

State Project: Gathering Information and Free Stuff

2018-2019

An activity from October – January





State Project Gathering Info Overview Letter

Dear Students and Parents,

As part of our social studies curriculum, each student will be required to put together a report on one state. The report will allow each student to research a variety of information including state industry, tourism, and state history. The project will consist of gathering and recording information and making a tri-fold display to present at our own "State Fair" in May – the culmination and celebration of this project.

Fourth grade students will have made up 5-6 trivia questions and play quiz master to the many visitors who come by their state displays. They will also give prizes and/or promotional items to those visitors who participate in their state trivia quiz. The State Fair is from 9am-1:30pm, and we encourage parents and siblings to come and join the festivities! The experience is both fun and educational.

This week in school, an overview of the project is being presented, and each student has or will have selected a state (via their lottery number) which he or she will research. We begin the process in October to allow time for students to make their contacts with state officials and businesses, and for these places to send back colorful brochures, maps, travel guides, and (hopefully) free promotional items to each student. While information will primarily be obtained from a book in our own Forcey Christian School library, more information can be researched through other books and through my website which has a wealth of research information that can be used as a supplement.

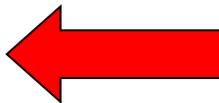
In January, students will begin receiving information about completing each phase of the project.

From November through January, students are to be in the gathering and collecting phase. This entails contacting state organizations (chambers of commerce, departments of tourism), state officials (governors and senators), and state businesses with student requests.

Students, start your engines! Begin writing your **sample inquiry letter** which you will submit to your homeroom teacher. Save your letter on your home computer to avoid re-inventing the wheel every time you need to write a new one. Once your sample letter has been graded and approved, start mailing out letters of inquiry to 2-3 state organizations or state officials and to 10-20 business contacts (or more). The more businesses you contact, the more likely you will be to receive free promotional items! Be sure to thank those who have sent things to you.

Parents, please browse through the packet. We will be going over everything with the students in class. Please sign the parent return form and have your child return it to me by no later than

Wednesday, October 24, 2018.



Sincerely,

Steve Shapero, Lynn Rohrer, Christine Hall

State Project Schedule **2019**

Rev. Date: **10/1/2018 2:36 PM**

- ☛ Students acquire their states & receive **Gathering Info Packet Week of Oct 15 2018**
- ☛ Gathering Info Parent Return Page is due back, signed, by **Wed, Oct 24, 2018**. Discussions and demos will be given this same week explaining how students are to make contact.
- ☛ Students are to actively make contact with tourism departments and businesses between October-February. Sample inquiry letter is due on **Wed, Nov 14, 2018, or whenever your homeroom teacher assigns**. Requested materials should be received by January.

Required Projects

Due Date:

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sample inquiry letter contacting state agency, business | Wed, Nov 14, 2018 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Getting to Know Your State | Thu, Jan 31, 2019 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Industry & Tourism | Wed, Mar 6, 2019 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5-6 Trivia Questions about your state | Thu, Mar 21, 2019 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trifold Displays (Terra Nova Testing Week) | Mon, April 8, 2019 |

Parent Return Forms Due Dates:

Due Date:

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gathering Info Parent Return Page | Wed, Oct 24, 2018 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State Project Parent Return Page | Wed, Jan 9, 2019 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Declaration of Attendance | Wed, Apr 10, 2019 |

Optional Projects for Extra Credit

Due Date:

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Themes Study pages (Terra Nova Testing Week) | Wed, April 10, 2019 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State in a Box (Terra Nova Testing Week) | Wed, April 10, 2019 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your State Brochure (Terra Nova Testing Week) | Wed, April 10, 2019 |

State Fair: Tuesday, May 14, 2019
Opening Ceremonies: 9:00am
Hours: 9:00 ~ 1:30 in the gym

Gathering Information and Free Stuff For your State Project

Students, between now and January, you are to concentrate your efforts on contacting as many state tourism resources and businesses as you can. You are in the “hunting and gathering” phase of this project. You’re asking for two types of things: souvenirs and literature.

- * Souvenirs are pens, free samples, electronic gizmos, bookmarks, promotional items with a company name, plastic cups, mini bags of chips or cereal, rock samples, food items, etc.
- * Literature would be magazines, colorful travel guides, state maps, brochures, pamphlets – things with pictures and information.

Why do I want them and how can I get them?

Ask! You will draft an *inquiry letter* requesting literature or souvenirs. The word *inquiry* comes from the word *inquire*, which means to ask.

