

# Geographic Educators of Nebraska

Advocating geographic education for all Nebraskans

## *Student Atlas of Nebraska Scavenger Hunt*

Students will become familiar with the atlas by using content vocabulary and context clues to find the most appropriate resource for information.

<b>Author</b>	Karen Graff
<b>Grade Level</b>	4th
<b>Class Period(s)</b>	2 (40 – 50 minutes)

### Nebraska Social Studies Standards

#### **SS 4.3.1**

**Students will explore where (spatial) and why people, places and environments are organized in the state.**

SS 4.3.1.a. Read local and state maps and atlases to locate physical and human features in Nebraska.

SS 4.3.1.b Apply map skills to analyze physical/political maps of the state.

SS 4.3.1.d Differentiate between cities, states, countries, and continents.

**SS 4.3.2 Students will compare the characteristics of places and regions and their impact on human decisions.**

SS 4.3.2.c Identify and classify regions.

**SS 4.3.4 Students will compare and contrast the characteristics of culture statewide.**

SS 4.3.4.b Compare and contrast population characteristics of the state of Nebraska (e.g., density, distribution, growth rates).

### Nebraska Science Standards

### Nebraska Language Arts Standards

#### **LA 4.1.5**

**Vocabulary: Students will build and use conversational, academic, and content-specific grade-level vocabulary.**

LA 4.1.5.a Apply knowledge of word structure elements, known words, and word patterns to determine meaning (e.g., plurals, possessives, parts of speech, affixes, base and root words).

LA 4.1.5.c Acquire new academic and content-specific grade-level vocabulary, relate to prior knowledge, and apply in new situations.

#### **LA 4.1.6**

**Comprehension: Students will construct meaning by using prior knowledge and text information**

### Nebraska Math Standards

**while reading  
grade-level literary  
and informational  
text.**

LA 4.1.6.f Use text features to locate information and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of print and digital text.

LA 4.1.6.i Construct and/or answer literal, inferential, and critical questions and support answers with explicit evidence from the text or additional source.

## Overview

This lesson is an introduction to the *Student Atlas of Nebraska*. Students will learn (or review) vocabulary that they will encounter in the Table of Contents, and later, throughout the Atlas. Then they will identify key words in the questions to decide which map or graphic in the Atlas will provide information needed to answer the questions.

## Purpose

The lesson will help students build content vocabulary for social studies and apply it as they become familiar with the *Student Atlas of Nebraska* as a classroom resource.

## Key Vocabulary

**Elevation**-Distance above sea level.

**Precipitation**-Any type of water that forms in the Earth's atmosphere and then drops onto the surface of the Earth.

**Latitude**-The measurement of distance north or south of the Equator. It is measured with 180 imaginary lines that form circles around the Earth east-west, parallel to the Equator.

**Longitude**-The measurement east or west of the prime meridian. Longitude is measured by imaginary lines that run around the Earth vertically (up and down) and meet at the North and South Poles.

**Aquifer**-An underground layer of rock that holds groundwater. Groundwater is rain or melted snow that has seeped into the ground and is held there.

**Vegetation**-All the plant life of a specific place.

**Reservoir**-An artificial lake where water is stored. Most reservoirs are formed by constructing dams across rivers.

**Expedition**-A journey with a specific purpose, such as exploration.

**Legislation**-Law, legal act, or statute.

**Ancestor**-Organism from whom one is descended.

Source: <http://nationalgeographic.org/glossary>

## Materials

- *Student Atlas of Nebraska* (1 copy for each student)
- 1 set of vocabulary pictorial cards to be posted
- 1 or 2 sets of "I have...Who has?" cards
- 1 Scavenger Hunt question sheet per student OR use question cards cut apart

## Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Use content vocabulary to locate information.
- Identify key words in order to find a resource for answering questions.
- Apply map skills to obtain information.

