

TOP TRUMPS

The United States

Introduction:

- Without using a map, ask students to name as many states that they can. As they are calling them off, make a chart of the states that they are citing.
- Tell them that they are going to learn about The United States and play a great game called Top Trumps and learn about the differences and similarities of the states and what they are known for.

Suggested lesson procedure:

Lesson 1

This lesson will familiarize the students with the United States.

- Divide the class into pairs
- Give a pack of the TOP TRUMPS **The United States** cards to each pair.
- Ask the children to lay the cards out face up either on their desks or on the floor.
- Give instructions such as “Find the state where you live”. Students find and hold up the corresponding cards as fast as they can. Once the children are familiar with the names of the states on the cards, ask individual children to take turns calling the names for their classmates to find.
- Create a “State wall”. (Students are more apt to use the “state wall” if they are involved with the creation of the wall. You can also have a large blank map of the United States that the students can fill in as the states are called out.)

Lesson 2

- Tell the children that they are going to use **The United States** cards to play TOP TRUMPS.
- Divide the class into groups of 3-6.
- Explain that each group needs only one pack of cards to play the game. Ask the children to put any extra packs to one side or turn them into you.
- To start the game, shuffle and deal all the cards face down. Each player holds their cards so that they can see the **top** card only. The player to the dealer's left starts by reading out a category from the **top** card (e.g. Indiana: Population: value 6 million).
- The other players then read out the same category from their cards. The one with the best or highest value wins, and that player collects all of the top cards, including their own, and moves them to the bottom of their pile. It is then their turn again to choose a category from the next card.
- If two or more cards share the top value and this will frequently occur with this set of cards, then all the cards are placed in the middle and the same player chooses again from the next card.
- Using a different category, the game is repeated until all of the cards are used.
- The person with all of the cards at the end is the winner!

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.3

Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.4

Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a *grade 4 topic or subject area*.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.7

Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

Lesson 3

Using the informational text on each TOP TRUMPS **The United States** cards, have the students work in groups to find the answers to the questions listed on the attached worksheet. This will give them additional information as they gain an understanding of the differences and similarities of the different states in the union.

Lesson 4

Writing is a tool that students can use to understand and dissect important facts and allows them to translate complex ideas into words and language. It helps create the bridge between content knowledge and understanding. A wide variety of writing assignments and activities move students from being passive learners to become actively engaged in social studies. Examples include social studies journals, free writes, vocabulary journals, observation reports topic analysis, diagrams, posters, brochures, charts and more.

Lesson 4 will provide an opportunity for students to use their writing as a means through which they are able to articulate complex regional facts, themes, and terms and synthesize concepts.

Regional Flipbook Project: The United States is divided into five regions. Divide your class into five groups, each representing one of the five regions: Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Southwest and West.

Utilizing the information from the TOP TRUMPS **The United States** cards along with other digital and print resources, the students will become familiar with the five regions of the United States as they work on a regional flipbook project. Give the students sufficient time to gather their information so they feel comfortable with their understanding of the region.

Have students make a group flipbook by taking four sheets of paper (preferable construction paper) and stagger them leaving 1/2"-1" at the bottom of each. Fold up the bottom, lining up the sheets leaving 1/2"-1" in the middle and press repeatedly until a sharp crease is formed. Insert staples in the crease. Each tab will be labeled.

You can choose your own areas for regional study, but I recommend these:

- regional name on cover
- states included in the region (a map if possible)
- location and climate
- geography (Describe a physical and human feature)
- cultural landmark (Think of what tourists would visit to learn more about the region)
- historical event or interesting fact
- a famous person and their accomplishment(s)

Student groups should be able to determine if they want each student to work on a particular area or they all work together as they research their region. (Conferencing is important at this time as it provides a form of assessment that is interactive and immediate. It can also allow you to model the best strategies for organizing either the group or the work product. Your informal feedback should guide the students in the direction of meeting the criteria for the assignment and answer any questions that they may have.)

Students should complete the flipbook and be prepared to share content for the next lesson.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.4

With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.A

Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings, and illustrations) when useful to aiding comprehension.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.D

Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.7

Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.7

Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.9

Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Lesson 5

Author's Chair: The Author's Chair strategy (Karelitz 1982; Boutwell 1983; Calkins 1983; Graves 1983) provides student writers with feedback on their writing as students engage effectively in collaborative discussions and presentations. It has also been called peer conferencing. The focus of the Author's Chair strategy is to provide feedback to students on their writing. This includes acknowledging its good qualities, making specific suggestions for improvement and asking thought-provoking questions of student authors so they produce writing, in this case a research report, in which the development and organization are appropriate for this assignment. The following activity is a version of the author's chair but completed in groups and not to assess writing strategy necessarily, but rather to share content that was discovered in their group's research.

Activity:

- Ask groups to come together to share their completed flipbooks.
- When all groups have had the opportunity to share their project, discuss similarities and differences pertaining to the regions until students have an excellent understanding.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.D

Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1.A

Come to discussions prepared having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.9

Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.