

State Nicknames: The 50 States of the USA (for teachers)

lesson plan

STEP 1

Students are given one of the four audio files to work autonomously on their mp3 player + the student's worksheet below (p.3)

Download the mp3 file from each main page:

Part 1: <http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/archive/2009-08/2009-07-29-voa1.cfm>

Part 2: <http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/archive/2009-08/2009-08-06-voa2.cfm>

Part 3: <http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/archive/2009-08/2009-08-15-voa1.cfm>

Part 4: <http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/archive/2009-08/2009-08-21-voa1.cfm>

Make sure all 4 audio files are equally distributed among the students. Audio n° 1 and 4 present 11 states each and could be distributed to the weakest students in the class. On the other hand, audio n° 3 presents 12 states and n° 2 presents 16 states, it could be distributed to students with the highest level.

Source: Words and Their Stories: State Nicknames- VOA News

STEP 2

In class, the teacher brings a large band of kraft paper with a blank map of the USA stuck in the middle.

http://www.mapofusa.org/map_of_usa_800x600.jpg

Students collaboratively fill in the giant map in the same way as they did on their worksheet.

Students draw balloons and write the names and nicknames of the states, and stick the pictures they have found to illustrate. They can also write a few keywords providing additional information

An alternative could be using ICT to create a collaborative map (text editor, Powerpoint or equivalent, or other interactive tools, like Didapages: www.fruitsdusavoir.org)

STEP 3

When the map is ready, students make an oral presentation of one state in turn, using the following pattern: « State name + location + nickname + additional information and description of the illustration(s) »

STEP 4

At home, on their mp3 player, students record a similar presentation of 6 states.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY

«Five American Cities » on Elllo.org

<http://www.elllo.org/english/Points/PT06-Cities.html>

see also:

<http://cms.ac-martinique.fr/discipline/anglais/file/balado/baladocities.pdf>

Common European Framework for Languages : levels and descriptors

Listening

Activities

B1 - Can understand straightforward factual information about common everyday or job related topics, identifying both general messages and specific details, provided speech is clearly articulated in a generally familiar accent.

- Can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure etc., including short narratives.

Speaking

Activities

B1- Can reasonably fluently sustain a straightforward description of one of a variety of subjects within his/her field of interest, presenting it as a linear sequence of points.

Strategies

B1- Can rehearse and try out new combinations and expressions, inviting feedback.

- Can work out how to communicate the main point(s) he/she wants to get across, exploiting any resources available and limiting the message to what he/she can recall or find the means to express.

Interacting

Strategies

B1- Can exploit a basic repertoire of language and strategies to help keep a conversation or discussion going.

- Can summarise the point reached in a discussion and so help focus the talk.

- Can repeat back part of what someone has said to confirm mutual understanding and help keep the development of ideas on course. Can invite others into the discussion.

B2i Collège items

1 – S'approprier un environnement informatique de travail

1.2) Je sais accéder aux logiciels et aux documents disponibles à partir de mon espace de travail.

4 – S'informer, se documenter

4.2) Je sais utiliser les fonctions principales d'un logiciel de navigation sur le web (paramétrage, gestion des favoris, gestion des affichages et de l'impression).

4.3) je sais utiliser les fonctions principales d'un outil de recherche sur le web (moteur de recherche, annuaire...).

4.4) Je sais relever des éléments me permettant de connaître l'origine de l'information (auteur, date, source...).

4.5) Je sais sélectionner des résultats lors d'une recherche (et donner des arguments permettant de justifier mon choix).

B2i Lycée items

2 - Adopter une attitude responsable

2.3) J'utilise les documents ou les logiciels dans le respect des droits d'auteurs et de propriété.

4 – S'informer, se documenter

4.1) Je sais interroger les bases documentaires à ma disposition.

4.2) Je sais utiliser les fonctions avancées des outils de recherche sur internet.

4.3) Je sais énoncer des critères de tri d'informations.

4.4) Je sais constituer une bibliographie incluant des documents d'origine numérique.

The 50 States of the USA
Listening comprehension : answer keys for teachers

***Note to teachers:** the keys provided here correspond to what the documents mention. Some of the information may be either incomplete or contentious.*

Dixie is one example in audio n°1. Other origins have been attributed to the word than the one mentioned by VOA NEWS.

Follow this link for more theories :

Word Detective <http://www.word-detective.com/back-i2.html>

Similarly, some states may be known under other names. Connecticut is another example in audio n°1. VOA News says Connecticut's nickname is "The Nutmeg State" and does not mention the more official nickname, "Constitution State" which reads on most car-plates.

Follow this link for more information:

Connecticut Sate Library <http://www.cslib.org/nicknamesct.htm>

Teachers may want to inform their students about these possible variations, and conceive follow up activities, according to the students' level.