## Procedures

### First Session/Day 1

1. Teach or review Key Vocabulary words so students will understand the titles in the Table of Contents. Use your established procedure for teaching new vocabulary. (It is not the intent of this lesson that students memorize the definitions.)  
-OR-
  - Have the students look up definitions in the glossary of a social studies textbook or other resource and create a **simple** illustration that will help them remember the meaning at a glance.
  - OR-
  - Post the vocabulary pictorial cards as you discuss the definitions and how the simple card illustrations might serve as reminders.
2. Practice the words by using the "I have...Who has..." cards. Copy and cut apart 1 set if students are paired or 2 sets for individuals so each pair/student has one card. Distribute cards and tell students to be sure they know the definition of the word in bold print when they hear it. Leave the vocabulary pictorial cards posted so all students can see them.
  - Have students stand with their cards.
  - Any student may be chosen to begin the round. For example: "I have the word **latitude**. Who has the word that means 'the height of land above sea level'?"
  - After reading the card, the student sits down and continues to watch/listen.
  - The student who heard the definition for the word on his card reads his card next. Ex: "I have the word **elevation**. Who has the word that means 'a trip or journey to explore an area'?" That student sits down and the process continues.
  - If you use 2 sets of cards you can either divide the class into 2 groups that work

independently or remain as a large group and allow the first of the two students who hears his/her word to read the card. The other student who has the same card will hear it again during the repeat round and will read it then.

- The round ends when all students are seated. One student who is already seated (the student who started the round) will hear the definition of his word and will stand to signal the end of the session.

The class should be able to complete two rounds in about 5 minutes. Collect and redistribute the cards (or have students exchange cards) so each child has a different word. Begin another round. Repeat as time allows. This quick, repeated practice should prepare students for the next part of the lesson.

## Second Session/Day 2

1. Distribute a *Student Atlas of Nebraska* to each student.
2. If this is their first exposure to the Atlas, allow a few minutes for them to browse through the Atlas and note the different text features. Then, guide students through the Table of Contents asking them to note any vocabulary words they studied in the previous session. Ask what kind of information they expect to find on each page based on the titles.
3. Tell students that they will be acting as “search engines” to find appropriate resources just as a computer uses key words to search for information. Choose one of the questions on the Scavenger Hunt sheet to use an example. Read the question to the class and ask students to identify key words in the question that will guide them to the page where they might find the answer. **\*\*\*Note:** Students may not be able to actually answer the questions yet if they haven’t had adequate map reading experience. You must decide if they will only indicate key words in the questions and a page number OR if they should answer the question as well. You might have different expectations for different students. However, they should be able to answer many of the questions if they met the grade 3 standard and indicator:  
**SS 3.3.1 Students will explore where (spatial) and why people, places and**

**environments are organized in the state.**

SS 3.3.1.a Utilize map elements (i.e., title, scale, symbols, legend, and cardinal and intermediate directions)

4. Guide students through several questions if necessary until they are able to work independently.
5. Distribute either the sheets for independent/pair practice OR distribute question cards (1 per student/pair.) Allow time for students to complete the lesson. If you use the question cards, give students a few minutes to respond to their question and follow up with a class discussion. Ask students to share their thinking. How did the key words give them a clue about where to find the information (the correct page in the Atlas)? Are they confident they could find (or did they find) the correct answer by using the information/text features on that page?

## Assessment

The Scavenger Hunt Assessment is designed to be a formative assessment.

## Extensions

A follow-up lesson on comparing and contrasting eastern and western Nebraska provides an opportunity for students to apply their knowledge.

## ***Student Atlas of Nebraska Scavenger Hunt***

Browse through your *Student Atlas of Nebraska* after skimming the Table of Contents on page ii. Decide where you might find useful information in each of these situations. Underline the key word(s) which helped you make your decision.

