

# THE SCRAMBLED STATES OF AMERICA

by Laurie Keller (Henry Holt)  
Themes: Geography/Humor  
Grade Level: 2 – 5  
Running Time: 15 minutes

## SUMMARY

What would happen if the entire configuration of the United States was turned upside down and inside out? *The Scrambled States of America* explores this concept with humor, unpredictability, and countless surprises throughout. Children will become acquainted with the "personalities" of individual states, learning their locations relative to other states in the process.

## OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn to identify U.S. states
- Children will learn about the locations of the states
- Children will explore the characteristics of the various regions of the U.S.

## BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book *The Scrambled States of America* with children. Then ask:

- Where is the state we live in on the U. S. map?
- What states surround our state?
- What might the weather in our state be like if we moved north? South?
- If you could choose another state to live in , which state would it be? Why?

Show children a large U. S. map. Point out their home state. Encourage children to point out and talk about other states on the map that they may have visited. Have children describe the special characteristics of those states, including climate, geography, special places of interest, etc.

Supply U. S. map puzzles that children can put together to help them become acquainted with the states, their shapes, and their locations. As children work, encourage them to discuss the unique shapes and sizes of the states. As children work, share information about special features of each state.

## AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

### Extended Learning Activities

Plan a field trip to a local travel agency with children. Encourage them to ask questions of the travel agent about states they are particularly interested in. Examine brochures of the different states, pointing out parks and landmarks that help to identify the states. While discussing the different states, compare their climates, landscapes, vegetation, etc.

Hang a large U.S. map on a classroom wall or bulletin board. Each week, allow a different child to pretend to take a trip to one of the states on the map. Share information about that particular state with children. Throughout the week, encourage children to use the school's resources (library, book area, other teachers/students) to learn more about that particular state and share the information with the class.

Play "Guess What State I Am." Have children take turns identifying special characteristics of a state of their choice. See if other children in the group can identify the state being described. If children have difficulty identifying the states, helpful clues can be given, including identifying the initial letter of the state's name, naming the region of the U.S. the state can be found in, identifying where the state is in relation to children's home state.

After learning about the special features, including unique traditions, occupations, and life styles of the people of the various states, bring props to the classroom. Have children identify where these props might be used. For example, you might bring in a cowboy hat that children can connect to a western state, a surf board that children can relate to the state of California, a souvenir from Walt Disney World that children can identify with the state of Florida.

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