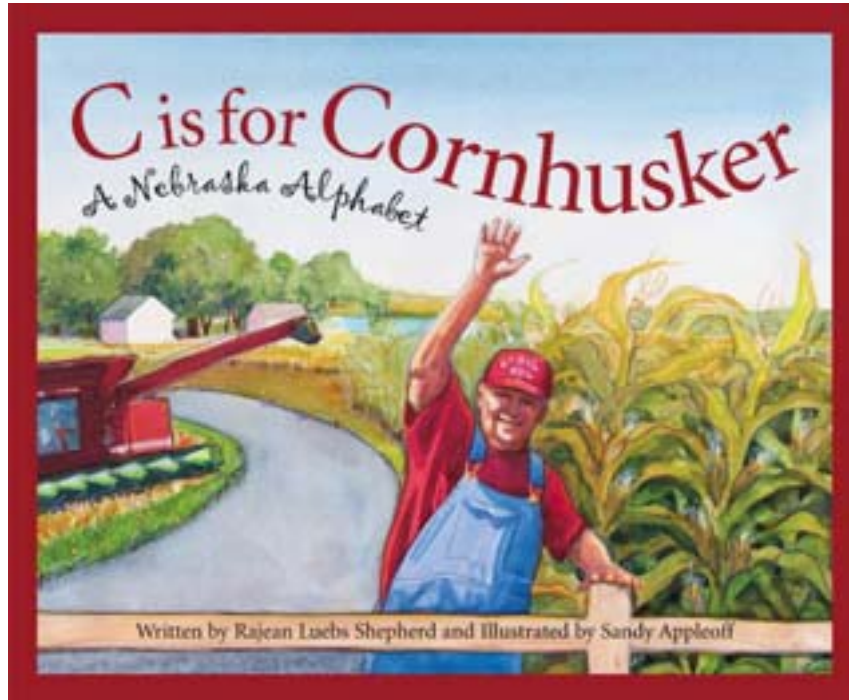


# A Teacher's Guide



## **C is for Cornhusker** **A Nebraska Alphabet**

Written by Rajean Luebs Shepherd  
Illustrated by Sandy Appleoff

**Guide Written by**  
**Rajean Luebs Shepherd**

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Published by Sleeping Bear Press  
310 North Main, Suite 300  
Chelsea, MI 48118  
800-487-2323  
[www.sleepingbearpress.com](http://www.sleepingbearpress.com)



# K-W-L Chart



In preparation for reading *C is for Cornhusker*, create a KWL Chart with your students to capture the before, during, and after components of reading the text.

\***K** stands for **Know**

What do I already **know** about Nebraska?

\***W** stands for **Want**

What do I **want** to learn about Nebraska?

\***L** stands for **Learned**

What I **learned** about Nebraska

1. On the chalkboard, an overhead, or on an individual handout, draw three columns. Label column 1 with a **K**, column 2 with a **W**, and column 3 with an **L**.

2. Before reading, students fill in the **Know** column with everything they already know about Nebraska. This helps generate their background knowledge.

3. Next, have students predict what they might learn or what they want to learn about Nebraska and fill in the **Want** column. It may help to take a "picture walk" through the book for a quick glance at some of the topics and illustrations.

4. As a summary after reading *C is for Cornhusker*, have students fill in the **Learned** column and discuss their new knowledge gained about Nebraska.

THE NEWS		
<b>K</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>
What I Know	What I Want To Know	What I Learned

# Tree-mendous ABCs



Over one million trees were planted on the first Arbor Day, celebrated in Nebraska on April 10, 1872. Arbor Day is now recognized in all 50 states as well as other countries, although the date may vary according to the best planting time in each region. In honor of Arbor Day in your own state or country, create a “tree-mendous” ABC book of trees.

1. As a prewriting activity, make an A-Z list of trees on the chalkboard. Have students brainstorm by using prior knowledge of tree names, or research the names on “tree” Web sites and in books and encyclopedias.  
A–apple, ash  
B–birch, beech  
C–cottonwood, cypress  
D–dogwood...
2. Next, have students select a letter of the alphabet (drawn out of a container or assigned by the teacher) and research a tree that begins with their selected letter.
3. Discover interesting facts about the tree in books, encyclopedias, and on Web sites. Ask what, where, why, and how questions such as “what makes my tree unique...how would I describe my tree...where does it grow...how long does it live...what are the special characteristics of my tree?”
4. Compile these interesting facts into a written paragraph of information.
5. Draw a colorful illustration of the tree. Students may want to draw an illustration of their tree as it looks in fall, especially if the leaves turn beautiful colors.
6. Have students share their information by giving an oral report to the class. Collect the A-Z tree reports and compile them into an ABC book of trees titled “Tree-mendous ABCs.”



# Corny Compounds



A compound word is made of two smaller words that have been combined to make a new word such as “cornfield.” The two words “corn” and “field” are joined together to make the new word, “cornfield.” For a lesson in helping students better understand the concept of compound words, complete this “corny compound” activity.

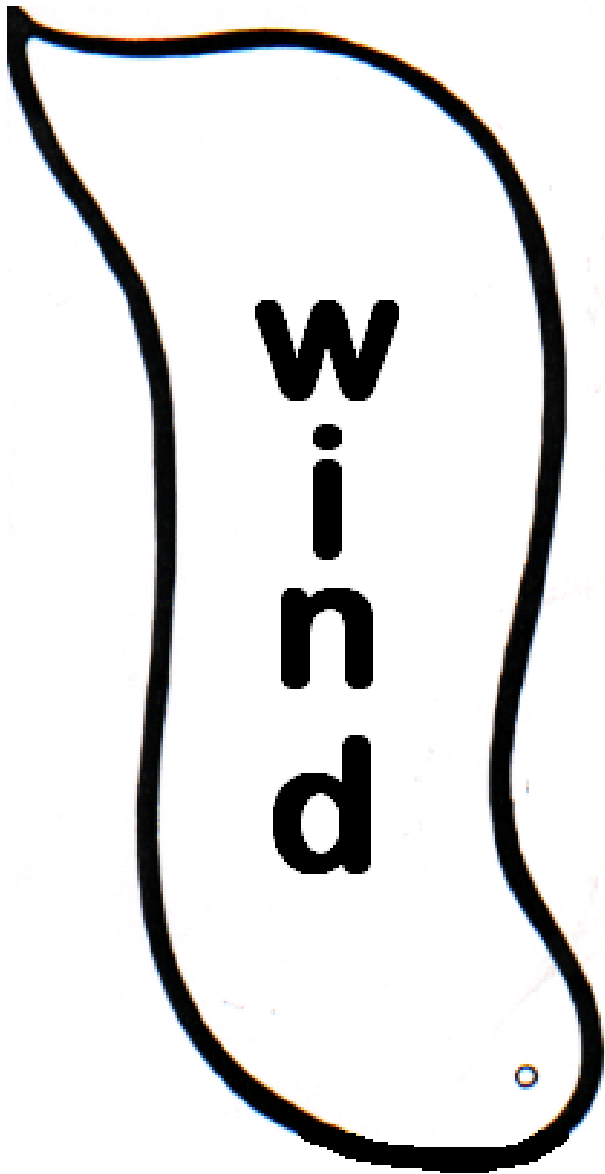
1. Search C is for Cornhusker to locate the many compound words found in the book. Some of the compound words that can be found include:

cottonwood	nickname	rifleman	underground
railroad	cornhusker	goldenrod	wildflower
livestock	sandhill	sandbar	ferryboat
cornfield	honeybee	countryside	rainstorm
handcart	landmark	skyscraper	breakfast
schoolhouse	keelboat	sandstone	windmill
waterfall	baseball	football	grasshopper
catfish	rainforest	wildlife	vineyard
meadowlark	patchwork	friendship	cornbread