1. A family is going to canoe on the Niobrara River next summer. Where is this river?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

2. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark explored part of Nebraska on their famous journey to the Pacific coast. In what part of our state did they travel?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

3. Nebraska's nickname is the Cornhusker State. What part of the state grows most of this important crop?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

4. Some football fans say that Memorial Stadium becomes Nebraska's third largest city on football game days. What city is really the third largest in our state?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

5. Nebraska is far from the Pacific and Atlantic coasts. How many states actually border Nebraska?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

6. The Nebraska History Museum in Lincoln has an exhibit called "The First Nebraskans" that displays artifacts from several Native American tribes. Tribes in the eastern and western parts of Nebraska had different ways of life. What was one main difference?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

7. Most people in Nebraska have relatives who immigrated from countries in Europe. What is the most common ancestry claimed by Nebraskans?

Page \_\_\_\_\_

8. Many Nebraska Native American farming tribes built earth lodges from thick grass and soil, supported by several heavy posts. Early settlers in Nebraska often built their homes from sod (layers of grass, roots, and soil) instead of logs. Why did these early people use so little wood for their homes?

Page \_\_\_\_\_

9. Nebraska does not experience hurricanes like coastal states might. Instead tornadoes are a dangerous type of storm in this area. Where in Nebraska are tornadoes the most common?

Page \_\_\_\_\_

10. We use a scale to weigh ourselves, food, packages, and other things. A different type of scale is used to measure distance. How might we find the distance across our state? What unit of measurement will we use?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

11. When we think of degrees, we usually think of temperature. But, this word has other meanings. On a map, degrees can be used to measure distance and location with a grid of lines called latitude and longitude. Which lines of latitude mark most of the northern border and all of the southern border of Nebraska?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

12. Nebraska is known as the Cornhusker State. However, corn is not the only important crop that grows here. What are two others?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

13. During some years in the 1950s and 1960s Nebraska's license plates used "The Beef State" as a motto, but it was not an official state nickname. However, beef comes from cattle which are raised across the state. How could you find the number of cattle in your county?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

14. The Dwight D. Eisenhower System of Interstate and Defense Highways was created by an act signed in 1956. What part of this system crosses Nebraska?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

15. Nebraska has 93 counties but not every county has its own legislator (or lawmaker) known as a state senator. How many legislative districts are there? In what district do you live?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

16. Many Nebraskans live in small towns across the state. About how many people live in Oshkosh, a town near the North Platte River?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

17. How many counties in Nebraska have over 500,000 people?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

18. Sometimes it is difficult to compare the areas (amount of land) of states on a map because they look so similar, like Wyoming and Colorado. Many of Nebraska's counties also appear to be the same size and shape. But, Nebraska's largest county is easy to identify. What is it?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

19. President Lincoln signed the Pacific Railway Act in 1862. This meant that the transcontinental railroad would be built so people could travel across the U.S. by train. What are some cities on the original route of the Union Pacific railroad across Nebraska?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

20. The Mormon Trail and Oregon Trail crossed Nebraska on the opposite sides of what river?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

21. One mile is equal to 5,280 feet. Name a place in Nebraska that is more than one mile above sea level.

Page\_\_\_\_\_

22. Water is an essential resource for plants and animals. Besides having rivers to provide water, Nebraska has a lot of water beneath its surface. How do we access this water?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

## "I have...Who has...?" Vocabulary Practice

I have the word **latitude**.

Who has the word that means "the height of land above sea level"?

I have the word **elevation**.

Who has the word that means "a trip or journey to explore an area"?

I have the word **expedition**. Who has the word that means "laws"?

I have the word **legislation**. Who has the word that means "a form of water that falls from the sky"?

I have the word **precipitation**. Who has the word that means "an imaginary line that reaches from the North Pole to the South Pole"?

## "I have...Who has...?" Vocabulary Practice

I have the word **longitude**. Who has the word that means "plant life"?

I have the word **vegetation**. Who has the word that means "an area of stored water to be used as needed"?

