeper thinking skills.

Profiles from History

To integrate history with your geography study select assignments from *Profiles from History*. These include biographies of significant people and interesting activities such as word searches, crosswords, and using timeline figures.

Geography Through Art

It is fascinating to include art with any study of geography. If you enjoy art or like to learn by doing crafts and hands-on activities, then you will enjoy the lessons in *Geography Through Art*. Look for art projects from this book listed on the bottom of the appropriate Points of Interest pages.

INSTRUCTIONS

Memorizing States and Capitals

Learn the states and capitals of the region during the 2-6 weeks you study each region, and continue to review them through the year. Some fun ways to do this are by making and using flashcards, playing Concentration (a memory game), and listening to geography songs.

Flashcards

See instructions for making flashcards on page 14.

Concentration

Make your own set of Concentration cards by cutting an index card in half. Place the name of a state on one card and the name of its capital on the other half. Shuffle the cards and place cards with words side down in rows on a table. The first player will turn up two cards. If the cards are a matching set of state and capital, the player keeps the cards and goes again. If the cards do not match, turn the cards back down, and the next player takes a turn. When there are no cards left, the game is over. The player with the most cards wins. But really everyone wins if the game helps you learn the states and capitals!

Option: Add state motto, bird, flower, nickname, etc., to the card with the state name (or use stickers or drawings). When you play the game you will see these symbols associated with the state. Without even trying terribly hard to memorize the facts, they will begin to just seep into your brain.

Crossword Puzzles

Follow crossword instructions on page 14, using state names and capitals for clues and answers.

Musical States and Capitals

Audio tapes and CDs help you learn the states and capitals. Play them in the car, while doing chores, preparing dinner, taking a bath, or doing the dishes. States and Capitals Songs cassette and CD from Audio Memory covers the states in geographical order from "northern border of the United States ..." "the middle of the United States ..." and so on. Another audio, called States and Capitals, is by Twin Sisters Productions. It uses quality music to help you learn state information and capitals by putting words to familiar patriotic tunes.

Geography Through Literature

The Lewis and Clark Expedition

During the final six weeks of this course, students travel with Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery and explore northern parts of the Louisiana Purchase in search of the Northwest Passage while reading the novel *The Captain's Dog: My Journey with the Lewis and Clark Tribe* by Roland Smith. Written from the perspective of Meriwether Lewis's dog, Seaman, and true to real events, this exciting narrative includes excerpts from Lewis's personal journal.

Students map the route as they read through the book. Additional assignments include learning about the various Indian tribes, geography, vocabulary, plants, and animals of the expedition. Weekly reading assignments can be spread out through the week or read in one sitting. It is highly recommended that you read aloud if possible. Use questions to help assess comprehension, as a springboard for discussion, and more. For your convenience, suggested answers are provided in parentheses after each question. (More detailed instructions, including other recommended resources, start on page 112.)

RESOURCES

Required Resources

- *Desk Atlas of the United States*
- Outline maps of each state (choose one):
- *Uncle Josh's Outline Map Book* or Map Collection CD-ROM
- *Trail Guide to U.S. Geography Student Notebook* (printable notebook pages in CD-ROM or digital download formats which include all outline maps needed)
- *The Captain's Dog: My Journey with the Lewis and Clark Tribe* by Roland Smith
- 3-ring binder and dividers (Geography Notebook)
- Reproducible sheets from the appendix

Recommended Resources

- *Profiles from History* Volumes 1, 2, and 3, by Ashley Wiggers (If including history with geography is your objective, forty-five biographies for twenty-four states are assigned throughout the Trail Blazing sections where appropriate.)
- Geography Terms Chart (reference for Illustrated Geography Dictionary)
- *Geography Through Art*
- *Eat Your Way Through the USA*
- Almanac, library books, encyclopedia, or other research references (for Trail Blazing)
- USA PlaceMap™ (handy guide for state facts with color USA map)
- *Trail Guide to U.S. Geography Student Notebook* – in CD-ROM or digital download formats (This will be used for all sections of the curriculum. Designed to aid the process of creating the Geography Notebook, it includes all maps you need to complete mapping assignments. For more information see pages 9-10.)

