Symbols of Our State:
Arkansas
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Lesson Plan by Holly A. Gillum, Anderson Elementary, Crossett, Arkansas
2005-06 School Year
Revised 2007-08 School Year Utilizing 2006 Social Studies Frameworks

The goal of this unit is to teach students about the symbols of the State of Arkansas. Depending upon grade level, they will learn about and be able to identify the state flag, insect, tree, beverage, flower, bird, fruit/vegetable, folk dance, instrument, gem, mineral, rock, mammal, and anthem. Students should be able to describe the state seal.

Grade Level: 1st – 4th (Lesson can be adapted for special needs students.)

Objectives:
1. Identify the symbols of the State of Arkansas
2. Describe the state seal
3. Review the state flag (See lesson plan “Flying High in Arkansas” http://www.butlercenter.org/education/index.html
4. Illustrate the symbols associated with the selected grade levels.

Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks:

Arkansas History Student Learning Expectations:


H.6.1.2 - Identify state symbols of Arkansas: flower, bird, fruit/vegetable, folk dance, instrument.

H.6.2.2 - Identify state symbols of Arkansas: gem, mineral, rock, mammal, anthem.


H.6.4.1 - Discuss the meaning of the state motto of Arkansas.

H.6.4.2 - Examine the history of the State Seal of Arkansas and its components.

Arkansas Fine Arts Student Learning Expectations:

A.2.6 - Produce art works to demonstrate an understanding of the various purposes for creating (aesthetic, functional, historical/cultural, therapeutic and/or social).

Related Encyclopedia of Arkansas Entries:
Official State Flag; Official State Seal; Official State Insect; Official State Flower; Official State Tree; Official State Gem
**Introduction:** The teacher will select the appropriate student learning expectations for his or her students, obtain a copy of *N Is For Natural State*, prepare transparencies (patterns provided) or use art work from the online *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. See [http://encyclopediaofarkansas.net](http://encyclopediaofarkansas.net).

**Key Terms:**

| flag | seal | symbol |

**Key Terms Defined:**

flag – a piece of cloth with a special design used as a symbol or signal.
seal – a sign or pledge that makes something secure.
symbol – something that stands for something else.

**Materials Needed:**

*N is for Natural State: An Arkansas Alphabet* – Shoulders & Anderson
Transparencies of each symbol (patterns provided)
Copies of Arkansas Symbols Handout (grade specific patterns provided)
Crayons or Colored Pencils

**Suggested Timeframe:**

**Two Class Periods.** The unit would best follow a lesson on the State of Arkansas and, perhaps, a lesson on the state flag.

**Procedure:**

**Day One:**

**Introduction to the Learning:**
~ Review any previous lessons on the State of Arkansas, the flag, etc.
~ Ask students if they can identify a symbol.
   ~ Define symbol and relate state symbols to school symbols, such as mascots.
   ~ Relate how symbols are representative of traits, such as a lion represents courage and strength or a dove symbolizes peace.
~ Tell students that each state has more than one symbol representing popular items and describing what life is like in each state.

**Suggested Teaching Strategies:**
~ Remind students of previous knowledge relating to the state flag. There should be one displayed in the classroom, and they should have learned the state pledge. Introduce the flag as a symbol of our state. Discuss the colors, stars, and diamonds in a brief review.
~ Introduce the graphic of grade specific symbol information found in the lesson. Use transparency to point out details (be as specific or general as you wish).
~ Provide as much information as needed for the students to understand the significance of the symbol and for them to complete the worksheet.
Closure to Learning:
~ Have students complete the specific grade level worksheet.

Day Two:
Introduction to the Learning:
~ Always start with a review of the previous day. Discuss the symbolism of the flag and introduce the Great Seal of Arkansas. Although this is the fourth grade lesson, the teacher could use the Great Seal to begin a discussion about other symbols of the state.
It is important to point out the way the seal represents the state of Arkansas. If someone wished to know more about our state, they could look at the seal and see things we grow and ways we make a living in our state.