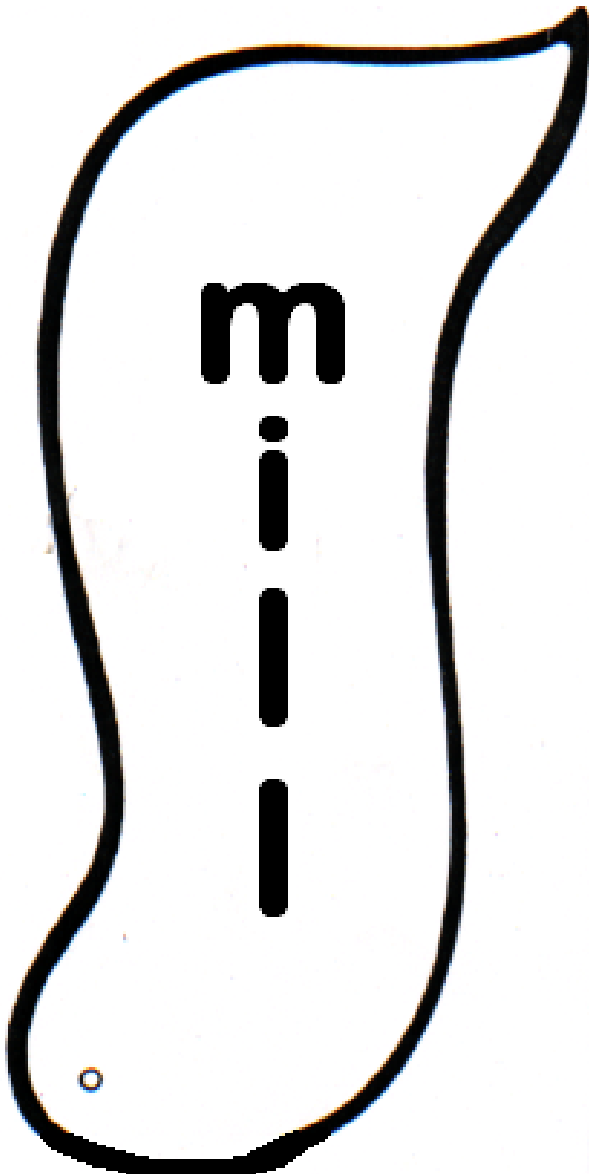
2. Let each student select or search for a compound word in the book.
3. Give each student a copy of the corncob and cornhusk patterns on the following page. White-out the sample word “windmill” and copy the patterns on white construction paper or heavier stock paper, if possible.
4. Have each student write their compound word, in large black print, on the corncob pattern. For example, print the compound word “windmill” on the corncob pattern. Then print the two smaller words that make up the compound word, onto each of the cornhusk patterns. For example, print “wind” in large print on the left husk and print “mill” in large print on the right husk (see the following page sample).
5. Have students find the definition of their compound word in a dictionary and write the definition on the back of their corncob pattern.
6. Color the corncob and cornhusks and attach the pieces together with a brad fastener.
7. Let each student present their compound word to the class by holding up their completed cornhusk. Have them cover the two husks over the compound word and say, “wind” plus “mill” makes “windmill.” Then open the husks to reveal the compound word “windmill,” and give the definition.
8. Display the words on a bulletin board with the caption “Corny Compounds.”



**windmill**



**w  
i  
n  
d**



**m  
i  
l  
l**



# Haiku

Haiku is a short and contemplative form of poetry which began in Japan in the seventeenth century. In Japan, people of all ages write haiku as a way to relax and gain perspective. Haiku should be written in the present tense to sound as though it is happening as you read it. It should capture the moment like a photograph. A haiku poem generally has seventeen syllables divided into three lines, with a fixed pattern of 5-7-5. There are many Web sites and books about haiku poems to help students with the writing process.

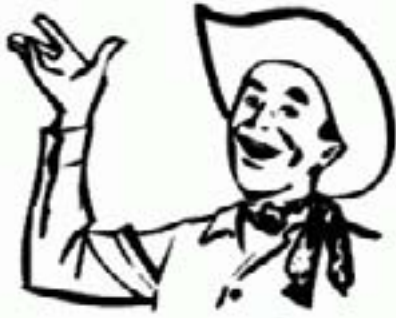
1. Research sandhill cranes to learn more about their unique characteristics, lifestyle, migration patterns, etc.
2. Create a web of adjectives to describe the sandhill crane. (dangling legs, stately, tall, bow, leap, dance, fling, roost, migrate, eat grain)



3. Write and illustrate a haiku poem about sandhill cranes using the 5-7-5 pattern of syllables. Clap out the syllables in each line for practice. Have students read their poem aloud and then display them on a “Journey to Japan” bulletin board.

Graceful sandhill cranes  
Bowling, leaping and dancing  
Spring is on its way!





## FEBOLD FEBOLDSON- NEBRASKA'S TALL TALE

A tall tale is a story based on a fact, but told in a highly exaggerated and humorous way. Define exaggeration for your class as something that goes beyond the truth.

Remind students that a tall tale character does not have magical powers but has exaggerated strengths.

1. Read a variety of tall tales to your class such as Paul Bunyan, Johnny Appleseed, Pecos Bill, Slue-Foot Sue, John Henry, and Davy Crockett. How do they go beyond the truth? Have students discuss what makes each a tall tale. Then list the reasons on a chart entitled "Tall Tale Exaggerations."

Character	Setting	Exaggeration
Paul Bunyan	Deep in a forest	Blue Ox-Babe
Pecos Bill	Range of the West	Wrestled Tornadoes

2. Read ***Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*** written by Judi Barrett and then give students some "writing whopper" sentences to complete for practice.  
Example: It was so hot that the cornfield began popping popcorn.  
The hail that came down from the sky was  
The flowers grew so quickly that  
The stars were shining so brightly they  
The farmer was so hungry that he  
It was so hot that the sun
3. Give students an opportunity to write their own tall tale about Nebraska's hero, Febold Feboldson. Read stories about Febold Feboldson or research his name on various Web sites. Discuss how his stories go beyond the truth. What exaggerations make him a tall tale?
4. In preparation for writing the tall tale, help students organize their thoughts by folding a piece of paper into three columns and labeling each column as in the above example with **Character, Setting, and Exaggeration**. Direct them to fill in the columns using their own ideas about Febold Feboldson.
5. Once students have generated ideas on their chart, have them use the Six Traits of Writing to write their tall tales.
6. After revising and editing, have students bring their story to life by gluing their tall tale onto an 11" x 17" sheet of construction paper to become Febold Feboldson's body. Add construction paper arms and hands, legs, and feet, a head, and a farmer's hat or any other creative details. Draw in facial features and clothing details. Febold Feboldson is now a larger-than-life tall tale!

