

Exploring the U.S.A Teacher's Notes A2

This illustrated map of the United States provides a visual presentation of its landmarks and industry. It could be used at various levels, depending on what is to be achieved by the students. We have chosen an A2 level, and therefore won't investigate much further than what is already on the map. The difficulty when using this type of document lies in the contrast between its apparent simplicity and the amount of information given, which means that the teacher will have to accept that a lot of the facts provided by the map will remain unexploited. On the other hand, this is a good opportunity for group work, with a focus on what is to be learnt by all students, while letting them choose the state(s) they want to work on in the final activity.

Vocabulary and structures.

- *in the west/western, Midwest/Midwestern...*
- *famous for, located in*
- landmarks
- *sunflowers, rubber industry, dairy products...*
- *passive voice (are sculpted, were persecuted, was given...)*
- relative pronouns

Pronunciation.

- State names, with particular attention to stress (eg. **Florida**, **Kentucky**, **Texas**, **Vermont**).
- Arkansas: /'ɑː.kən.sɔː/

Interaction.

- We suggest starting by writing 'The United States' on the board. During brainstorming, have students fill in a KW chart (I know, I want to know). They will provide information, which will be added to the K section, and ask real questions to the class. Any unanswered question should be kept in the W section to be answered at the end of the lesson, or investigated as homework. At the beginning of the next lesson, students should be able to complete

a KWL chart, having added 'I learnt' to the original grid.

Reading, finding information on a website, speaking.

Activities A and B.

- It's worth spending a few minutes checking pupils' knowledge of the cardinal points (in general, and in English), and pointing out the key at the bottom, explaining the colour code which divides the states into regions. This is interesting from a cultural point of view as there is no real geographical reason why the Midwest has "west" in the name. It could be a good point to do a quick revision of U.S. history and point out that they are all west of the original 13 colonies, which were all on the east coast.
- We suggest splitting the states between groups in order to avoid devoting too much time to these activities, which require mapreading abilities and could generate loss of interest if tasks are not clearly defined and shared. These should be cooperative groups, in which each member is in charge of finding the information for 2 or 3 states, before reporting to the rest of the group.

Activity 3:

■ For this activity, divide the class into collaborative groups, in which all students will try to find the same information before sharing with the group and reporting to the class once all findings have been put together.

Writing.

Activity 4.

■ In this activity, every student has to choose a state (make sure they don't all choose the same states) and work individually. The teacher provides help when needed. All the texts can be put together in a class book.

Answers

A.1. 50 (some students will say 51, including Puerto Rico, which is not a state but a territory).

B. 1. There are fifty states in the United States.

STATE	LOCATION				
	THE WEST	THE SOUTH WEST	THE MIDWEST	THE SOUTH EAST	THE NORTH EAST
ALABAMA				✓	
ARIZONA		✓			
ARKANSAS				✓	
CALIFORNIA	✓				
COLORADO	✓				
CONNECTICUT					✓
FLORIDA				✓	
GEORGIA				✓	
IDAHO	✓				
ILLINOIS			✓		
INDIANA			✓		
IOWA			✓		
KANSAS			✓		
KENTUCKY				✓	
OHIO			✓		
OKLAHOMA		✓			
OREGON	✓				
TEXAS		✓			
TENNESSEE				✓	
UTAH	✓				
VERMONT					✓
VIRGINIA				✓	

2.

STATE	CAPITAL CITY	STATE	CAPITAL CITY
New York	Albany	Louisiana	Baton Rouge
California	Sacramento	Minnesota	Saint Paul
Mississippi	Jackson	Texas	Austin
Massachusetts	Boston	Illinois	Springfield
Alabama	Montgomery	Nebraska	Lincoln
Ohio	Columbus	Virginia	Richmond
Wyoming	Cheyenne	Nevada	Carson City
Arizona	Phoenix	Maine	Augusta
Florida	Tallahassee	Washington	Olympia

C. Louisiana is famous for jazz music.

Kansas is famous for sunflowers.

Florida is famous for citrus farms, theme parks, beaches and the Kennedy Space Center.

Ohio is famous for the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Museum and for the rubber industry.

Wisconsin is famous for dairy products.

D. Mount Rushmore: The heads of four presidents of the United States are sculpted on this granite cliff in South Dakota.

The Mayflower: In 1620, 102 Pilgrims sailed to the New World on this ship because they were persecuted in England for religious reasons.

The Statue of Liberty: It was given to the American people by the French people and it was inaugurated in 1886 in New York Harbor.

E. The following presentations are examples of what students might write.

The productions will vary in length and complexity according to students' writing abilities.

Arizona is located in the south west of the United States. Its capital city is Phoenix. It's famous for the Grand Canyon and for Indian culture.

South Dakota is a Midwest state. The capital city is Pierre. It's famous for Mount Rushmore, which is a granite cliff on which the heads of four presidents of the United States are sculpted.

Louisiana is a south-eastern state. It's famous for jazz music.



New York State is (located) in the north east of the United States. A lot of people think its capital is New York City, but it's not. Albany is. One of the most famous landmarks is the Statue of Liberty. It was given to the American people by the French people and it was inaugurated in 1886 in New York Harbor.