I have the word **reservoir**.  
Who has the word that means "a relative from many years ago such as a great-grandparent"?

I have the word **ancestor**.  
Who has the word that means "a natural area of sand and gravel beneath the land's surface that holds water"?

I have the word **aquifer**.  
Who has the word that means "an imaginary line that circles that Earth from west to east"?

## ***Student Atlas of Nebraska Scavenger Hunt***

Browse through your *Student Atlas of Nebraska* after skimming the Table of Contents on page ii. Decide where you might find useful information in each of these situations. Underline the key word(s) that helped you make your decision.

1. A family is going to canoe on the Niobrara River next summer. Where is this river?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

2. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark explored part of Nebraska on their famous journey to the Pacific coast. In what part of our state did they travel?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

3. Nebraska's nickname is the Cornhusker State. What part of the state grows most of this important crop?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

4. Some football fans say that Memorial Stadium becomes Nebraska's third largest city on football game days. What city is really the third largest in our state?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

5. Nebraska is far from the Pacific and Atlantic coasts. How many states actually border Nebraska?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

6. The Nebraska History Museum in Lincoln has an exhibit called “The First Nebraskans” that displays artifacts from several Native American tribes. Tribes in the eastern and western parts of Nebraska had different ways of life. What was one main difference?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

7. Most people in Nebraska have relatives who emigrated from countries in Europe. What is the most common ancestry claimed by Nebraskans?

Page \_\_\_\_\_

8. Many Nebraska Native American farming tribes built earth lodges from thick grass and soil, supported by several heavy posts. Early settlers in Nebraska often built their homes from sod (layers of grass, roots, and soil) instead of logs. Why did these early people use so little wood for their homes?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

9. Nebraska does not experience hurricanes like coastal states might. Instead tornadoes are a dangerous type of storm in this area. Where in Nebraska are tornadoes the most common?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

10. We use a scale to weigh ourselves, food, packages, and other things. A different type of scale is used to measure distance. How might we find the distance across our state? What unit of measurement will we use?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

11. When we think of degrees, we usually think of temperature. But, this word has other meanings. On a map, degrees can be used to measure distance and location with a grid of lines called latitude and longitude. Which lines of latitude mark most of the northern border and the entire southern border of Nebraska?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

12. Nebraska is known as the Cornhusker State. However, corn is not the only important crop that grows here. What are two others?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

13. During some years in the 1950s and 1960s Nebraska's license plates used "The Beef State" as a motto, but it was not an official state nickname. However, beef comes from cattle that are raised across the state. How could you find the number of cattle in your county?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

14. The Dwight D. Eisenhower System of Interstate and Defense Highways was created by an act signed in 1956. What part of this system crosses Nebraska?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

15. Nebraska has 93 counties but not every county has its own legislator (or lawmaker) known as a state senator. How many legislative districts are there? In what district do you live?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

16. Many Nebraskans live in small towns across the state. About how many people live in Oshkosh, a town near the North Platte River?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

17. How many counties in Nebraska have over 500,000 people?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

18. Sometimes it is difficult to compare the areas (amount of land) of states on a map because they look so similar, like Wyoming and Colorado. Many of Nebraska's counties also appear to be the same size and shape. But, Nebraska's largest county is easy to identify. What is it?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

19. President Lincoln signed the Pacific Railway Act in 1862. This meant that the transcontinental railroad would be built so people could travel across the U.S. by train. What are some cities on the original route of the Union Pacific railroad across Nebraska?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

20. The Mormon Trail and Oregon Trail crossed Nebraska on the opposite sides of what river?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

21. One mile is equal to 5,280 feet. Name a place in Nebraska that is more than one mile above sea level.

Page\_\_\_\_\_

22. Water is an essential resource for plants and animals. Besides having rivers to provide water, Nebraska has a lot of water beneath its surface. How do we access this water?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

## ***Student Atlas of Nebraska Scavenger Hunt-KEY***

Browse through your *Student Atlas of Nebraska* after skimming the Table of Contents on page ii. Decide where you might find useful information in each of these situations. Underline the key word(s) that helped you make your decision.

