

The States of India

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Suggested Grade Levels: 4-6

Suggested Curriculum Areas: Educational Technology, Social Studies, and Communications.

Estimated time for the activity:

5 or 6, 45 minute sessions. Duration dependant on class size and computer lab access.

Essential Understanding

A state is a governmental and geographical area found in a country such as the United States that duplicates and maintains the same nationwide values found in all other states in the union. States in other countries, such as those in India, can resemble ‘mini-countries’ that operate more independently of each other. An essential understanding is that relatively young countries like the United States have organized their states from the beginning with values that are understood and shared by all, whereas much older countries like India often ‘retrofit’ states into formerly autonomous areas that represent a far greater array of pre-existing values. Another essential understanding is that the fundamental attributes of states in an unfamiliar culture can make meaningful connections with what is known about the same attributes in a familiar one.

Content Standards

Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements Grades 4-6

- **EALRs 2-3 Social Studies:** Economics, Geography, History, SS Skills
- **EALRs 1-3 Communications:** The student uses listening and observation skills and strategies to gain understanding, uses skills and strategies to communicate interculturally, uses knowledge of topic/theme, audience, and purpose to plan presentations, uses media and other resources to support presentations, uses effective delivery.
- **EALRs 1&2 Educational Technology:** Students use technology within all content areas to collaborate, communicate, generate innovative ideas, investigate and solve problems. Students demonstrate a clear understanding of technology systems and operations and practice safe, legal and ethical behavior.

Objectives

- Students will each study one of the 28 States of India
- Students will explore online computer lab and onsite library resources to collect data on their state
- Students will organize data in their own server folders and complete a computer lab ‘fact file’ and PowerPoint assignment on their state.
- Students will give a corresponding oral presentation demonstrating an understanding and appreciation of the states in India.

Background Information for Teachers

For best learning, teachers will want to precede this unit with a study/report on US states.

If the class size exceeds 28 students, add the 7 Union Territories as needed.

This type of lesson could be adapted to the study of other countries with states (e.g., Australia, Germany, Brazil, Mexico) or, with alterations, a study to compare states and provinces (e.g., Canada, China).

Find and greatly enlarge a state-demarcated map of India for classroom display. An online [Bing](#) state map of India is a good, free source of map varieties for printout or digital projection. A service like [FedEx Kinkos](#) is a good source for making oversized, white board-sized prints.

Have access to a server (or some safe digital storage device) to which students can independently save, edit and retrieve their accumulated materials and projects.

Create a resource folder for India on your class website or class 'dropbox' for students to access. Explore, select and post the Websites Resources (and their many links) that will be suitable for your students to use in their own state fact files and PowerPoints.

Create a 'fact file' template in *Kidspiration* or *Inspiration* (or word document if you don't have either) that you will project and handout as a student guide (see Day 2 for details).

Purchase in advance (or acquire through your school/district/public library) some of the books in the *Book List*. [Amazing India: A State-By State Guide](#) is especially useful.

Activities

Day 1

Spend at least a 45 minute period with the class examining the enlarged map or map projection that demarcates the 28 states and, if needed, the 7 Union Territories.

1. Assign each student a state/UT, or if preferred devise a random selection procedure such as having students pull a name from a hat (or turban!). Help practice the pronunciation of the states with the students.
2. If students have recently completed a US state report (highly recommended), they should be aware that the continental United States are grouped into geographical regions that we call the Northwest, Southwest, Northeast, Midwest, etc. Unless your enlarged map already does this, outline and name the 6 regions/7 UT of India around the states they encompass thusly:

North: Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan

East: Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Orissa

Northeast: Sikkim, Asom, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura

Central: Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh

West: Gujarat, Maharashtra

South: Goa, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu

Union Territories: Delhi, Chandigarh, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Puducherry, Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

3. If possible, group the students together into their Indian 'regions'. This association will be more meaningful for the students when they present their oral state reports by region. If you have to include Union Territories, group them together, too. Also explain that territories are like our own pre-state regions (e.g., Washington State was once part of the Oregon Territory) that were more under the control of the Federal Government.