# Pioneer Games And Toys



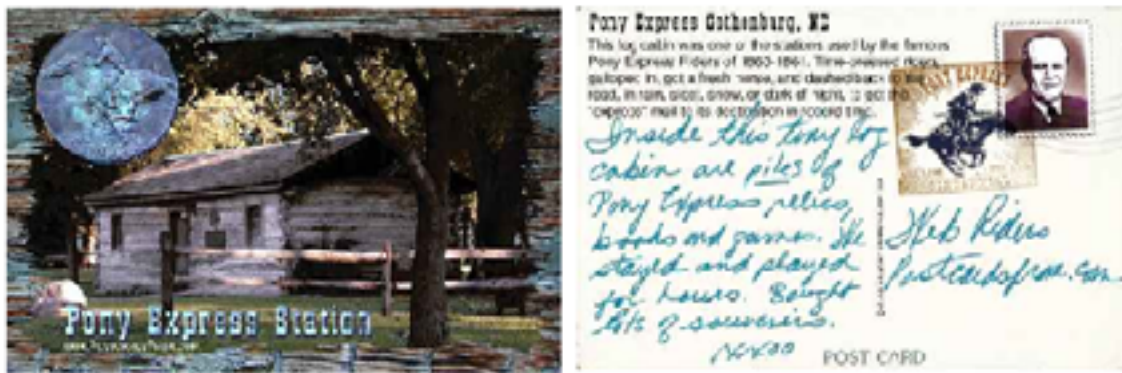
Although pioneer children had many chores to do such as cooking, cleaning, sewing, chopping wood, caring for the animals, and gathering cow or buffalo chips for the fire, they still managed to have fun. What did pioneer children do for fun? They didn't watch TV, play video games, or have fun on a computer. Instead, they used their own imagination to create games and toys out of materials that were available, such as stones, rope, pieces of wood, and scraps of material. Mothers taught children how to make cornhusk dolls and fathers taught children how to carve things from wood such as a buzz saw.

## Make a Buzz Saw Toy

1. Thread a piece of nylon string, about twice the length of your arm, through a two-holed button. A one-inch wooden button and an approximately 56-inch length of kite string work well for making a buzz saw. After threading, the string should form a loop. Tie the loose end together in a knot.
2. Hold each end of the string so the button slacks in the middle. Be careful as you swing the button in a circle to tightly wind up the string. It takes practice!
3. Pull your hands apart and then slightly push them back together to see if you can get your button to whirl and sing. See how long you can keep it going.

## Create Your Own Fun as the pioneers did!

1. Brainstorm a list of materials that may have been available to pioneer children for making their own toys (stones, twigs, wood, cherry pits, rope, chestnuts, cornhusks, corncobs, buffalo chips, leaves, apples, scraps of material).
2. Provide some of these materials and divide the class into small groups. Have each group work together to create their own toy or game and the rules to go along with it. Have fun demonstrating your game to the rest of the class!



## Postcards from Nebraska

When it began in April 1860, the Pony Express provided the fastest means of delivering mail and news between the East and West. Although the Pony Express lasted only 18 months when it was replaced by the telegraph, it has been ranked among the most remarkable feats to come out of the American West era.

A segment of the CBS Morning News, "Postcards from Nebraska," has been seen on television for over 10 years. This segment has come to symbolize the continuing saga of small town America as seen from the perspective of Roger Welsch's tree farm in Dannebrog, Nebraska—population 320!

For experience in learning how to write a postcard, have your students take an imaginary trip somewhere in Nebraska and design a postcard to mail to a friend or relative.

1. Begin by looking at various postcards and discuss why people send postcards.
2. Lead students to see that a postcard often includes a picture of an important place or site, a personal signed note from the sender, and the address of the person who will receive it. Discuss the parts of a postcard such as the salutation or greeting, the body, closing, and signature.
3. Give each student a blank 5" x 7" index card or make one from white tag board.
4. On the front of the index card, have the students choose a place, site, or scene in Nebraska to illustrate and color such as Chimney Rock or the State Capitol.
5. On the back, draw a line down the middle of the index card to separate the body of the note on the left side from the address on the right side.
6. In the body of the note, have students include two or three interesting facts about the Nebraska site or scene they have illustrated on the front of the postcard.
7. Properly address the postcard on the back. In the upper right-hand corner, select one of Nebraska's official state symbols to use in designing a stamp, or use a real stamp and have students mail their postcards.



## Colossal Fossils Leave an Impression



There are many archaeological sites in Nebraska where visitors can watch paleontologists at work uncovering ancient fossils. A paleontologist is a scientist who learns more about prehistoric life by studying fossils that have been buried by rock. Fossils are formed from an impression left by a part of a plant or animal that lived thousands or even millions of years ago.

To help understand how fossils form, have students make their own fossil in one of the following ways.

- A. Mix 2 cups flour  
1 cup water  
1 cup salt  
6 tablespoons dry brown tempera paint  
(Makes 6-8 fossils)

1. Place a shallow layer of the fossil "mud" in a small container such as a meat tray or small foil pie pan.
2. Firmly press an object such as a shell, stick, plastic leaf, plastic dinosaur, or any object that will leave an impression-into the mud to create a fossil imprint.
3. Set the print aside for several days to dry and then remove it from the container.

- B. Another method for making fossil imprints is to use any kind of soft clay.

1. Roll the clay into a smooth ball and then press it flat on a tabletop. A little water can be used to smooth around the outside edges of the clay.
2. Press your object or objects directly into the clay. When you remove the object, the imprint will remain.
3. Roll the clay up and try again, until you get the imprint that you want.
4. The fossils can be air-dried.
5. When the fossil is dry, gently rub shoe polish over the surface to give it an ancient look.
6. Let the shoe polish dry and then brush on a coat of acrylic finish or floor wax, or carefully spray with a clear acrylic finish.



## In my covered wagon, I have packed a...

As pioneers packed their prairie schooners, or covered wagons, to travel west, they were limited in space and in what they could take with them on the journey. Step back in time with this old-fashioned memory game and science experiment on the following page 14.

1. Generate a list of items that pioneers may have brought with them on their journey west. Help students distinguish between items of the past versus items of present day. For help in creating a list of items, research books and Web sites about the pioneers, covered wagons, and the Mormon and Oregon Trails.

*Daily Life in a Covered Wagon* by Paul Erickson

*If You Traveled West in a Covered Wagon* by Ellen Levine

*Westward Ho!* by Laurie Carlson

*Pioneer Days* by David C. King

2. Have students create a list of items (nouns) for each letter of the alphabet. As students give a suggestion for each letter of the alphabet, write their suggested item on the board. The following list is provided as an example:

A. axe	N. nails
B. books	O. oxbows
C. candles	P. pickles
D. Dutch oven	Q. quilts
E. eggs from chickens	R. rice
F. flour	S. sunbonnet
G. gun	T. tin pots and pans
H. horse	U. undergarments
I. iron kettle	V. vinegar
J. journal	W. washboard
K. knife	X. X-tra shoes
L. lead (for guns)	Y. yeast
M. money	Z. zither

3. Once the list is completed, gather the class in a circle on the floor to lead them in a memory game. Be sure to erase the list of items from the board. The teacher should keep a written list of the items for herself/himself. Do not distribute the written list to the class.
4. The teacher begins by saying, "In my covered wagon, I have packed an axe" (or whatever item was listed for letter A). The first student then repeats "axe." The teacher continues by saying, "In my covered wagon, I have packed an axe and books." The second student repeats "axe and books." The teacher then says, "In my covered wagon, I have packed an axe, books, and candles." The third student then repeats, "axe, books, and candles." Continue in this manner. The teacher may need to give some clues for extra help.
5. When a student misses a word, he/she is out of the game. Although a student may be "out" of the game, let him/her continue sitting in the circle with everyone. Continue playing until the end of the alphabet or until all students are out.