**(Page numbers are in parentheses to show where answers can be found. Where there are 2 page numbers, the second is for the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the *Atlas*.)**

1. A family is going to canoe on the **Niobrara River** next summer. Where is this **river**?

Page \_\_\_\_\_ 11 or 12 (northern/northwestern Nebraska)

2. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark **explored** part of Nebraska on their famous **journey** to the Pacific coast. In what part of our state did they **travel**?

Page \_\_\_\_\_ 19 (east/northeastern Nebraska along the Missouri River)

3. Nebraska's nickname is the **Cornhusker** State. What part of the state grows most of this important **crop**?

Page \_\_\_\_\_ 34/37 (eastern)

4. Some football fans say that Memorial Stadium becomes **Nebraska's third largest city** on football game days. What city is really the third largest in our state?

Page \_\_\_\_\_ 44/48 (Bellevue)

5. Nebraska is far from the Pacific and Atlantic coasts. How many **states** actually **border** Nebraska?

Page \_\_\_\_\_ 4 (6—South Dakota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming)

6. The Nebraska History Museum in Lincoln has an exhibit called “The First Nebraskans” that displays artifacts from several **Native American tribes**. **Tribes** in the eastern and western parts of Nebraska had different ways of life. What was one main difference?

Page \_\_\_\_\_ 17 (Eastern tribes were typically farmers and western tribes were hunters/nomads.)

7. Most people in Nebraska have **relatives** who emigrated from countries in Europe. What is the most common **ancestry** claimed by Nebraskans?

Page \_\_\_\_\_ 27/29 (German)

8. Many Nebraska Native American farming tribes built earth lodges from **thick grass and soil**, supported by several heavy **posts**. Early settlers in Nebraska often built their homes from **sod (layers of grass, roots, and soil)** instead of **logs**. Why did these early people use so little **wood** for their homes?

Page \_\_\_\_\_ 14 (Nebraska was covered mostly by grasses and had only small areas of forest.)

9. Nebraska does not experience hurricanes like coastal states might. Instead **tornadoes** are a dangerous type of storm in this area. Where in Nebraska are **tornadoes** the most common?

Page \_\_\_\_\_ 16 (eastern Nebraska)

10. We use a scale to weigh ourselves, food, packages, and other things. A different type of scale is used to **measure distance**. How might we find the **distance** across our state? What unit of **measurement** will we use?

Page \_\_\_\_\_ 6 (Use the scale bar to find the distance in miles.)

11. When we think of degrees, we usually think of temperature. But, this word has other meanings. On a map, degrees can be used to measure distance and location with a grid of lines called **latitude and longitude**. Which lines of **latitude** mark most of the northern border and the entire southern border of Nebraska?

Page\_\_\_\_\_ 5 (43° N, 40° N)

12. Nebraska is known as the **Cornhusker** State. However, **corn** is not the only important crop that grows here. What are two others?

Page\_\_\_\_\_ 35, 36 (soybeans, wheat) AND/OR sugar beets, dry beans, popcorn on page 40 in 2<sup>nd</sup> edition)

13. During some years in the 1950s and 1960s Nebraska's license plates used "The **Beef** State" as a motto, but it was not an official state nickname. However, **beef** comes from cattle, which are raised across the state. How could you find the number of cattle in your county?

Page\_\_\_\_\_ 38/42 (Use the map key and find the size of the symbol for your county.)

14. The Dwight D. Eisenhower System of Interstate and Defense **Highways** was created by an act signed in 1956. What part of this system crosses Nebraska?

Page\_\_\_\_\_ 50/54 (I-80)

15. Nebraska has 93 counties but not every county has its own **legislator** (or lawmaker) known as a state senator. How many **legislative districts** are there? In what **district** do you live?