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

These general weekly schedules are provided as a guide. Adapt them to fit your needs. Use more or less time depending upon student skill level and abilities. Make a "Face the Facts" chart the first week of each new region to use as a reference the following week(s). This is a five-day plan, but feel free to use this curriculum for four days a week or less.

One state a week

Monday

- 5-minute drills
- 15 minutes on memorization (capitals, abbreviations, etc., of region)
- Geography terms

Tuesday

- 5-minute drills
- 15-20 minutes on mapping

Wednesday

- 5-minute drills
- 20-30 minutes on simple Trail Blazing projects

Thursday

- 5-minute drills
- 20-30 minutes reading and researching choice of Trail Blazing projects

Friday

- 30-45 minutes on writing final copy of any Trail Blazing report, an art project from *Geography Through Art*, or any Trail Blazing project which may take more time

Two states a week

Monday

- 5-minute drills
- 15-20 minutes on mapping first state
- 15-20 minutes Trail Blazing same state

Tuesday

- 5-minute drills
- 30-40 minutes on more Trail Blazing projects

Wednesday

- 5-minute drills
- 15-20 minutes on mapping second state
- 15-20 minutes Trail Blazing second state

Thursday

- 5-minute drills
- 30-40 minutes on Trail Blazing projects of second state

Friday

- 15 minutes on memorization (capitals, abbreviations, etc., of region)
- Geography terms
- Art project or complete any unfinished Trail Blazing projects

Co-op groups or classroom

Each student must have access to his own atlas for answering the questions and for completing the mapping assignments. Give a variety of Trail Blazing assignments to different students to complete at home and let all share what they have learned with the group the next time you meet.

Join our Yahoo user group

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/geographytrailguides>

NEW ENGLAND STATES






Maine
Massachusetts
New Hampshire
Vermont
Connecticut
Rhode Island






GEOGRAPHY TRAILS

Week 1 - New England States




Day 1

-  What is the capital of Maine? What country is north of Maine?
 -  What is Maine's state bird? Name one river in Maine that flows into the Atlantic Ocean.
 -  What is the easternmost city in Maine and, therefore, in the United States? Where does the Kennebec River originate?
-




Day 2

-  What mountains make up the central part of Maine? Maine's jagged coastline is longer than California's; what ocean forms the boundary of this coastline?
 -  What river flows from Moosehead Lake to the Atlantic Ocean? What is the only state that borders Maine?
 -  What rivers form boundaries between Maine and Canada? What interstate highway connects Bangor, Maine, to the state's capital?
-

Day 3

-  What is the capital of Massachusetts? What two states lie on Massachusetts' northern border?
 -  Where in Massachusetts are the Berkshire Hills located? What river flows into Boston Bay?
 -  The Connecticut River Basin flows through which part of Massachusetts: east, south, north, or west? What body of water lies between Cape Cod, Nantucket Island, and Martha's Vineyard?
-

Day 4

-  What bay forms a border for Boston, Massachusetts? What Massachusetts cape juts into the Atlantic Ocean?
-  What five states border Massachusetts? What is the highest point in Massachusetts?
-  What interstate highway runs east and west through Massachusetts? About how many miles would you travel going from Worcester, Massachusetts, to the state capital?





POINTS OF INTEREST



Maine Mapping



- Draw and label the Kennebec River.
- Label Canada, New Hampshire, and the Atlantic Ocean.
- Label Augusta with a star.



- Shade and label the Appalachian, Katahdin, and Blue Mountains.
- Shade and label Chamberlain and Chiputneticook lakes.
- Label Kennebunk and Bar Harbor.



- Place a brown triangle at Mount Katahdin and label its name and elevation.
- Draw and label the St. John, St. Croix, Kennebec, and Penobscot Rivers.
- Shade and label Moosehead and Sebago lakes.
- Label Canada, New Hampshire, and the Atlantic Ocean.
- Label Augusta, Portland, Eastport, Fort Kent, and Bangor.


Trail Blazing

As a Matter of Fact...

In order to eliminate a navigational hazard in the Kennebec River (at Augusta), the people of Maine once hitched 200 oxen to Cushnoc Island in a failed attempt to move the island. Add this and any other interesting facts to your notebook.