Day 2

1. Show students where all the book and material resources are (either your classroom or on reserve in the library). Assemble students in the computer lab and show them the resource file or 'dropbox' where they can access websites and the template in step 2, below. Demonstrate how to save, retrieve, etc.
2. Show students your 'fact file' template that you have created (ideally in *Kidspiration* or *Inspiration*) on an overhead/projection and hand out hardcopies. Demonstrate how to locate, copy and paste state picture, etc. Your fact file template should include the following:
 - Size (in sq km)
 - Population
 - Capital
 - Rivers
 - Forests/National Parks/Wildlife Sanctuary
 - Languages
 - National Neighbors (adjacent states)
 - International Neighbors (adjacent countries)
 - State Animal
 - State Bird
 - State Tree
 - State Flower
3. Explain that the fact file will be filled out in pencil on the handout first, then typed into the template and saved. When this is completed, the information will be transferred into PowerPoint slides as part of a larger project that includes unique pictures, audio files, and important facts about history, people, art and music that represent their state.
4. With any time that may be left, have students begin researching their fact file information. Collect the papers and save for the next day/session.

Days 3-4

1. Pass out the fact file papers and have students complete the tasks started on Day 2, including transferring the written information on the fact file handouts

to the fact file template and saving that to their own 'saving space' (either a unique student 'dropbox' or flashdrive, for example).

2. When all students are finished with step 1, review the access information and requirements for the PowerPoint that follows. The PowerPoint should include:
 - A minimum of 10 slides, maximum 20.
 - A title page slide with state name in a large font, student name in smaller font, and a background state-related picture and audio music file. The audio music file, if appropriately subdued, may continue for all remaining slides. Different background pictures, foreground pictures and audio music file may be on each slide, as long as long as they are relevant to other information on the slide.
 - At least 3 slides with the transferred fact file information included.
 - At least 1 slide on state history (e.g., the word *Sikkim* comes from the Limbu word 'suhim', meaning 'new house').
 - At least 1 slide on state music (e.g., the bamboo trumpet is one of the oldest musical instruments in *Nagaland*).
 - At least 1 slide on state art (e.g., Bidri is an ancient craft using silver wire in *Karnataka*).
 - At least 1 slide on a famous state person (e.g., Prince Siddhartha, best known as Buddha, was born in the state of *Bihar*).
 - At least 1 slide on a famous state city or monument (e.g., Varanasi, the world's oldest city and center of the Hindu faith, is in *Uttar Pradesh*).
 - 1 slide on something the student thinks is the best (or favorite) thing about the state!

Days 5-6

Before individual PowerPoints are shown, reassemble students in their 'regional groups' again and have them brainstorm what they think are 'linking commonalities'. Prompt by suggesting they think about some things like:

- what languages are spoken (Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, English, Garhwali, Kumaoni, Monpa, Miji, Aka, Sherdukpen, Apatani, Adi, Hill Miri, etc.)
- What kind of work do people do (is farming or fishing important, is growing rice, tea or apples big here, etc.)
- What is the weather or landscape like (is there heavy monsoon weather, is the land flat or does it have a lot of mountains, etc.)
- What was important about their history (did the Moghuls rule in this region, did the English, Portuguese, French, Dutch or Americans have anything to do with this region?)
 1. Have students take some time and write down about 4 things they think they learned about their state. Have them be ready to memorize and present that information in a short, 1 or 2-minute oral report.
 2. Have students give a class presentation of their state PowerPoint, organized by region. Each student will follow this with a 1 or 2-minute oral report on what they learned about their state.

Books Resources:

Amazing India: A State-By State Guide by Anita and Amit Vachharajani (Scholastic, 2009)

India the Land: The Land by Bobbie Kalman (Scholastic, 2010)

Spotlight on India by Robin Johnson (Crabtree Publication, 2008)

The World of Communities by Denise Babcock (Blackbirch Press, 2009)

India : a question and answer book / by Nathan Olson (Capstone Press, 2005)

A primary source guide to India by Autumn Leigh (Rosen Pub. Group, 2003)

India : a primary source cultural guide by Allison Stark Draper (PowerPlus Books, 2003)

India in our World by Darryl Humble (Smart Apple Media, 2010)

The Geography of India [eBook] (Britannica Educational, 2010)

Website Resources and subsequent links for Indian States, Union Territories, fact sheets, music, art, and photos:

http://www.india.gov.in/knowindia/state_uts.php

<http://www.indianembassy.org/state-governments.php>

<http://www.wisc.edu/southasia/outreach/k12>

<http://www.asia.si.edu/>

Extension Computer Lab and/or Classroom Collaborations

- The visual, musical and dance arts of India as extra credit research topics.
- Exploration of a grant and special assembly for visiting Indian musicians, dancers and artists. Integrate a student collaboration piece with the school music teacher.
- An art activity for the school featuring student-created art of India on display in the library and connecting hallways.
- Focusing on the culture of India (at least by the library) during a school culture week. If practical include an inexpensive food treat like ‘curried garbanzo beans on a toothpick’ or a masala spice sample for students/teachers to try.