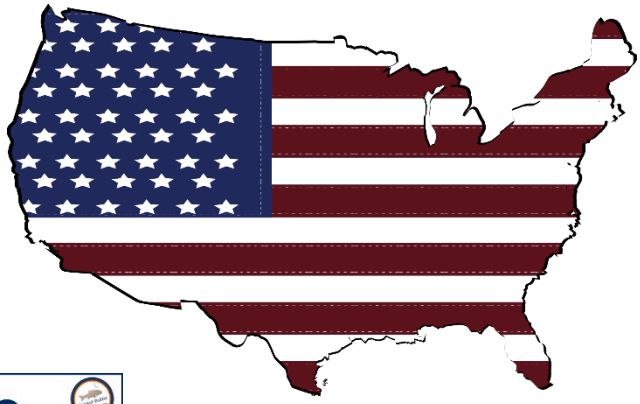
Listening to Learn United States



This is a sample of our Listening to Learn US States Packets:

Print one picture for each child for each set of directions you do. You will need crayons or colored pencils. For the first set of directions, you will also need a map, globe or atlas where your children can see where Hawaii and Alaska are located. Read the directions to your children with modifications as stated below, if needed.

For children working at simple levels, break directions up, help them find locations, or modify the directions in other ways to help them be successful.

If the directions are too easy for your child, give two at a time. Or make it even harder by giving your child something to remember (a word, phrase, number, etc.), then give her the two directions. Once she has completed the directions, ask her what she was supposed to have remembered.

These activities are to help teach your children learn how to follow directions and to give them practice. They are NOT tests. The goal is for your children to experience **at least 80% success**. Modifications will help your children achieve this level of success. As your children become better at following directions, decrease the amount of help you are giving them.

United States

US Map

Let's explore some major characteristics of a map of the United States. Alaska and Hawaii are not really located where they appear on the map in front of you so get out a map or globe to help us with the first two directions.

1) First, look at the map you got out and find Alaska. You will see Alaska is a US state that sits at the northwestern border of Canada across the Bering Strait from Russia. On your map, draw some snowflakes and some mountain peaks on Alaska and write 'Bering Strait' to the left of it.
2) Now find Hawaii on the map that you got out. You will see Hawaii is a US state that is a series of islands in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Color the area around the islands on your paper blue and write 'Pacific Ocean' above Hawaii, to the west of California. The Pacific Ocean lies west of the contiguous United States.
3) Let's look at the other big borders of the United States. Canada is located above the contiguous United States. The entire northern border touches Canada. Write 'Canada' in red above the US.
4) To the South is Mexico. The borders of California, Arizona, and New Mexico and the southwestern border of Texas all touch Mexico. Write 'Mexico' in green below these states.
5) To the east of Mexico is the Gulf of Mexico, which borders the southeastern edge of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and the western side of Florida. Write 'Gulf of Mexico' here and then draw blue waves around your words.
6) To the east of the contiguous United States is the Atlantic Ocean. Write 'Atlantic Ocean' on the right side of your paper.
7) Now we are going to color the Great Lakes blue. Color the areas north and east of Michigan blue. Then color the areas north of Ohio and western New York blue. Finally, color the lake in the middle of Michigan blue. These are the five Great Lakes. (*Break this direction into three parts or combine the parts if your children are able to handle longer directions.)*
8) Let's fill in one more body of water…the Mississippi River. Start about half way up the Wisconsin border with Minnesota and trace the curving borders south with a blue pencil until you reach the Gulf of Mexico. This river has played a major role in the development of the US.
9) Another major geographical feature are the Rocky Mountains. Draw gray mountain peaks across eastern Idaho, western Montana, most of Wyoming, and through central Colorado. (*Break up this direction as needed*.)
10) The area to the southwest of the Rocky Mountains is mostly desert. Write 'desert' across Nevada. Then color Nevada and the areas just around it tan like sand.
11) Finally, head back east to where northern Virginia touches Maryland. Put a big red star here. This is where Washington DC, the capital of the United States, is located.

Did one of these places sound interesting? Do a little research about it! We will learn more about the United States on the next page.

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United States

US Facts and Symbols

Today, we are going to learn more about the history and symbols of the United States.

