

April 2, 2013

Dear PALs,

During the next four weeks, 4/5 students will be working on an at home project related to states of the United States. We'd like students to study a state, focusing on economics, geography, history, culture, or landmarks, in order to create a product to share with their classmates. Each student will also be responsible for writing a five paragraph essay/report about their state.

By completing this project and learning from others students will be working toward the following standards:

- Construct a mental map of the relative locations, directions and size of regions in the United States.
- Understand the ways in which people in different regions of the United States interact with their physical environments through work and recreational activities.

In addition, we want students to gain a sense of the interrelatedness of economic, historical, geographical, political and cultural factors.

Projects in the 4/5 include several components. Each student will be assigned a specific state to research. Each student must then choose some sort of end product that will effectively display the knowledge the student has gained while completing the research. Ideas for products are given in this packet. Each student will use at least three sources to research information. In addition to being used in the end product, this information will also be used to write a five-paragraph essay. Finally, the student will orally present the work to the class. This presentation will be recorded and made available for the student to watch and self-evaluate.

During project time there will still be other homework assigned. In particular, we expect students to continue math facts/24 and daily reading, although other assignments will also be given. We will look for documentation of project work in daily journals, agenda books, on the planning checklist, and in the project folder. The project folder should travel to and from school on a daily basis. We will be providing some guidance on the various steps involved in the project in school, however the majority of the project work must be completed at home.

Please sign up for the date you will be ready to present. Contact us if you need special consideration around presentation dates (Ms. Cook 845-4271; Ms. Wick 845-4272).

Please cut and return this slip to your homeroom teacher by Friday, April 5, 2013.

_____ and I have discussed the project options and expectations and understand that projects are due Monday, April 29. I am aware of the planning guide checklist and will use it to help guide my child's progress. We have discussed the timeline for the project, and my child will work to have the project ready to present by the date circled below.

The state my child was assigned is _____

The product my child has selected is _____

parent signature

Monday, April 29 Tuesday, April 30 Wednesday, May 1 Thursday, May 2

**Independent Projects
To Be Completed at Home
Projects Due April 29, 2013**

Goals and Expectations:

- **Select a suitable product from those listed below; consider your strengths, resources available to you, and the time given to complete the project.**
- **Plan, organize, and complete your project by April 29, 2013.**
- **Keep track of your progress on the planning guide checklist.**
- **Demonstrate your understanding of the selected topic by presenting a project to your class. Presentations will be limited to 6-8 minutes.**
- **Your project must include the following five components: 1) research from at least 3 sources, 2) written work (including a bibliography), 3) artistic work, 4) a product, and 5) a presentation.**
- **Assess your performance and efforts on the stated goals. Your assessment will include at least one paragraph in which you reflect on your performance on the project as a whole.**

Project Product Options:

1. **Video Documentary** - Prepare a short video to tell about aspects of the state you researched. We recommend that you do your research, plan the organization of your video, and then shoot the presentation. You can use United Streaming video segments if you select clips that allow editing.
2. **PowerPoint Presentation** - Design a computer presentation of facts and highlights about your state. Consider the purpose of your presentation and how it might be most useful to a specific audience.

3. **Nonfiction Book or Poster** - Gather information on your state from at least 4 sources. Organize the facts that you learn into a nonfiction book or poster format in order to help others learn. List the sources that you used as part of your final product. Include a table of contents and index for your book.
4. **Demonstration** - Prepare to teach your classmates about how to do something related to your state (e.g. how to milk a cow, how to square dance, how to make clam chowder, etc.). Take the class step by step through the process. This will include using props and learning aids for your demonstration.
5. **Magazine** - Imitate the styles used in several different magazines to design one of your own. Gather appropriate pictures or draw illustrations to include in your magazine. Write at least four articles (including your essay). You might also include a letters department, games, stories, cartoons, or other aspects of popular children's magazines.
6. **Mock Interview** - Select an individual or several people associated with your state (past or present) who you consider to be expert in some aspect of your state's geography, entertainment, economy, science, etc. Either videotape your interview, or write a script that allows you to perform in a talk show format. Be sure to coach the people who help you so they become "experts."
7. **Museum Display of a Collection of Artifacts** - Make a display or design a bulletin board that may be suitable for a museum. Your display should capture key information about your state with related activities. Consider ways in which you might make it interactive.
8. **Models** – Create a model of something in your state that helps others learn about it. This might include modeling the architecture of famous buildings, landmarks or landforms, creating a relief map to scale, or making a diorama of a historical event.
9. **Game or Quiz Show** - Plan a presentation to tell about your topic. Incorporate the answers to your game in your presentation. At the end of your presentation, share a game of your own design.
10. **Plan a Road Trip** -- Plan a 5 day road trip through your state. Include an itinerary and the key stops that you will make each day. Visit at least three different cities, travel at least 300 miles, and select a variety of landmarks and tourist attractions to visit.
11. **Post Card Book** – Design a series of post cards that might be sent from your state. Pretend that you have visited the locations and write about what you did and saw. See *Stringbean's Trip to the Shining Sea* for inspiration.
12. **Alphabet Book** – Write an alphabet book about your state. See *Wis for Wisconsin* for ideas.

13. **Brochure** - Identify places to see and points of interest in your state. Use photographs or draw sketches of important places to see. Your presentation should help others to learn about the places you choose and should be accompanied by factual information that gives detail about the points of interest you identify.
14. **Timeline** - Identify 12 or more historic dates related to your state. Design an illustrated timeline to teach about the events you have identified.
15. **Share Ethnic Traditions, Foods, or Celebrations** - Prepare to teach your classmates about the contributions and influences of a particular ethnic group as it relates to your state. You might prepare a taste test, share traditional clothing and dances, or explain the significance of special celebrations.
16. **Series of Maps** - Replicate two or more maps to scale using any medium (clay, poster board, salt dough, paint, etc.) Your maps could tell about geographic regions, landforms, products, political regions (cities, counties), population, and/or places of interest, etc. The purpose of your maps should be easily identified.
17. **Play** - Write a play that focuses on important facts about your state. Prepare others to help you deliver the play during your presentation.
18. **Other** - Design a project of your choice that relates to your topic. Present a written description of your idea for a project and be sure to get an okay from your teacher before you begin.
 - For this project, you may wish to combine different aspects of several project options. Of greatest importance is that you include the following five components: 1) research from at least 3 sources, 2) written work (including a bibliography), 3) artistic work, 4) a product, and 5) a presentation.
 - Some guidance will be provided in class to help you with these components; however, the majority of this work must be completed at home.

Independent Project Planning Guide Checklist

This list of expectations is provided for you to use in goal setting and creating a timeline for completing your independent project. Date each step as you complete it.

- _____ Select the end product you plan to complete.
- _____ Sign up for a presentation day.
- _____ List what you know about the topic.
- _____ Brainstorm questions you would like to answer.
- _____ Gather resources on your topic.
- _____ Write a bibliography (with at least three sources listed).
- _____ Take notes.
- _____ Begin planning your product and presentation.
- _____ Create an outline about your topic that includes at least three main ideas.
- _____ Write a rough draft for a 5-paragraph essay report.
- _____ Edit and revise your rough draft.
- _____ Write a final copy.
- _____ Complete your display and presentation.
- _____ Practice presenting your project.
- _____ Present your project to the class.
- _____ Complete the self-assessment form for your project.