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Date _____

50 States & Capitals

The 50 States and Their Capitals

Learn more about this topic! Each section gives more detail on one of the lyrics from the song. Read each section, and then respond by answering the question or taking notes on key ideas.

1. The state capital is the political center of the state and is the location of the state legislature, government and governor of the state. The state supreme court is also often located in the state capital. Offices for many federal government agencies may be located there as well. Not all state capitals are the largest city in terms of population. For example, the largest city in Texas is Houston. While the capital city, Austin, is the state's fourth largest.

Notes

2. In the US, a state is a distinct geographical area with its own independent government and national representatives. A state shares its authority with the federal government. Because of this shared authority, an American is a citizen of both the federal republic (the United States) and of her state of residence.

Notes

Unlike a state, a territory is a type of political division that's directly overseen by the US federal government. For example, Puerto Rico and Guam are US territories, not states. Although residents of both territories are considered full citizens of the US, they are not allowed to vote for president.

3. Some interesting state trivia:

- Of the fifty state capitol buildings in the US, 11 do not feature a dome: Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, Louisiana, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee and Virginia.
- The first three states to be admitted to the Union, all in December 1787, were Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Before Alaska and Hawaii were admitted in 1959, the last state to join had been Arizona in 1912.
- “Washington” is an important name in the United States. It’s both the name of a US state and the name of the US capital city. The nation’s capital is called Washington, DC, but people will sometimes refer to it as “Washington” or simply “DC” (which stands for the District of Columbia). The United States Capitol Building sits on top of Capitol Hill. That’s where our Congress meets.

Notes