

February 12, 2008

Dear 5th Grade Parents,

From now through May my students will be working on their **state research reports**. Reading, writing, social studies, art, and library skills are involved in the completion of this project. Please review this packet in detail with your child. The report is worth **165** points, and will be a **major** part of their grades in **both social studies and writing** for the second trimester.

The state reports are due on Wednesday, May 14. Extra credit points will be given if they are turned in early.

The reports must be written on computer. Students will have opportunities to work on their reports in the school library and in our classroom. They will be able to use the school computers during our regular computer lab times, plus supplemental times I will be scheduling. They will also be able to use the school computers after school – either in the library, lab, or in my classroom. If they have access to a computer outside of school, please read the instructions on how to save documents in the correct format. I’ve seen too many kids lose data and time by not saving documents in the proper format.

Mrs. Haupt will be helping each student find information about his or her country. You might also consider a trip to the public library for additional materials.

Between now and the due date – **May 14** – I expect each student to work on his or her report, possibly every night, as homework. If your child should say he or she has no homework, remind him or her that the country report is homework.

Besides the written report, each student must have **a decorated cover**, and must make **a detailed map** and **a color drawing of his or her country’s flag**. This is very time consuming!

The reports will be on display at Baywood’s Open House, which will be May 21, but there will be no grades given by then.

Each student will be given a large manila envelope in which they should keep all their report information, as well as this packet. They will most likely be given at least one book about their country from Mrs. Haupt. **THEY MUST BRING THESE TO SCHOOL WITH THEM EACH DAY. Extra credit points will be given at the end of this project to each student who still has his or her envelope and packet. POINTS WILL BE TAKEN AWAY EACH TIME YOUR CHILD DOESN’T HAVE HER OR HIS PACKET OF MATERIALS (INCLUDING THE BOOK) AT SCHOOL.**

Report writing is an extremely important skill, which will be used many times during each student’s educational career. This project should give them an excellent beginning in mastering this process. Good work habits, timely completion of tasks, and **GOOD TIME MANAGEMENT** (no procrastinating!) will be extremely important to the success of this project. Parents can help by keeping track of their child’s progress. Thank you for your support.

Thank you
Mr. Snapp

Parents please sign and return by Thursday, February 14

I am aware that my child will be writing a state report that will be a major part of his/her grades in both writing and social studies for the second trimester. I have reviewed this packet with my child and we understand the requirements. **I am aware that the report will be due on Wednesday, May 14.**

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____

STATE SELECTED: _____

I am aware that I will be writing a state report that will be a major part of myr grades in both writing and social studies for the second trimester. I have reviewed this packet with my parent(s) and we understand the requirements. **I am aware that the report will be due on Wednesday, May 14.**

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____

State Report - General Guidelines

THE REPORT MUST BE WRITTEN IN SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS. Start each paragraph by indenting *approximately* 5 spaces. **Use of English will be the most important part of your grade.**

Format

THE REPORT MUST BE WORD PROCESSED ON COMPUTER.

Specifics:

- You must use either Times New Roman or Arial fonts.
- The body text should be font size 11.
- Headings should be font size 20. (The sizes on the Title Page can be larger.)
- Margins should be one inch on all four sides.
- Put two spaces between sentences.
- It should be double-spaced. (However, I don't want the kids to do this until I teach the lesson. They should type it single-spaced, and we'll double-space it later.)
- Leave one blank line between the body of one article and the heading of the next.

Plagiarism

YOUR REPORT MUST BE WRITTEN IN YOUR OWN WORDS. It's okay to use terms or two- or three-word phrases that you find in your research, but don't copy whole sentences. Anyone caught plagiarizing will be required to rewrite the report, and their grade will be severely lowered. If you have a good reason to copy a sentence or phrase from a book, it's okay, but put it in quotation marks, and tell who originally wrote or said it.

Your use of English will be the biggest part of your grade – worth 40 points, while the other sections are worth 5 or 10.

Various Sections – Directions – What to Include

I don't want you to include every single fact in your report. I'm not asking you to write a book (and I don't have time to read 27 books.) There are basically two types of things you should include – **THINGS THAT ARE IMPORTANT, OR THINGS THAT ARE INTERESTING.** IT'S UP TO YOU TO DECIDE WHICH FACTS ARE IMPORTANT, although you can always ask me for advice on whether a fact you've discovered is important or not. Additionally, if you read something about your state that isn't really important, but it's *really* interesting, put that in. It will make your report interesting to read.

Cover

Your report should have a cover on it, the same way a book has a cover. It should be decorated somehow - maybe with a picture, maybe a photograph. It could have a collage. **IT MUST HAVE THE NAME OF THE STATE ON IT AND YOUR NAME.** Try to make it original.