# Making Butter



One item pioneers often packed in their covered wagon was a butter churn. A butter churn is a container with a dasher, a stick or plunger, used for making butter. Often the butter churn was tied to the side of the wagon. As the wagon bumped and rocked across the prairie, the wagon stirred the cream, making butter. Conduct a science experiment, while making butter as the pioneers did in the days of traveling by covered wagon.

1. While playing the game on the previous page "In my wagon I have packed a..." fill two plastic containers half full with heavy cream. Add a tight lid to each container and leave the first container in the middle of the circle while playing the game. Take the second container and have each student take a turn shaking it, a number of times, while they are playing the game seated in a circle on the floor.
2. The cream will turn to butter in about 7-10 minutes of vigorous shaking. After the butter has been churned and the game is finished, discuss the experiment with the students by asking some of the following questions:

**\*Did anything happen to the first container after it was set in the middle of the circle during the game?**

**\*What other elements was the cream exposed to in each of the two containers?**

**\*How many possible explanations can you think of as to why the cream may turn to butter? (Time, heat, air, light, plastic, and shaking were involved with the second container. The first container had the same elements except for the shaking.)**

**\*How can these guesses be tested?**

**\*If neither container had turned to butter, what conclusion could have been drawn?**

**\*If both containers had turned to butter, what conclusion could have been drawn?**

**\*Since only the shaken container turned to butter, what conclusion can be drawn?**

3. After discussing the experiment, enjoy tasting the butter by draining off the excess cream and spreading the butter on some crackers.

\*\*\*\*\*



## Classroom Ice Cream



½ cup of milk (whole or any kind)

1 tablespoon of sugar

¼ teaspoon vanilla or other flavor

Add ingredients to a zip-loc baggie and zip it shut. Then place the smaller zip-loc baggie into a larger one. Add ice to fill the larger ziploc baggie about half way and add a tablespoon of salt to the ice. Zip the larger baggie shut. Then shake, toss, turn, and mix the bag for about 5-10 minutes. Serve and enjoy.

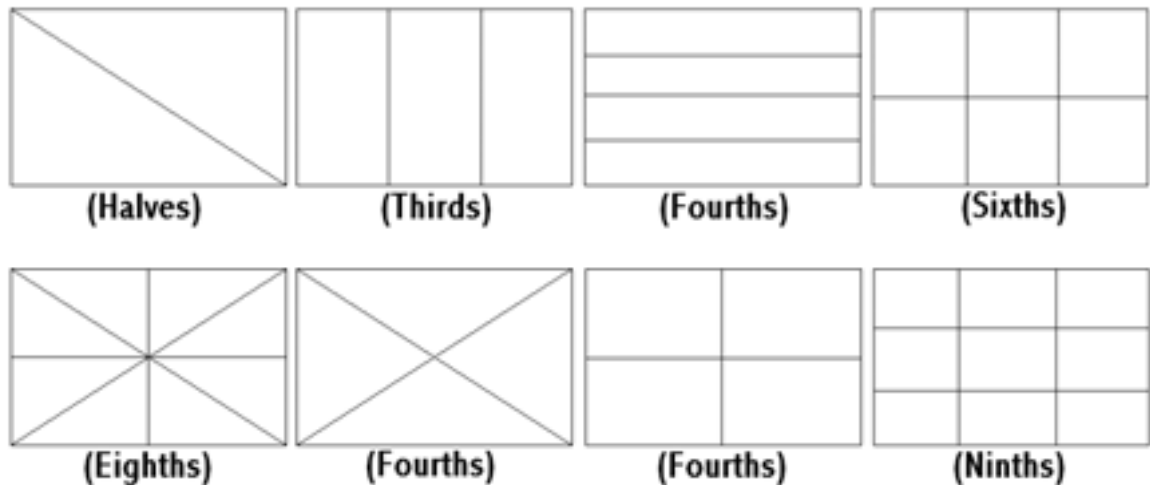


# Fraction Flags



Flags stand for things we care about like our country or state. Most flags are rectangles with designs that have special meanings. Nebraska's official flag was adopted in 1925 and the original flag is now on display in the Secretary of State's office in the Nebraska State Capitol building.

1. Read the Rand McNally book I Know About Flags, written by Chris Jaeggi, or another similar book. Discuss the meaning of flags and have students research state and international flags in encyclopedias, or on various Web sites. While researching, have students pay close attention to the flag symbols and designs, colors, shapes, etc.
2. Using a ruler and a pencil, divide a sheet of white construction paper into fractions to create a flag. There are many different fractions that can be drawn—halves, thirds, fourths, sixths, eighths, ninths, etc. Have students use their creativity to think of different ways to divide their flag into fractions (vertically, horizontally, and diagonally).
3. Remember that each fraction of the construction paper should be the same size and shape.
4. Some examples for dividing the paper into fractions:



5. After dividing the paper into fractions, draw state symbols or designs on the flag that represent Nebraska. Color the flag.
6. Tape the flag to a dowel and let your students wave their flags proudly. The flags can also be stuck in a lump of clay on the corner of the student's desk or displayed on a bulletin board with the caption, "Fraction Flags."

Whether sitting in the football stadium on a crisp Saturday in fall or floating down the Niobrara River on a hot summer day, Nebraskans are proud to show their team spirit by wearing Husker shirts, sweatshirts, jackets, hats, caps, and visors, and by flying Husker flags. Join in the team spirit by wearing a Husker visor and playing "Football Lingo Bingo" on page 23 of the Teacher's Guide.

1. Begin with a discussion about "team spirit." What does it mean to be a good Husker fan? What is proper etiquette when attending a Husker sporting event? What does good sportsmanship mean?

2. Cut the visor pattern out of white tag board or construction paper.

3. Decorate the visor with football-related designs and words such as "Go Big Red!"

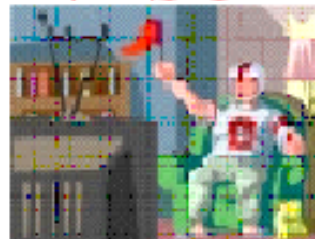
4. Cut out the visor and paper punch a hole about one inch from each end of the visor.

5. Cut a piece of elastic string and attach it to the back of the visor by threading it through each hole and tying knots to secure it.

6. Color the visor with the team colors of red and white or the official scarlet and cream.

7. Remember to wear your visor while playing "Football Lingo Bingo!"

## Go Big Red Visor



# Design a license plate!

The state of Nebraska holds a contest to determine its new license plates for motor vehicles. Nebraskans can submit their designs, which are eventually pared down to three finalists and then put up for public vote. For a whimsical art activity, have students design their own Nebraska license plate.

1. Research state license plate designs at:  
<http://worldlicenseplates.com>. First click on “Americas,” and then under “North America,” click on U.S.A.
2. Cut a license plate template from a 6" x 12" piece of white construction paper. Slightly trim the corners so they are rounded.
3. Have students brainstorm ideas for their license plate by thinking about Nebraska’s state symbols, landmarks, historical sites, scenery, notable Nebraskans, or some of the topics included in *C is for Cornhusker*.
4. Using their imagination and creativity, have students draw and color their license plate. Be sure to include the word Nebraska, a slogan, and/or numbers on the license plate to make it look authentic.