PART 1

<http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/archive/2009-08/2009-07-29-voa1.cfm>

(duration: 00:04:54)

Name	Nickname	Additional information
Alabama	The Heart of Dixie	- middle of a group of states in the deep south - Dixie = nickname for American South (comes from 10 « dix »(French - Louisiana)
Alaska	The Last Frontier	- near the Arctic circle - final nation
Arizona	Grand Canyon state	- famous Canyon (+ Colorado river)
Arkansas	The State of Opportunity	- southern state - rich, natural resources - place where old people retire
California	The Golden State	- 1848 The Gold rush
Colorado	The Centennial State	- became a state in 1876 , 100 years after independence
Connecticut	Nutmeg State	- nutmeg = spice - people smart in business, capable of selling false nutmegs
Little Delaware	The First State	- was the 1 st state to approve the new US constitution.
Florida	The Sunshine Sate	- sunny days and fine beaches
Georgia	The Peach State	- sweetest fruit in America
Hawaii	The Aloha State	- in the Pacific Ocean - aloha = hello and good-bye

The 50 States of the USA
Listening comprehension : answer keys for teachers

PART 2

<http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/archive/2009-08/2009-08-06-voa2.cfm>

(duration: 00:04:54)

Name	Nickname	Additional information
Idaho	The Gem State	- no diamonds - jewel of the western Rocky Mountains
Illinois	The Land of Lincoln	- Abraham Lincoln 16 th psdt led the nation through the civil war in the 1860s
Indiana	The Hoosier State The Crossroads of America	- refers to poor farmers and uneducated people - different name according to the state legislature
Iowa	The Hawkeye State	- named in honour of Black Hawk, an Indian chief
Kansas	The Jayhawk State	- Jay Hawkers were opposed to pro slavery fighters before the Civil War
Kentucky	The Bluegrass State	- is bright green - looks blueish from a distance
Louisiana	The Bayou State	- bayou = slow moving stream with alligators (100s of bayous in the state)
Maine	The Pine Tree State	- In the North East - covered in evergreen woods
Washington	The Evergreen State	- On the Pacific coast - covered in evergreen trees
Massachusetts	The Bay State	-body of water - separates most of the state from Cape Cod
Michigan	The Wolvering State	- a fierce native animal
Wisconsin	The Badger State	- a fierce creature
Minnesota	The Gopher State	- nicer animal
North Dakota	The Flickertail State	- little squirrel
South Dakota	The Coyote State	- they like to eat flickertails
Oregon	The Beaver	- large flat-tailed rodent - uses trees to build dams.

The 50 States of the USA
Listening comprehension : answer keys for teachers

PART 3

<http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/archive/2009-08/2009-08-15-voa1.cfm>

(duration: 00:04:54)

Name	Nickname	Additional information
Maryland	The Free State	- 1920s = wanted to be free to sell alcohol during the prohibition (Baltimore)
Mississippi	The Magnolia State	- hot southern state - big white flowers
Missouri	The show Me State	- people once had the reputation of not believing what people told them
Montana	Big Sky Country	-western mountains and plains
Nebraska	The Corn Husker	- refers to the area's chief crops - borrowed from the state university athletic team's nickname
Nevada	The Silver State	- desert, western state - once silver mines and towns - now many ghost towns
New Hampshire	The Granite State	- in the north-east, called New England - name of colorful rock
New Jersey	The Garden State	- truck farmers used to provide vegetables to big neighboring cities (New York, Philadelphia)
New York	The Empire State	- natural wealth - Manhattan Empire State Building named after the state's nickname
New Mexico	The Land of Enchantment	- red sunsets on The Sangre de Cristo Mountains
North Carolina	The Tar Heel State	- men who gathered substances from trees wore no shoes. - made turpentine from tar to protect the heels of their feet
South Carolina	The Palmetto State	- split from Carolina in 1729 - palm trees

The 50 States of the USA
Listening comprehension : answer keys for teachers

PART 4

<http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/archive/2009-08/2009-08-21-voa1.cfm>

(duration: 00:04:54)

Name	Nickname	Additional information
Ohio	The Buck Eye State	- in the Mid-West - a nut tree
Oklahoma	The Sooner State	- great plain state - 1899: people cheated during a sale to get their piece of land sooner
Pennsylvania	The Keystone State The Quaker State	- holds the arch of the young America
Rhode Island	Little Rhody	- very small
Tennessee	The Volunteer State	- citizens defended New Orleans in 1812 against the British army
Texas	The Lone Star State	- has one single star on its flag - represents short time when Texas was an independent nation, battling Mexico for self-rule.
Utah	The Beehive State	- no more beehives than in any other state - Mormon church's symbol for hard work
Vermont	The Green Mountain State	- green mountains
Virginia	The Old Dominion	- King Charles II added the colony's coat of arms to his shield
West Virginia	The Mountain State	- ancient Appalachian - broke away from Virginia in the 1860s
Wyoming	The Cowboy State	- the most famous US nickname - once an area where cattle were transported East