A Teacher’s Guide

B is for Big Sky Country: A Montana Alphabet

Guide written by
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Correlation to Montana Standards for Social Studies

**Content Standard 1**- Students access, synthesize, and evaluate information to communicate and apply social studies knowledge to real world situations.

*Do You Know
Montana’s Mighty Symbols of Montana*

**Content Standard 3**- Students apply geographic knowledge and skills.

*Montana’s Geography
Super Map Reader
Glacier Is Great
Killer Weeds Invade*

**Content Standard 4**- Students demonstrate an understanding of the effects of time, continuity, and change on historical and future perspectives and relationships.

*Little Bighorn Battle
Dinosaur Discovery
When Did It Happen*

**Content Standard 5**- Students make informed decisions based on an understanding of the economic principles of production, distribution, exchange, and consumption.

*Tourism = Jobs
Different Viewpoints*

**Content Standard 6**- Students demonstrate an understanding of the impact of human interaction and cultural diversity of societies.

*Native Peoples Rule*
You will find facts about many interesting Montana personalities when you read the book *B is for Big Sky Country*. Use the information you learn to match up Montana’s mighty with the reason they are famous.

1. ________ Jeanette Rankin  
   a. Montana’s most faithful dog.

2. ________ Myrna Loy  
   b. artist

3. ________ Charlie Russell  
   c. discovered first dinosaur eggs.

4. ________ Shep  
   d. first American woman elected to a national office.

5. ________ Jack Horner  
   e. Queen of the Movies

6. ________ William Clark  
   f. famous explorer who carved his name in Pompy’s Tower.
Montana’s state symbols are found throughout the book *B is for Big Sky Country*. See if you can find the following symbols and write their names on the lines.

1. state flower

   ________________________________

2. state fish (2)

   ________________________________

   ________________________________

3. state fossil

   ________________________________

4. state grass

   ________________________________

5. state tree

   ________________________________

6. state gemstone (2)

   _____________    _____________

7. state animal

   ________________________________

8. official state nickname

   ________________________________

9. state bird

   ________________________________

Choose two of Montana’s symbols and draw and color pictures of them.
You have been assigned the task of writing a newspaper article based on the Battle of Little Bighorn. You can get information to help you with your article in the book B is for Big Sky Country, on the L page. Write this article from the perspective of the Sioux and Cheyenne.

The graphic organizer will help you to organize your thoughts before you write your article.

WHO ____________________________________________

WHAT __________________________________________

WHERE __________________________________________

WHEN __________________________________________

WHY ____________________________________________

HOW ____________________________________________

REMEMBER, you are writing this account as if you were reporting for the Native Americans.

How do you think your article would change if you wrote it from the perspective of the U.S. Army?
Crossword Puzzle

*B is for Big Sky Country* will help you to solve this Montana crossword puzzle.

1. __ __ __ __ __ __ __
2. __ __ __ __ __ __ __
3. __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
4. __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
5. __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
6. __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
7. __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __

1. Center for Montana’s music, arts and theatre
2. Birds that nest on telephone poles along rivers
3. Lived in Montana before Europeans arrived
4. Official nickname of Montana
5. Largest producer of copper in the world
6. Pompey’s Pillar
7. Gary Cooper

HINT: If you take the first letter of each answer in the crossword you will find the name of the great state of ____________.
Is Montana Really a Dog State?

The book *B is for Big Sky Country* tells you the story of a very famous Montana dog named Shep. Read this story and then find out if Montana is really dog country.

Survey 15 classmates to see which of the following is their favorite pet. Keep track of your classmates’ answers in a list below.

- Dog ● Cat ● Horse ● Fish ● Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Favorite Pet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Use this data to create a bar graph. Make sure you label your columns. Your graph will need a title. Use bright colors as you color in your bars.
Tourism is a major industry in Montana. The book *B is for Big Sky Country* is full of ideas showing why tourism is important to Montana’s economy.

Make a list of as many different jobs as possible that tourism makes for the state of Montana.

List the ways you and your family have supported Montana by visiting a tourist attraction.
Get a Montana map and see how long it takes you to find the following places that are described in the book *B is for Big Sky Country*.

1. Ekalaka
2. Flathead Lake
3. Glacier National Park
4. Helena
5. Missoula
6. Virginia City
7. Butte
8. Yellowstone River
9. Missouri River
10. Columbia River

*It took me __________ minutes to find all the places.*
Choose the measure of distance you would use for each object. Read about these animals and places in the book *B is for Big Sky Country.*

**Measures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Conversion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>inch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foot</td>
<td>12 inches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yard</td>
<td>3 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mile</td>
<td>1,760 yards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OBJECT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. An otter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Height of Pompy’s Tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Distance from Virginia City to Helena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Length of Yellowstone River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Length of a bison from nose to tail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. University of Montana’s football field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. A cutthroat trout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Wingspan of an osprey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Height of a meadow jumping mouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Distance around a dinosaur egg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do you have an extra minute to fill? These questions are based on the book *B is for Big Sky Country*.

1. Name the capital of Montana.
2. Write three facts about Montana’s history.
3. Write a description of where you live in Montana or might want to live in Montana. Include the location within the state, the landscape of the area, and the industries in the area.
4. Name a famous Montana person and tell why they are famous.
5. Name the alphabet book about Montana.
6. Write a math word problem about Montana.
7. Draw a picture of yourself doing your favorite activity in Montana.
8. Write something you recently read or heard about Montana in the news.
9. Name the first official town in Montana.
10. Name three wild animals found in Montana.
11. Which national park is in Montana?
Montana’s native peoples were present long before the Europeans arrived. Read about what happened to them in the book *B is for Big Sky Country*.