## Notable Nebraskans Matching Activity

(Match each notable Nebraskan with their accomplishment)  
The first one is completed.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <u>  i  </u> Gerald Ford                 | a. Founder of Arbor Day  |
| _____ Edwin Perkins                      | b. Nickname for the University of Nebraska football team   |
| _____ Sacagawea                          | c. Aided Freedom Seekers on the Underground Railroad and often served them cornbread                   |
| _____ Julius Sterling Morton             | d. Two famous leaders of the Oglala Sioux tribe  |
| _____ Willa Cather                       | e. Nebraska's "tall tale" character who plowed a "bee-line" for the border of Nebraska                 |
| _____ Meriwether Lewis and William Clark | f. Shoshone Indian and important guide and interpreter who accompanied Lewis and Clark                 |
| _____ Huskers                            | g. First Native American woman to become a medical doctor  |
| _____ "Buffalo Bill" Cody                | h. Founder of Boys Town  |
| _____ Father Flanagan                    | i. The 38 <sup>th</sup> president of the United States   |
| _____ Canteen Volunteers                 | j. Army officers appointed by President Jefferson to lead the Corps of Discovery expedition            |
| _____ Barbara Mayhew                     | k. A Civil War soldier, recognized as the first person to apply for a homestead land grant             |
| _____ Febold Feboldson                   | l. The Pulitzer Prize-winning author from Red Cloud, Nebraska  |
| _____ Susan Picotte LaFlesche            | m. Developed method for making Kool-Aid in 1927  |
| _____ Daniel Freeman                     | n. Expert rider, rifleman, and buffalo hunter who who became a legend in American West history         |
| _____ Red Cloud and Crazy Horse          | o. Served food to six million soldiers during World War II as their trains stopped in North Platte, NE |



# Native American Fry Bread



## Ingredients:

2 ½ cups flour  
1 ½ tablespoons baking powder  
1 tablespoon dry milk  
1 teaspoon salt  
¾ cup warm water  
1 tablespoon vegetable oil

- 1. With teacher or adult supervision:** Mix together the flour, baking powder, dry milk, and salt. Stir in the warm water and oil until a smooth dough forms. Knead the dough lightly on a floured surface. Then cover the dough with a towel for about 12 minutes.
- 2.** Separate the dough into 8 equal portions and form each one into a ball. Flatten each ball by hand into a 9-inch circle. Using your finger, poke a small hole in the center of each circle. Coat each circle of dough lightly with flour, then stack them and cover with a towel.
- 3.** In a deep skillet, heat 1 to 1 ½ inches of oil until hot or at about 375 degrees in an electric skillet. Fry the circles of bread, one at a time until golden and puffy (about two minutes to a side). Remove and drain on a paper towel.
- 4.** Sprinkle with cinnamon sugar when hot or brush with garlic butter. Other toppings to try: honey, jam, jelly, powdered sugar. Makes 8 servings. Enjoy!

## Plains Indian Tepee or Tipi



Native Americans lived in different dwellings depending upon which tribe they belonged to and where they lived. They used the natural resources around them to build their homes. The Plains Indians lived in tepees, or tipis, which provided protection from the weather and could easily be taken down when they moved to follow and hunt bison or buffalo herds.

The frame of the tepee was made of long wooden poles pointed together and fastened at the top. The bottoms were spread out to form a circle. The frame was then covered with a tent of animal hides or skins and Native American symbols were often painted on the side.

1. Make a model tepee by tracing a circle, 11-12 inches in diameter, on a brown paper sack. Cut it out.
2. Cut the circle in half to form two semicircles. Two tepees can be made from the two semi-circles. Crumble or wad up the semicircle into a ball and then smooth it out again. This will give the appearance of rough hide or leather.
3. Using markers or crayons, decorate the semicircle with Native American symbols.
4. With the flat edge at the top and the curved edge at the bottom, join the two ends of the semicircle together to form a cone shape. Staple or tape the two ends together. Keep a small opening at the top.
5. Tape four flexible or bendable straws together in a bunch. Insert the bunch of straws through the opening in the top of the tepee. Once inserted through the opening, the bunch of straws can be taped to the back tepee wall to hold them in place. Bend the flexible tops of the straws so they stick out of the top of the tepee. These will look like the lodge poles that the Plains Indians used to keep their tepees upright.
6. A small slit, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches, can be cut at the bottom center of the tepee and folded back to create a door in the tepee.





# Football Lingo Bingo



Join the excitement of Husker football by playing this bingo game and learn football vocabulary in the process! (Wear your “Go Big Red” visor, found in a previous activity.)


As a warm-up activity prior to playing bingo, hold a discussion about the qualities of teamwork, cooperation, and good sportsmanship. Discuss the meaning of the Husker’s motto: “Not the victory, but the action, not the goal, but the game; in the deed, the glory.”

1. Give each student a copy of the bingo words listed below, or write the words on a chalkboard.
2. Have students select 24 of the words to write on their bingo card, in any order. A sample bingo card can be found on the next page.
3. Use the same directions you might use in playing regular bingo.
4. Students can use math “counters” or “manipulatives” to cover their bingo card or they can make their own by cutting football shapes out of brown construction paper.
5. The following words are just a sample of the many football terms that can be used in playing bingo. The definition of these words may be found by searching for “football glossary” Web sites such as:

[www.firstbasesports.com/football\\_glossary.html](http://www.firstbasesports.com/football_glossary.html)  
[http://football.about.com/bl\\_glossary.htm](http://football.about.com/bl_glossary.htm)

Football	Touchdown	Goal	Run	Down
Center	Helmet	Spike	Tackle	Offsides
Points	Halfback	Fullback	Uniform	Yards
Penalty	Field	Goalpost	Kick	Time-out
Punt	Pass	Defense	Offense	Quarter
Score	Interception	Receiver	Fumble	Carry
Overtime	End zone	Completion	Huddle	Coin toss
Quarterback	Cheer	Halftime	Officials	Coach
Captain	Spiral	Substitution	Handoff	Fans

# FOOTBALL BINGO



## Sprouting Grass Egghead



One disadvantage to living on the prairie was the lack of trees and therefore a lack of material for building a home. Without trees, settlers were forced to use the prairie itself for building material and they often built their houses out of sod, or dirt that had grass growing in it. The settlers had to find the right kind of grass that had densely packed roots to hold the soil together. So Nebraska settlers searched for fields of buffalo grass, little bluestem (the official state grass of Nebraska), prairie cord grass, Indian grass, wire grass, and wheat grass. Because plant roots were left in the sod, new growth sprouted each spring and summer and it was not uncommon to have grass and wildflowers sprouting on the rooftop of the sod house.

**For an activity in growing green grass, try this science experiment.**

1. Break an egg by using a needle or a small nail to make a hole at one end, about the size of a quarter. Try to keep as much of the shell in one piece as possible.
2. Drain the eggshell and then thoroughly and carefully rinse it.
3. With the broken side up, carefully use a permanent marker to make a funny face on the front of the eggshell.
4. Decorate an old film canister, or use a 1-inch strip of construction paper to make a ring on which to stand the eggshell.
5. Fill the eggshell  $\frac{2}{3}$  full with dirt and sprinkle some grass seeds on the top. Then add a thin layer of dirt over the seeds. (Plant according to package directions.)
6. Water your egghead every day and it should start sprouting in 2 - 3 days.
7. Once the grass or hair has begun to grow, it can be styled into pigtails, a ponytail, a buzz cut, spiked hair, etc. Be creative!



# Tornadoes and Twisters

Prior to the arrival of tornado season, practice your school's emergency plan and procedure for a tornado drill so students are well prepared in the event of a real tornado.

