

Grade 5 ELA

Activity 2

- **Imagine Language & Literacy or Lexia – 20-30 minutes three times a week.**
 - Log in through Clever
- **Reading- Read for 20 minutes each day (Nonfiction Text)**

Title _____

Author _____

Throughout the week we will be exploring different states in the U.S.A. Before you read think about what you already know about that specific state as well as anything you want to learn.

Reading Comprehension

- Read about Alaska. As you read think about how Alaska is the same and different from California.

Writing

- Choose a diagram, map, chart, graph or image that is important to the text. Draw the image & explain its significance to the text.

Alaska

Get facts and photos about the 49th state.

BY JAMIE KIFFEL-ALCHEH

FAST FACTS

- NICKNAME: The Last Frontier
- STATEHOOD: 1959; 49th state
- POPULATION (AS OF JULY 2015): 738,432
- CAPITAL: Juneau
- BIGGEST CITY: Anchorage
- ABBREVIATION: AK
- STATE BIRD: willow ptarmigan
- STATE FLOWER: forget-me-not

HISTORY

The first people probably came to what is now Alaska about 13,000 years ago. They either walked from what is now [Russia](#), which was connected to Alaska by a patch of land up to 600 miles wide called the Bering Land Bridge, or they sailed.

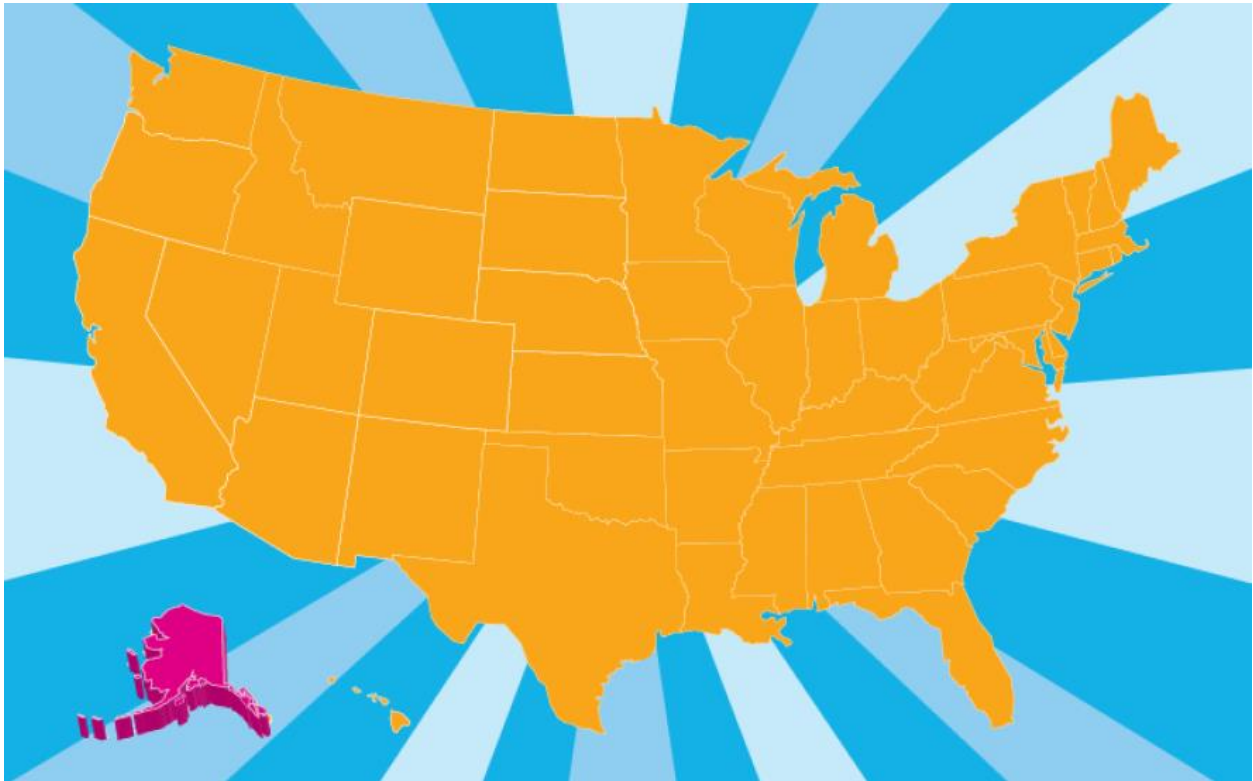
Russians settled here in 1784, and in 1867 the United States purchased the land for two cents an acre. Many thought the harsh habitat was a bad buy until gold was struck in 1872. Alaska became the 49th U.S. state in 1959.

[Indigenous people](#) including the [Inuit](#), [Tlingit](#), Haida, Aleuts, Athabascans, and [Yup'ik](#) still live here.

WHY'S IT CALLED THAT?

Alaska's name comes from the native Aleut word Alyeska, or Aláxsxaq, which roughly means "great land."

GEOGRAPHY AND LANDFORMS



Head north through the contiguous (that means connected) United States, cross into Canada, then go all the way west to get to Alaska, the largest state (in area) in the Union. The state is bordered by Canada on the east, the Beaufort Sea and Arctic Ocean in the north, the Bering Sea and the Chukchi Sea in the west, and the Pacific Ocean and Gulf of Alaska in the south.

Alaska deserves its reputation for being cold. Much of the state is covered in a layer of permafrost—permanently frozen soil—and it's home to the largest glacier in North America. Called the Bering Glacier, it's 2,250 square miles, about the size of the state of Delaware. The northern and western coasts are tundra landscapes: flat and treeless with whipping winds. Brr!

Visit [Denali National Park](#) to see its snow-capped celebrity, Denali—the tallest mountain in North America.

The taiga forest in the center of the state is filled with evergreen trees, lakes, and meadows. Along the southeast coast, you'll even find rain forests. But watch out! Alaska has over 40 active volcanoes.

WILDLIFE



Off the north and west coasts of Alaska you might spot [polar bears](#), [beluga whales](#), and [walruses](#). More big [mammals](#) include black bears, moose, Dall sheep, musk oxen, [caribou](#), and the world's largest [brown bear](#), the Kodiak. Alaska is also home to [birds](#) such as albatross, eagles, and loons.

You can see trees including hemlock, pine, cedar, and Sitka spruce, Alaska's state tree. The state flower is the forget-me-not, which gives off its scent only at night.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Alaska's biggest export is the mineral zinc, but gold is its most famous export. Alaska is also known for lumber, fish—especially salmon—coal, and jade, the state gem.

FUN STUFF



—The temperature in northern Alaska dropped to -80°F in 1971, marking the coldest temperature ever recorded in the United States.

—Alaska is called the Land of the Midnight Sun because for over two months in the summer, in the northernmost part of the state, the sun doesn't set at all!

—The aurora borealis, also known as the Northern Lights, are bands of brightly colored light that dance across the night sky. They're caused by electrically charged particles from the sun that collide with gases in our atmosphere.

—Try a bite of aqutak, or ice cream—a mix of seal oil, animal fat, snow, and wild Alaskan berries.