Literature about your state can be useful for your research in doing your state projects. It provides you with information about your state’s history, industry, tourism, and a lot more. Literature contains pictures, some useful for project or tri-fold display at your state booth. Getting literature is easy and almost a sure thing! Write to a few of the following places:

- Your state chamber of commerce
- A chamber of commerce for a major city in your state
- An elected official such as a congressman, senator, or governor.
- A state convention center will also have literature.
- Try several of the above for a variety of literature.

Souvenirs are those cool free things that you can hand out at your display to draw visitors to your booth at the State Fair. And of course, you’ll want to keep one or two yourself! Write to private businesses located in your state to request souvenirs. A few things to keep in mind:

- Not all companies will send you souvenirs – we’re in a bad economy, but some companies stock them to give away to clients and have all kinds of giveaways lying around.
- I suggest targeting businesses that are “kid friendly”(toys, foods, souvenirs, candy, school supplies, etc.); however, I’ve also seen students receive souvenirs from construction companies and electronics corporations.
- The more businesses you write to, the better your chances of getting souvenirs.
- Also write to a state convention center, as some also stock souvenirs.
- Ask if they can supply you enough for about 70 visitors.

Your assignment:

Draft an inquiry letter with the following information:

- Tell why you are writing
- Tell about your school's state fair
- Tell why you chose the great state of _____ and your connection
- Politely ask for your literature or souvenir
- Wrap up with a polite "thank you" for reading your letter

Hand in your draft to your teacher for review:

- Your teacher will critique your letter and help you refine it
- You will get a Language Arts grade from this assignment

Think about who you will contact:

- State agencies and elected officials will be easy to find from Mr. Shapero's website
- Private businesses will be more challenging
- If you have friends or relatives living in your state, they can be very helpful suggesting businesses to contact
- Often, it is better to contact a business by phone and speak with someone directly. Use your letter to guide you about what to say. If you make a phone call:
 - Do not read your letter over the phone
 - Keep it brief – just tell that your school is having a state fair and you're hoping to get some things to give away at your booth (70 visitors).
 - Be sure to thank them for their time.

Brainstorming your paragraphs:

Why I'm writing:

- * a social studies assignment
- * our school's state fair
- * my need for literature (state agency)
- * my need for promotional items at my booth (business)

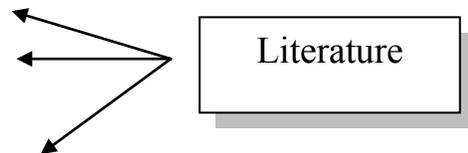
Explaining the state project:

- * Each student does in-depth study of a state
- * I chose _____.
- * research on agriculture, industry, and tourism
- * poster-board display
- * booth with trivia Q's & prizes
- * give away souvenirs
- * Held in mid May

Explaining your request:

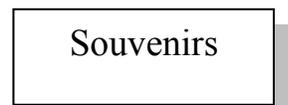
Dept. of Tourism, Government Officials, or
State Chamber of Commerce

- * maps
- * other places to get more info
- * colorful pictures for my display
- * fun facts for trivia questions
- * travel guides
- * state events
- * places to visit in your state



Businesses:

- * Promotional items to hand out to people who visit my display



Expressing Appreciation / ending:

- * For taking time to read my letter
- * For considering my request
- * For any help you can offer

For More Help and Information ...

Mr. Shapero's website has some **short** video tutorials which further explains the idea behind the business letter you will be writing.

In addition, there is an **FAQ** (Frequently Asked Questions) Page.

To access this information, go to the following link:

http://www.steveshapero.com/State_Contact_Page.html

Or

From the main website: www.steveshapero.com click on the State Project Directory link, then click on "Contacting your State" at the top of the page.

Gathering Info Parent Return Page

Please return this page to your social studies teacher

Student's Name _____

Parents and students, please check off each of the following, sign it, and have your child return this page to his/her social studies teacher.

I understand that...



- Students should start as early as November (or sooner) to begin making contact with state officials for the purpose of gathering literature and souvenirs for their project and state fair booth. State officials include:
 - departments of tourism,
 - chambers of commerce,
 - senators, and governors
 - convention centers

- Students should also begin making contact with state convention centers and businesses to inquire about free (or very cheap) souvenirs that can be distributed to visitors at their state booths at the State Fair in May.

- All information on finding names and addresses of various chambers of commerce, convention centers, businesses, and offices of senators and governors can be obtained from Mr. Shapero's website. However, students may also obtain this information from their public libraries or by using the Internet.

- Information about the inquiry letter assignment is explained in this packet.

- The more places and offices that are contacted, the more likely students will meet with success at receiving information and souvenirs; however, there is no guarantee that all places contacted will be responsive to such requests, which is why it is a good idea to contact as many as possible.

Parent Signature _____ **Date** _____

Student Signature _____ **Date** _____