## Tornado in a Bottle

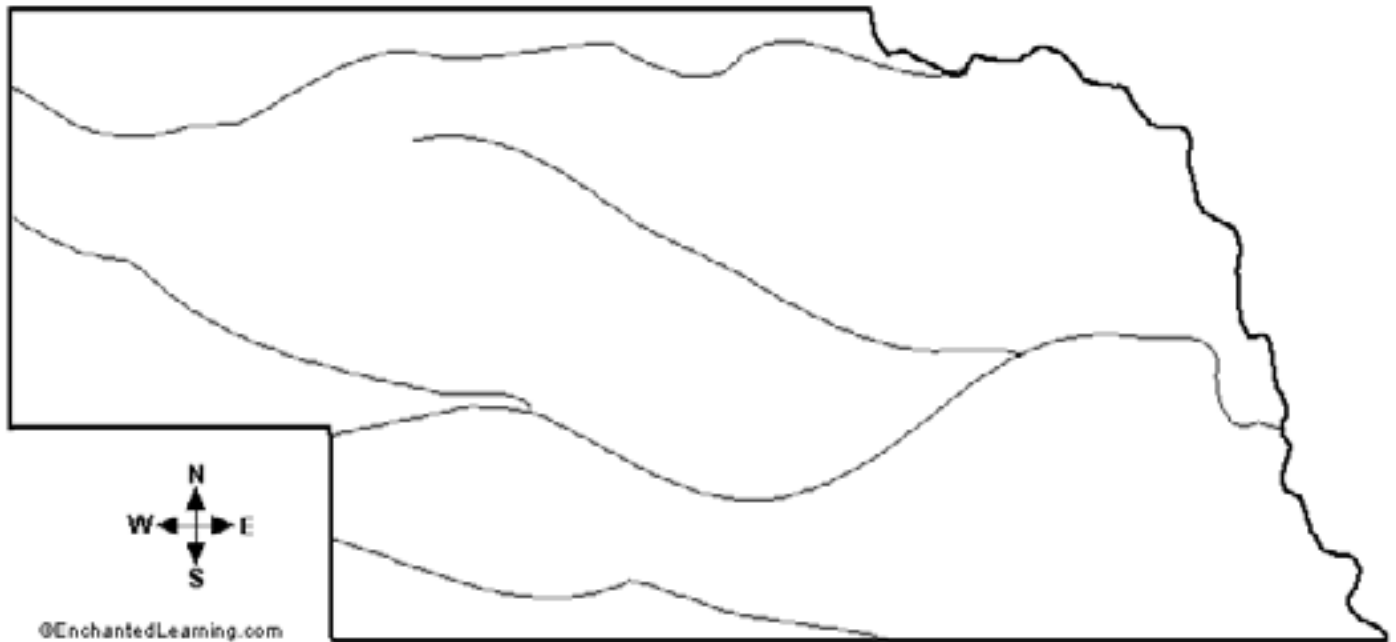
16 or 20 oz. clear plastic bottle with a cap  
cold water  
two drops of a clear liquid dish detergent  
1 teaspoon of glitter (optional)

1. Fill the plastic bottle with cold water.
2. Add the two drops of liquid dish detergent and glitter to the bottle.
3. Screw on the top tightly.
4. Holding the bottle by the neck, turn it upside down. Quickly rotate your wrist vigorously, many times in a clockwise motion.
5. When you stop rotating the bottle, a mini tornado will form inside.
6. Additional experiments can be found on Web sites under the heading "tornadoes in a bottle."

## Twister Jeopardy

For a fun way to summarize what was read in *C is for Cornhusker*, play a game of "Jeopardy" using a mat from the game "Twister."

1. Use the questions from the page titled "A Friendly Farmer's Field of Facts" located at the back of the book *C is for Cornhusker*.
2. Write each of the 20 questions on the lined side of an index card.
3. Based on your students' knowledge of Nebraska and having read *C is for Cornhusker*, place the four easiest questions, written on index cards, across the 1st row of the Twister mat and write "20 points" on the front of each one. Place the next four easiest questions across the 2nd row and write "40 points" on the front of each one. The 3rd row of questions is worth 60 points each, the 4th row is worth 80 points each, and the last (5th) row should have the most difficult questions, each worth 100 points.
4. Divide the class into teams and create your own rules for a game of "Jeopardy."



**Take the Union Pacific Train from east to west across the state of Nebraska and, in the process, locate the following Nebraska cities, rivers, and bordering states on the map.**

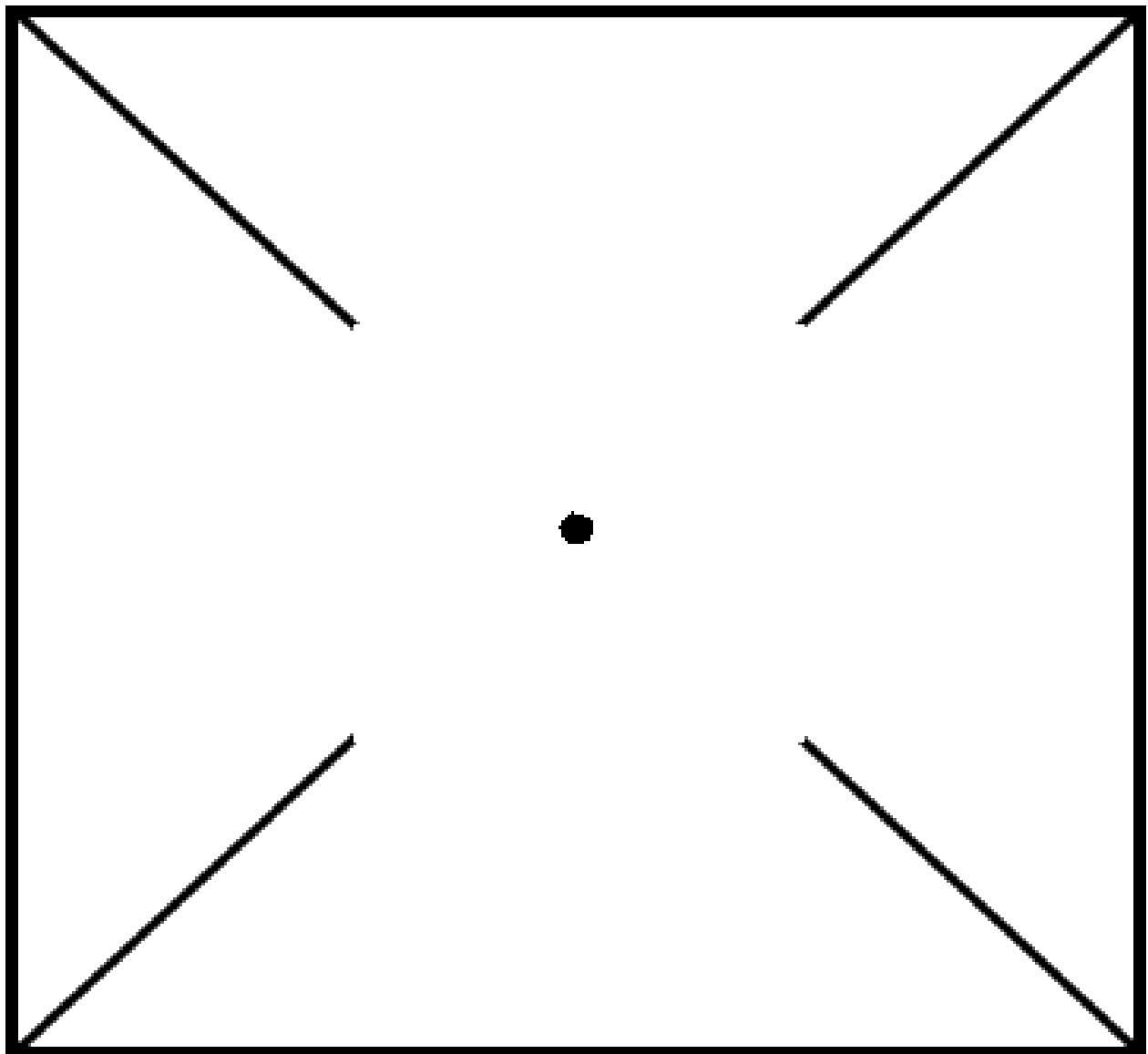
1. How many states share a border with Nebraska? Label the bordering states, on the map, in their correct location.
2. What state is located directly north of Nebraska?
3. \_\_\_\_\_ is the state located directly south of Nebraska.
4. Name two states that share an eastern border with Nebraska.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are the two states that share a western border with Nebraska.
6. What river forms the eastern border of Nebraska? Label it on the map.
7. The \_\_\_\_\_ River is a popular summer spot for tubing and canoeing. Label this river on the map.
8. The \_\_\_\_\_ River is Nebraska's official state river. Label it on the map.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ is the capital city of Nebraska. Label it on the map and draw a star next to it.
10. Name Nebraska's largest city. Label it on the map and draw a large dot next to it.