Write a paragraph explaining how Montana might be different today if the government had NOT taken away the Native American lands.
Many interesting and fun facts about Montana are in the book *B is for Big Sky Country*. Choose one of the ideas found in the book and write a cinquain poem.

A cinquain poem has five lines.
Line 1 (same as the title) has one word
Line 2 describes the title in two words
Line 3 has three words that express action
Line 4 has four words that express feeling
Line 5 is one word referring to the title

Example

water
cool, wet
drinking, swimming, splashing
refreshing, relaxing, laid-back
summer
When Did It Happen?

A timeline helps you to see the order in which events happened. In the book *B is for Big Sky Country* you will read about many events in Montana’s great history.

You can create your own timeline by finding the dates for the following events. After you have the correct dates, put them in the correct order on the timeline. Make sure you leave space where there are large gaps in time.

___________ Glacier National Park was created

___________ Helena became the state capital

___________ Battle for Little Bighorn fought

___________ William Clark carves his name on Pompy’s Tower

___________ Virginia City becomes the first official town

___________ Wolves return to Montana

___________ The word Montana is added to the state flag
Montana Timeline
Montana once was the world’s leading producer of copper. Read about copper’s importance to Montana in the book *B is for Big Sky Country*.

Write a sentence explaining the importance of copper from the viewpoint of each of the following people and things.

1. A copper miner _________________________________

2. An artist _________________________________

3. A penny _________________________________

4. A Native American _________________________________

5. The dome of the capitol _________________________________

6. A telephone wire ______________________________________

7. A rock collector ______________________________________
Killer Weeds Invade!

Montana has had a problem with weeds from other places killing many of its native plants. *B is for Big Sky Country* will help you to understand this problem.

You and a partner have been given the job of being junior environmentalists! It is your job to brainstorm a list of ways to get rid of Montana’s killer weeds. Choose your ten best ideas after your brainstorming and write them below.

1. __________________________________________
2. __________________________________________
3. __________________________________________
4. __________________________________________
5. __________________________________________
6. __________________________________________
7. __________________________________________
8. __________________________________________
9. __________________________________________
10. __________________________________________

Challenge- Send your list to the department in your state that deals with the environment.
Many dinosaurs roamed Montana long ago. *B is for Big Sky Country* will tell you about the discovery of dinosaur remains in Montana.

Pretend you are a paleontologist and have just made a discovery on Egg Mountain. Write a story about what you discovered and how you made your discovery. Be creative!!
Dinosaur Discovery continued

Draw a picture of the discovery you made on Egg Mountain. Make sure you show the bones!
Glacier National Park is a wonderful place to visit! Information about the park can be found on the G page of *B is for Big Sky Country*.

Design a brochure that encourages people to visit Glacier National Park. Tell them why it is so wonderful.

**Directions**

1. Take a plain sheet of paper and fold it in half the long way.

2. The front of your paper is the cover. Design your cover so that it is bright and attracts attention. Don’t forget to put the name of the park on the cover.

3. Inside give facts about Glacier National Park. Make your facts interesting. Don’t just make a list.

4. On the back put the name of the author who created the brochure (YOU).

5. Mail your brochure to a friend in a different state and encourage them to visit Glacier National Park.
What Surrounds Montana?

Draw and label the following:

1. States that surround Montana
2. Montana's capital
3. Montana's three largest rivers
B is for Big Sky Country contains information about many Montana wild animals. Read this book and have fun making your own Montana wildlife book.

DIRECTIONS:

1. CUT TWO PIECES OF PLAIN PAPER IN HALF (LENGTH WISE)

2. STACK THE FOUR PIECES OF PAPER YOU NOW HAVE.

3. FOLD THE STACK IN HALF, TO MAKE A BOOK.

4. MAKE A COVER FOR YOUR BOOK.

5. STAPLE THE PAGES, INCLUDING THE COVER, ALONG THE FOLDED END.

6. PUT A TITLE ON THE COVER OF YOUR BOOK.

7. ON EACH PAGE INSIDE YOUR BOOK DRAW AND COLOR A MONTANA WILD ANIMAL. ADD ONE SENTENCE ABOUT WHY THIS ANIMAL IS IMPORTANT.
Montana Answer Sheet

**MEASURING MONTANA**  1) feet or inch 2) feet 3) mile 4) miles 5) feet 6) yards 7) inch 8) feet, inch 9) inch 10) inch

**WHEN DID IT HAPPEN** Glacier 1910, Helena 1894, Battle 1876, Clark 1806, Virginia City 1864, Wolves 1979, Montana flag 1981

**DO YOU KNOW CROSSWORD PUZZLE**  1) Missoula 2) osprey 3) Native peoples  4) Treasure State  5) Anaconda  6) national monument  7) actor

**SYMBOLS OF MONTANA**  1) bitterroot  2) Western slope and Yellowstone cutthroat trout  3) duck-billed dinosaur  4) blue bunch wheat grass  5) Ponderosa pine  6) sapphire, moss agate  7) grizzly bear  8) Treasure State  9) Western meadowlark

**MONTANA’S MIGHTY**  1) d  2) e  3) b  4) a  5) c  6) f