Suggested Teaching Strategies:
~ Introduce the other state symbols associated with the specific grade level taught by the teacher using this lesson. Provide as much information as you wish for each of the state symbols associated with the grade level.
~ If time permits and the technology is available, utilize the online Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture with the students.

Closure to Learning:
~ Have students name all of the state symbols associated with their grade specific framework.
~ Have students finalize their worksheets.

Assessment:
Student worksheets may be graded via the rubric and recorded. Class participation may also be “graded”.

Suggested Extended Activities:
~ Provide students with an outline map of Arkansas and have them fill in their favorite symbol and list 2 facts about it.
~ Group students and have each group complete a poster about a state symbol to be displayed in the hall.
~ Use of a writing prompt is recommended for second through fourth grade students. Grade the student work according to the school’s writing rubric. An example of a writing prompt is: The State of Arkansas has decided to adopt a State Dog. What breed of dog do you think should represent our state and why?
Name: _______________________ Date: ______________________

The State Insect: Honeybee
Kindergarten

Name 2 good things about honeybees:

1. ___________________________  2. ___________________________
How many different sounds can a mockingbird make? ____________________

Why was this bird chosen as our state bird? _____________________________
________________________________________________________________
The State Gem: Diamond

Second Grade

What is special about our diamond mines? ______________________

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________
Arkansas State Pledge
What do the symbols on the Great Seal represent for our state? ______________
Sources

http://www.sos.arkansas.gov/index.html
Site is the Secretary of State for Arkansas. Has information about each symbol, including the pictures provided on the student handbook pages. From the homepage, under educational materials, there is an activity book that is printable covering state symbols and more.

http://www.enchantedlearning.com/usa/states/arkansas/
Site offers information about state symbols, as well as links to pages with additional information, and black line masters.

http://www.netstate.com/states/symb/seals/ar_seal.htm?NF=1
Site gives an official statement of the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas, explaining each symbol.

http://www.honey.com/kids/facts.html
Site is kid friendly with honey related trivia and facts about honey and bees.

Site is a PDF file giving information about the Mockingbird. It has interesting information relating to the State of Arkansas.

http://www.sdnhm.org/exhibits/diamonds/facts.html
Site offers trivia information about diamonds.

Book gives information about several of the symbols, including illustrated pictures. It should be read daily in conjunction with the unit.

Book has wonderful color photographs of each symbol as well as interesting information.
Rubric for Student Work and Class Participation

4  _____ Student can define and discuss what a flag is.
    _____ Student can define and discuss what a symbol is.
    _____ Student can give more than one fact about the grade specific symbol used in the lesson.
    _____ Student can give more than one fact about the other grade specific symbols.
    _____ Student can define and discuss what a seal is.
    _____ Student can give more than one fact about the Great Seal of Arkansas.
    _____ Student completed the worksheet independently.

3  _____ Student can define and discuss what a flag is with some prompting.
    _____ Student can define and discuss what a symbol is with some prompting.
    _____ Student can give at least one fact about the grade specific symbol used in the lesson.
    _____ Student can give at least one fact about the other grade specific symbols.
    _____ Student can define and discuss what a seal is with some prompting.
    _____ Student can give at least one fact about the Great Seal of Arkansas.
    _____ Student completed the worksheet with some prompting.

2  _____ Student can define and discuss what a flag is with much prompting.
    _____ Student can define and discuss what a symbol is with much prompting.
    _____ Student can give at least one fact about the grade specific symbol some prompting.
    _____ Student can give at least one fact about the other grade specific symbols with some prompting.
    _____ Student can define and discuss what a seal is with much prompting.
    _____ Student can give at least one fact about the Great Seal of Arkansas with some prompting.
    _____ Student completed the worksheet with much guidance.

1  _____ Student needs assistance defining and discussing what a flag is.
    _____ Student needs assistance defining and discussing what a symbol is.
    _____ Student needs assistance giving one fact about the grade specific symbol.
    _____ Student needs assistance giving one fact about the other grade specific symbols.
    _____ Student needs assistance defining and discussing what a seal is.
    _____ Student needs assistance giving one fact about the Great Seal of Arkansas.
    _____ Student did not complete the worksheet satisfactorily.

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