# A Windmill Pinwheel

For an experiment to demonstrate how wind power turns the blades of a windmill, make a pinwheel from the following pattern.

1. Cut out a copy of the pinwheel square and color and decorate it. Then cut in from all four corners on the black line, leaving about two inches of the center uncut. Do not fold, but gently bend one of the cut corners to the center point. Skip the next cut corner and bend the following one. Skip and bend until four points meet in the center. Stick a straight pin with a flat head through all four points in the center of the pinwheel and then stick the pin into a pencil eraser. Stick the pin into the eraser head only far enough so it does not go all the way through. Have fun in the wind!
2. Web sites with pinwheel directions and patterns:  
[www.leslietryon.com/3dcolorcutout/makepinw/makepinwheel.html](http://www.leslietryon.com/3dcolorcutout/makepinw/makepinwheel.html)  
<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/pinwheel/>

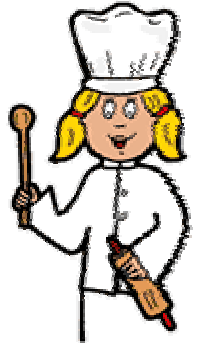


# A-MAIZE-ING CORN

Children may be amazed at how many common foods are made from corn. Bring in a variety of corn-based foods to conduct a classroom taste test such as Kix, Corn Chex, Corn Flakes, corn chips, corn tortillas, corn meal, corn syrup, canned corn, frozen corn, and popcorn. Display the foods and graph the foods that students have tasted.

Try a cornbread recipe that may be similar to the one Barbara Mayhew served the Freedom Seekers at the Mayhew Cabin on the Underground Railroad. Visit the Mayhew Cabin Web site at:

[www.mayhewcabin.com/education.html](http://www.mayhewcabin.com/education.html)



1 cup all whole wheat flour  
1 cup yellow cornmeal  
¼ cup brown sugar or dark molasses  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 cup milk  
¼ cup melted butter  
1 egg, beaten

1. Heat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Grease 8-inch square pan.
3. Combine dry ingredients.
4. Stir in remaining ingredients until dry ones are moistened.
5. Pour batter into prepared square pan.
6. Bake for 20-25 minutes until golden brown.
7. Serve warm with butter, honey, or jelly.
8. Makes 9 full servings.



## It's Official—Nebraska's State Symbols

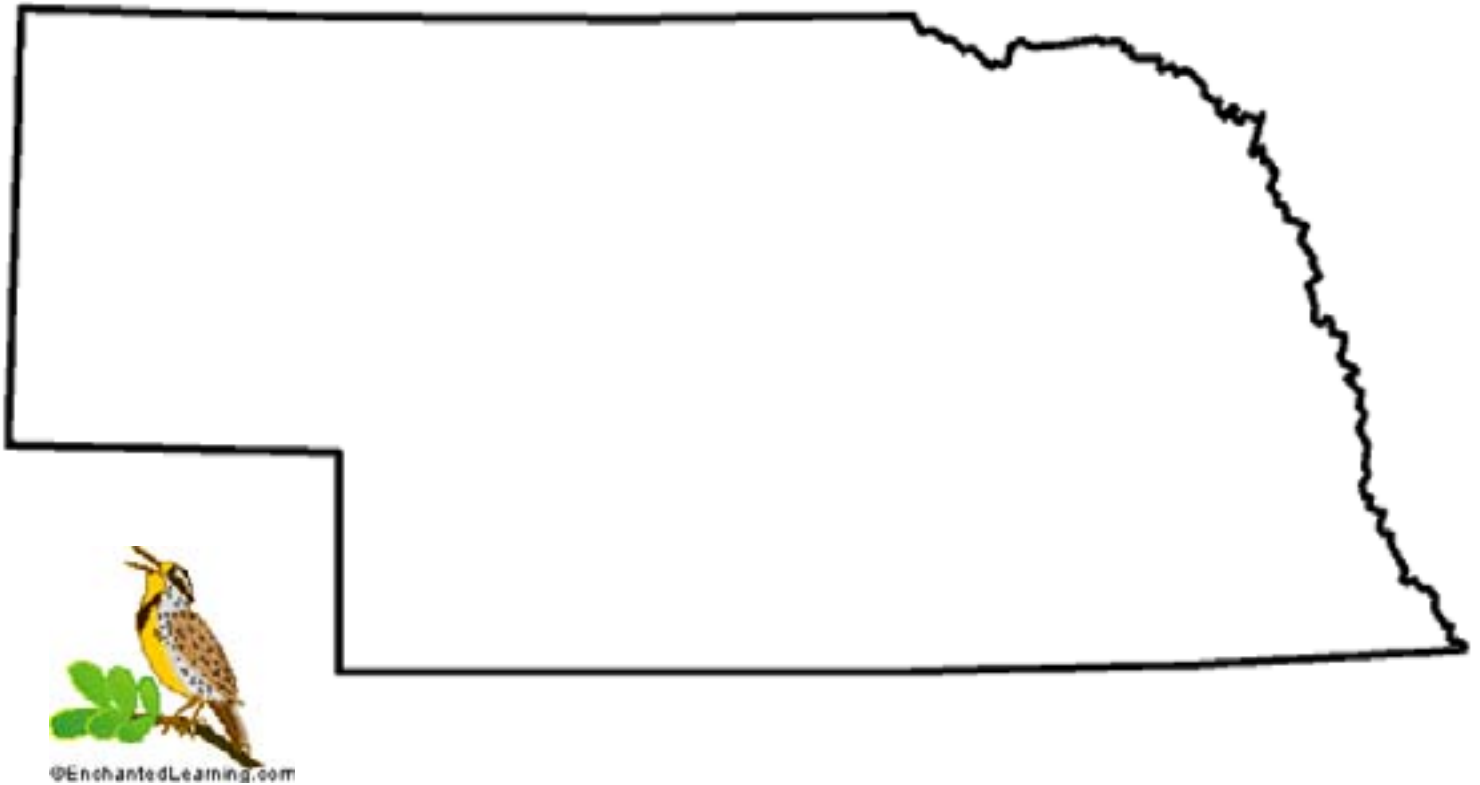
Complete the puzzle of state symbols by filling in the blanks below with the correct letters to form words. Answers can be found by reading *C is for Cornhusker*. A hyphen (-) indicates there is more than one word in the answer.