1) On July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was signed separating the 13 British colonies from Britain. This date is celebrated every year as the founding of the United States. Color the 4th of July picture on your paper alternating red and blue for the letters. (*Show your children what 'alternating' means, if needed.*)
2) The Liberty Bell hung in Independence Hall where the Declaration of Independence was signed and was believed to be rung along with other bells on July 8th to announce the signing of the declaration. Color the wood at the top brown and the bell itself bronze or orangish-brown.
3) However, the United States did not really become a sovereign nation until the Treaty of Paris was signed at the end of the Revolutionary War in 1784. Write '1784' in the bottom righthand corner.
4) And it wasn't until 1787 that the Constitution was signed, which set up the structure of the US government as we now know it. Circle the Constitution in blue, which starts with 'We The People' and write '1787' to the right of it.
5) Despite all this, the bald eagle became the US national symbol in 1782. After the Declaration of Independence was signed, several people submitted designs for a national seal and in 1782, one was created with a bald eagle at its center. Color the body of the bald eagle brown, leaving the head and the very tip of the tail white. Color the beak yellow. (*Modification:* Break into two parts, if needed.)
6) The Statue of Liberty is another symbol of American freedom, but did not arrive in the United States until 1885. It was a gift from the French people commemorating the alliance of France and the United States during the American Revolution. Color the Statue of Liberty green and write '1885' above the crown.
7) The flag shown on your page was adopted in 1960 when Hawaii joined the United States. Color every other stripe red starting with the top one and color the area around the 50 stars dark blue. (*Modification:* Break into two parts, if needed.)
8) Another symbol of the US government is Uncle Sam, which came into use during the War of 1812. Write 'Uncle Sam' in red below the Liberty Bell. Uncle Sam has the same initials at the United States.
9) Finally, the other national symbol is the national anthem or the Star Spangled Banner, which starts with "Oh say, can you see…" To the right of the flag, write 'Oh say, can you see'.

What was the most interesting thing you learned?

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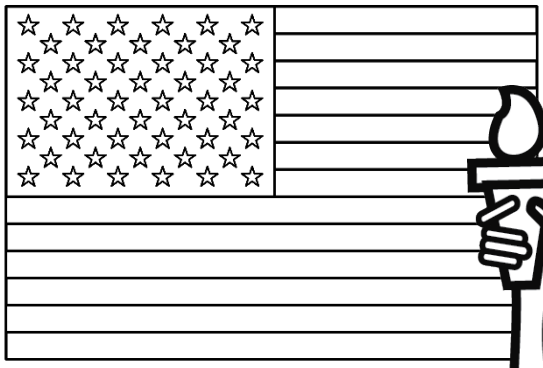

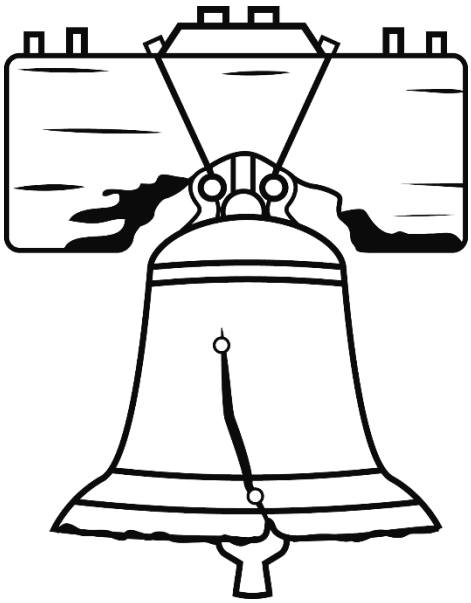

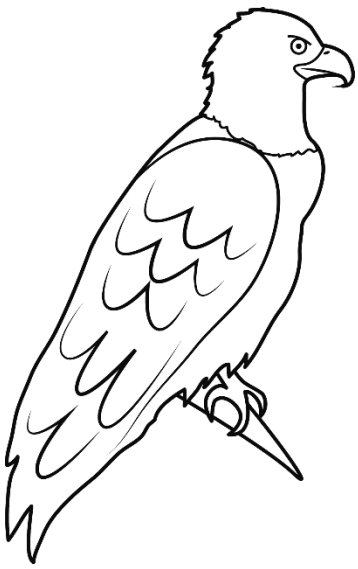

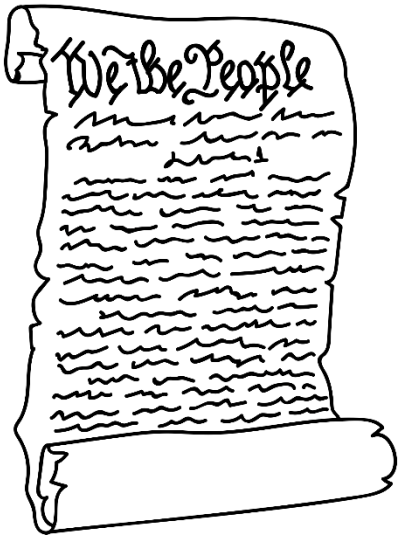

4th of July!

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