Page\_\_\_\_\_ 48/52 (49-Answers will vary. Students living in the Omaha and Lincoln areas will not be able to determine their districts by using the map. Students may have to use the maps on pages 39/43, 45/49, or 46/50 to be able to locate their county and identify it on the Legislative Districts map.)

16. Many Nebraskans live in small **towns** across the state. About how many people live in Oshkosh, a **town** near the North Platte River?

Page\_\_\_\_\_ 43/47 (Between 500-999 people) \*\*\*Students may need to use the map on page 11 to locate the North Platte River before finding Oshkosh.

17. How many **counties** in Nebraska have over 500,000 **people**?

Page\_\_\_\_\_ 40 or 41/44 or 45 (one)

18. Sometimes it is difficult to compare the areas (amount of land) of states on a map because they look so similar, like Wyoming and Colorado. Many of Nebraska's **counties** also appear to be the same size and shape. But, Nebraska's largest **county** is easy to identify. What is it?

Page\_\_\_\_\_ 40/44 (Cherry)

19. President Lincoln signed the Pacific Railway Act in 1862. This meant that the transcontinental **railroad** would be built so people could travel across the U.S. by **train**. What are some cities on the original route of the Union Pacific **railroad** across Nebraska?

Page\_\_\_\_\_ 24 (Kimball, Sidney, North Platte, Kearney, Grand Island, Central City, Columbus, Fremont, Omaha)

20. The Mormon **Trail** and Oregon **Trail** crossed Nebraska on the opposite sides of what river?

Page\_\_\_\_\_ 21 (Platte River, North Platte River)

21. One mile is equal to 5,280 feet. Name a place in Nebraska that is more than one mile **above sea level**.

Page\_\_\_\_\_ 7 (Panorama Point)

22. Water is an essential resource for plants and animals. Besides having rivers to provide water, Nebraska has a lot of **water beneath its surface**. How do we access this water?

Page\_\_\_\_\_ 13 (Wells are drilled into the aquifer.)

### **Level of Difficulty**

Easy 1, 3, 4, 9, 14, 17

Average 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22

Difficult 8, 15, 16

Name\_\_\_\_\_

## Scavenger Hunt Assessment

**Read the statements below. Underline key words that help you find a page in the Table of Contents to locate useful information. Go to that page to see if it has the information you need.**

1. Nebraska has many state parks and several national monuments for people to enjoy. There are also Indian Reservations where members of certain Native American tribes may choose to live. The government protects these special areas. Name three of these sites.

Page\_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

2. The United States Congress is a large group of lawmakers in Washington DC. Citizens in each state elect lawmakers for the House of Representatives. How many congresspeople represent Nebraska in Washington DC?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

3. Today, Fort Atkinson is a state historical park. But long ago, it was the first military post west of the Missouri River where over 1,000 soldiers stayed. When was this fort active?

Page\_\_\_\_\_

---

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Scavenger Hunt Assessment-KEY

Read the statements below. Underline key words that help you find a page in the Table of Contents to locate useful information. Go to that page to see if it has the information you need.

(Page numbers are in parentheses to show where answers can be found. Where there are 2 page numbers, the second is for the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the *Atlas*.)

1. Nebraska has many **state parks** and several **national monuments** for people to enjoy. There are also Indian Reservations where members of certain Native American **tribes** may choose to live. The government protects these special **lands**. Name three of these sites.

Page 51/55

Accept any sites found on page 51/55. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. The United States **Congress** is a large group of lawmakers in Washington DC. Citizens in each state elect lawmakers for the House of Representatives. How many **congresspeople** represent Nebraska in Washington DC?

Page 46/50

3. Today, **Fort** Atkinson is a state historical park. But long ago, it was the first military post west of the Missouri River where over 1,000 soldiers stayed. When was this **fort** active?

Page 23

1819-1827 \_\_\_\_\_