1.    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ **I** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
2.    \_ \_ **T** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
3.    \_ \_ **S** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
  
4.    \_ **O** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
5.    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ **F** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
6.    **F** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
7.    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ **I** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
8.    **C** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
9.    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ **I** \_ \_
10.    \_ **A** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
11.    \_ \_ **L** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

1. Official state mammal
2. Official state tree
3. Official state bird
4. Official state insect
5. Official state fish
6. Official “tall tale” of the state
7. Official state river
8. Official state nickname
9. Official state soft drink
10. Official state fossil
11. Official state flower

What secret code do the above **yellow** letters spell?

\_, \_ , \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_



## Booklet of Nebraska's State Symbols

1. Use the above outline of the map of Nebraska to make a booklet of state symbols. Copy enough pages to make a booklet for each student or have each student create their own booklet by cutting out one copy of the outline and using it as a pattern in making additional pages.
2. Label each page with one of the state symbols and include a colorful illustration and interesting fact. For example: Label a page with **Western Meadowlark-State Bird**. Students may want to illustrate the bird in its natural habitat and add an interesting fact such as, **The meadowlark is known for its joyful song.**
3. Some state symbols that could be included in the booklet:

cottonwood—state tree	little bluestem—state grass
western meadowlark-state bird	blue chalcedony—state gemstone
goldenrod—state flower	milk— state beverage
white-tailed deer—state mammal	Kool-Aid—state soft drink
mammoth—state fossil	Platte River—state river
Cornhusker State—state nickname	“Beautiful Nebraska”—state song
honeybee—state insect	“Equality Before the Law—motto
channel catfish—state fish	prairie agate—state rock
4. Add a title and cover illustration to the booklet. Have the students include their name on the front cover as the book's author and illustrator.

# Zany Zack the Zebra Zigzagged Through the Zoo

## Animal Alliterations



Bring some of the Henry Doorly Zoo animals into the classroom with this animal alliteration activity. An alliteration or initial rhyme is the repetition of an initial consonant sound in two or more neighboring words or syllables, such as Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.

1. Read some alliteration-based literature to the students such as *Alligator Arrived with Apples* by Crescent Dragonwagon. This alliterative alphabet story describes what some unusual animal guests bring to a vegetarian Thanksgiving potluck.
2. Brainstorm a list of animals that can be found at the Henry Doorly Zoo. [www.henrydoorlyzoo.com](http://www.henrydoorlyzoo.com)
3. Assign or have students choose an animal and write an alliterative sentence using as many words as possible with the same consonant or vowel sound as the animal chosen.  
Example: Pete the puffy penguin played piano in the pool.
4. Have students cut out a giant letter, on which to write their alliterative sentence, from an 11" x 17" sheet of construction paper. The giant letter should be the same as the beginning letter of the animal they have chosen for their alliterative sentence. Example: Cut out a giant P for the sentence, "Pete the puffy penguin played piano in the pool."
5. To create a giant letter, have students type their letter on a computer using the "arial black" font in size 72 print. This will give them a model to look at while drawing their enlarged letter on the 11" x 17" sheet of construction paper. Cut out the letter.

A B C D E F G

6. Print the alliterative sentence around the outside of the giant cut-out letter. Draw an illustration to go along with the alliterative sentence. Have students share their alliterative sentence with the class.

# Cornhusker Word Search

## Words To Find:

ARBORDAY  
 BUFFALOBILL  
 CORNHUSKER  
 FOOTBALL  
 GREATPLAINS  
 KOOLAID  
 LEWISANDCLARK  
 LINCOLN  
 MAMMOTH  
 NIOBRARA  
 OMAHA  
 PIONEERS  
 PONYEXPRESS  
 POWWOW  
 QUILT  
 RAILROAD  
 SANDHILLCRANE  
 SODDY  
 STATESYMBOLS  
 TALLTALE  
 TORNADO  
 VOLUNTEERS  
 WINDMILL  
 ZOO

Y	T	G	S	L	O	B	M	Y	S	E	T	A	T	S
S	L	Y	R	A	I	L	R	O	A	D	O	V	J	A
P	R	E	L	L	I	B	O	L	A	F	F	U	B	N
O	O	E	W	M	L	L	A	B	T	O	O	F	X	D
N	M	W	E	I	O	D	A	N	R	O	T	A	H	H
Y	G	A	W	T	S	T	L	I	U	Q	T	R	B	I
E	M	A	H	O	N	A	R	B	O	R	D	A	Y	L
X	I	L	T	A	W	U	N	T	W	Q	H	R	S	L
P	N	L	O	C	N	I	L	D	C	J	Q	B	O	C
R	E	K	S	U	H	N	R	O	C	C	F	O	D	R
E	O	H	T	O	M	M	A	M	V	L	Z	I	D	A
S	S	R	E	E	N	O	I	P	U	Z	A	N	Y	N
S	N	K	S	N	I	A	L	P	T	A	E	R	G	E
O	R	T	A	L	L	T	A	L	E	K	E	S	K	S
L	L	I	M	D	N	I	W	K	O	O	L	A	I	D

# TEACHER'S GUIDE ANSWERS

## Notable Nebraskans Matching Activity

- Gerald Ford-**i**
- Edwin Perkins-**m**
- Sacagawea-**f**
- Julius Sterling Morton-**a**
- Willa Cather-**l**
- Meriwether Lewis and  
William Clark-**j**
- Huskers-**b**
- “Buffalo Bill” Cody-**n**
- Father Flanagan-**h**
- Canteen Volunteers-**o**
- Barbara Mayhew-**c**
- Febold Feboldson-**e**
- Susan Picotte LaFlesche-**g**
- Daniel Freeman-**k**
- Red Cloud and Crazy Horse-**d**

## Let's Map It!

1. Six states share a border:  
South Dakota, Iowa, Missouri  
Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming
2. South Dakota
3. Kansas
4. Iowa and Missouri
5. Wyoming and Colorado
6. Missouri River
7. Niobrara
8. Platte
9. Lincoln
10. Omaha

## It's Official!

1. white-tailed deer
  2. cottonwood
  3. western meadowlark
  4. honeybee
  5. channel catfish
  6. Febold Feboldson
  7. Platte River
  8. Cornhusker State
  9. Kool-Aid
  10. mammoth
  11. goldenrod
- (It's Official)**

## Nebraska Word Search

Y	T	G	S	L	O	B	M	Y	S	E	T	A	T	S
S	L	Y	R	A	I	L	R	O	A	D	O	V	J	A
P	R	E	L	L	I	B	O	L	A	F	F	U	B	N
O	O	E	W	M	L	L	A	B	T	O	O	F	X	D
N	M	W	E	I	O	D	A	N	R	O	T	A	H	H
Y	G	A	W	T	S	T	L	I	U	Q	T	R	B	I
E	M	A	H	O	N	A	R	B	O	R	D	A	Y	L
X	I	L	T	A	W	U	N	T	W	Q	H	R	S	L
P	N	L	O	C	N	I	L	D	C	J	Q	B	O	C
R	E	K	S	U	H	N	R	O	C	C	F	O	D	R
E	O	H	T	O	M	M	A	M	V	L	Z	I	D	A
S	S	R	E	E	N	O	I	P	U	Z	A	N	Y	N
S	N	K	S	N	I	A	L	P	T	A	E	R	G	E
O	R	T	A	L	L	T	A	L	E	K	E	S	K	S
L	L	I	M	D	N	I	W	K	O	O	L	A	I	D