Read about Maine's name, state symbols, and motto. Tell what you learned.

Read about Joshua Chamberlain in *Profiles from History* Vol. 2 and complete the activities.

 Study the coast of Maine. Learn what industries the many miles of coastline and salt water support. Compare its length when measured in a straight line from border to border to its actual length of curvy, zigzagging coast.

Learn about Maine's oldest lighthouse, Portland Head Light. Write a journal entry as a lighthouse keeper in the 1800s during a harrowing storm. Include a picture of a lighthouse in your notebook. Compare lighthouses in the 1700s to those in use today.

Maine has an abundance of pine forests, making it a major producer of lumber and other wood products. List some of the products manufactured in Maine.

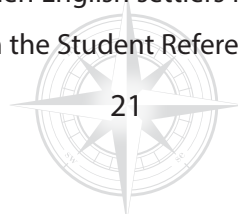
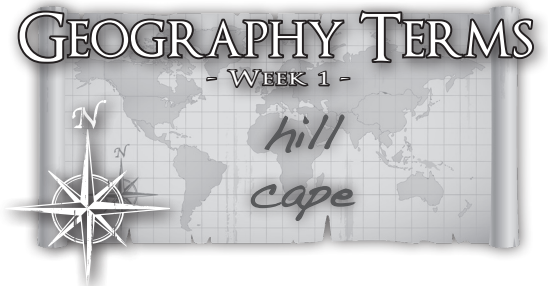
Maine supplies about half of the country's lobster. Learn what conditions are required for lobsters to live. How are they caught and transported to the rest of the U.S.? Include a picture of a lobster in your notebook.

Name some famous people from Maine and what they accomplished. Choose one person to write about and include it in your notebook, or copy one of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poems in your notebook.

Begin to learn the capitals of all states in this region.

Make a timeline of Maine starting in 1607 when English settlers first established Popham Colony.

Select from the list of state projects found on the Student Reference Sheet.





POINTS OF INTEREST

Massachusetts



Mapping



- Draw and label the Connecticut and Charles Rivers.
- Label New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and the Atlantic Ocean.
- Label Boston with a star.



- Label Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod Bay, Boston Bay, and Massachusetts Bay.
- Shade and label Quabbin Reservoir.
- Label Cambridge, Salem, and Amherst.



- Shade and label the Berkshire Hills.
- Place a brown triangle at Mount Greylock and label its name and elevation.
- Draw and label the Merrimack, Connecticut, Concord, and Charles Rivers.
- Label Cape Cod, Nantucket Sound, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket Island.
- Label New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and the Atlantic Ocean.
- Label Boston, Concord, Plymouth, Springfield, and Lexington.

Trail Blazing

As a Matter of Fact...

One of the first incidents of the Revolutionary War, the Battle of Bunker Hill, actually took place on Breed's Hill. Add this and any other interesting facts to your notebook.

Read about Massachusetts' name, state symbols, and motto. Tell what you learned.

Read about William Bradford and Squanto in *Profiles from History* Vol. 1 and complete the activities.


Read about John Adams, Paul Revere, or Samuel Adams, in *Profiles from History* Vol. 2 and complete the activities.


Read about Clara Barton in *Profiles from History* Vol. 2 or Alexander Graham Bell in Vol. 3 and complete the activities.

Read about the rich history of Massachusetts and list a few of its many "firsts."

Learn what Native Americans lived in Massachusetts when the Europeans settled there. Write or tell about the relationship between the colonists and Indians.

Copy or draw a diagram or map of the streets of Boston that make up the Freedom Trail. Include the historic sites along the trail.

 Study the Industrial Revolution and how it affected the lives of the factory workers. Explain the changes associated with the emergence of the textile mills and factories and increased availability of goods.

 Read about the geography, climate, and natural resources of Massachusetts. Tell how each of these are related to one another and how they affect the state's economy.

Name some famous people from Massachusetts and what they accomplished. Choose one person to write about and include it in your notebook, or copy a poem by Emily Dickinson in your notebook.

Make a timeline of Massachusetts starting in 1498 when John Cabot first explored the coast.

Select from the list of state projects found on the Student Reference Sheet.