Title Page

This is not the same as the cover. It should be a piece of regular paper, just inside the cover. Include the name of your state, your name, and the date. They should all be centered.

Table of Contents

DO THIS LAST! That way you'll know what pages things are on. Include each section and the number of the page on which the section begins. Don't list the Title Page or the Table of Contents in the Table of Contents.

Introduction and State Symbols – (THESE ARE ONLY SUGGESTIONS. Not every suggestion will apply to your state.)

- location (region, surrounding states)
- how it got its name
- meaning of name
- nickname
- population
- capital
- major cities
- area
- abbreviation
- time zone
- state bird
- state flower
- state tree
- state song
- state motto
- other symbols?

History

Find as much information about the history of your state as you can. Include things like what Native American tribes were there before Europeans came, when Europeans came, early settlements, possible Indian wars, any Revolutionary War or Civil War involvement, when your state achieved statehood, etc.

Geography – (THESE ARE ONLY SUGGESTIONS. Not every suggestion will apply to your state.)

- elevation
- lakes
- mountains
- rivers.
- forests
- animals
- climate

ECONOMY (Suggestions)

- agriculture
- manufacturing
- natural resources
- other

GOVERNMENT

- governor (name of current one, term of office)
- legislature (what it is called, how many houses, how many current members)
- names of current United States Senators

PLACES TO VISIT (Suggestions)

- Write about any tourist attractions
- State and National Parks
- Natural wonders
- Amusement Parks
- Historical Sites
- Interesting places
- Are there any professional sports teams to bring in tourists

Conclusion

Write a good conclusion to your report. Tie all the information together. **Tell the three most important things you learned about your state.**

Appendices

Appendix I. Political Map Directions

- Use a map of your state from the social studies textbook, an encyclopedia, your atlas, or some other source.
- Trace the outer border of your state with a solid line.
- Outlines should be done in **thin black pen**.
- Put the following items on your map:
 - compass rose (This goes on the map itself; not in the margin. Find a spot where there is some room.)
 - title (“Map of _____”) should be centered and there should be some space between this and the map
 - scale (I’ll show you how to do this.)
- Using a **black ball point pen NEATLY** label bordering states,
- Label any important regions.
- Label important cities. The capital city should be marked with a small star inside a circle.
- Label all important physical features such as rivers, lakes, oceans, seas, mountains, mountain ranges, deserts, valleys, canyons, etc.
- Print horizontally. **DO NOT USE ALL CAPITAL LETTERS!!!** Only the first letter should be capitalized. If a word won’t fit, write it nearby and draw a straight line from the word to the thing it names.
- Use blue to color oceans, seas, and important lakes and rivers
- Use light gray to color bordering states.
- **Use colored pencils.**
- **DO NOT USE TRACING PAPER.**

Appendix II. Flag Directions

- Use an almanac, encyclopedia, or other source to find a picture of your state’s flag.
- Copy the basic design of your flag on a n unlined sheet of white paper.
- Use crayons, or colored pencils to color your flag.
- The flag should nearly fill up the piece of paper. Neatness counts!!!

Appendix III. Extra Credit (Here are some ideas:)

Extra credit items could include:

- charts
- travel brochures (either commercial ones, or one you create yourself)
- a timeline of important historical events
- postcards
- pictures
- weather maps
- an art project
- objects from your state
- cooking a food dish from your state
- doing a craft from your state, etc.
- make some sort of poster display
- make a model of something from your state.

Helpful Hints

- **START YOUR RESEARCH NOW!!** A great report is not done overnight.
- Enjoy yourself. Find books you want to read.
- Be creative. See your teacher if you have any ideas of what to add to your report.

**Proofread your report carefully. After you have proofread it, have a friend proofread it.
Have your parents proofread it!**

Your report will be on display at Open House, Wednesday, May 21

STATE REPORT GRADING SHEET.

REPORT DROPS ONE LETTER GRADE FOR EACH DAY IT IS LATE.

Category	Points Possible
Cover	10
Title Page	5
Table of Contents	10
Introduction and State Symbols	10
History	10
Geography	10
Economy	10
Government	5
Places to Visit	10
Conclusion	5
Map	10
Flag	10
Bibliography	10
English	40
Neatness	10
Extra Credit for not losing packet	10
Extra Credit for turning report in early	???
Other extra credit	???
Total (not including extra credit)	165

Extra Credit

- You will receive extra credit points for each day your report is turned in early.
- You can also earn extra credit by including items that are not required.
- You can earn 10 points of extra credit if you don't lose this packet.