

Name: _____

How Kansas Got Its Name

Journalists are people who write about a variety of topics, like sports or events that are happening around the world. Their writing is published in newspapers or blogs.

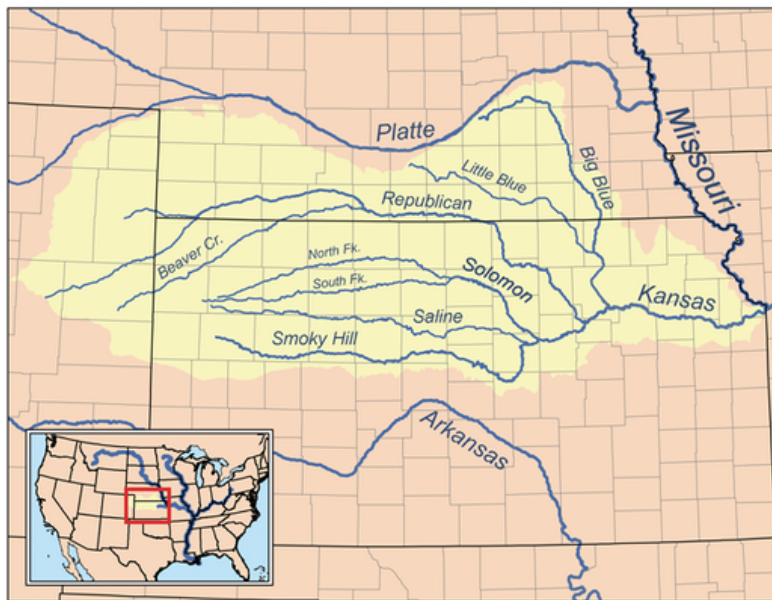
Some journalists also write for fun! For example, they might write in a diary or write letters to friends or family. Today, you will be a journalist and learn about how the state of Kansas got its name. You will then send a letter to someone about what you learned. But, this letter will not be a normal letter. It will be delivered in an unusual and wacky way! Follow the steps below.

Step 1: Learn about the History of How Kansas Got its Name

Read the passage below about the history behind the name “Kansas.” Then, answer the questions.

The state of Kansas is named after the Kansa Indians. The Kansa is a Native American tribe who lived in the eastern part of Kansas. The Kansa Indians arrived in the area now known as Kansas many years before European and American settlers. They were also known as the Kaws. The tribe’s name means south wind. A south wind is a wind that blows from the south towards the north. The Kaws were given this name because they believed they got their strength and power from the wind.

Look at the map below. The Kansa settled their villages along the Kansas river in the north-eastern area of what is now Kansas. Can you find the Kansas river on the map?



When the first French traders came to the territory in the 1700s, they called the land “Kanza” or “Kansa” after the Kansa tribe who lived there. Over time, the lands were called “Kansas.”

In 1803, the United States purchased a large chunk of land in the middle of North America from the French. This purchase was called the Louisiana Purchase. The land the Kansa Indians had lived on was purchased in this agreement.

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Finally, in 1861, Kansas became the 34th state in the United States. This means that the United States government recognized it as an official state. The United States kept the name “Kansas” for the land.

Answer the questions below using complete sentences.

1. What was the name of the Native American tribe who lived on the lands that became Kansas?

2. What did this tribe’s name mean and why was it name this?

3. Who were the first people to start calling the area of land Kansas?

4. Why do you think the United States kept the name Kansas when they made it a state?

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Step 2: Plan Your Letter

Read the passage below about the history behind the name “Kansas.” Then, answer the questions.

Write a letter to someone you know about the history of Kansas’ name. Your letter will not be written on a piece of paper! Instead, you will write your letter on another item, like a coconut or sandal. The United States Postal Service allows people to send letters in the mail that are not written on paper and do not require a package or a box around them! Fill in the sections below to plan your letter.



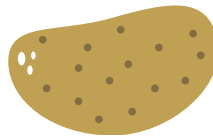
Choose an item from the list below to send your letter on.



Coconut



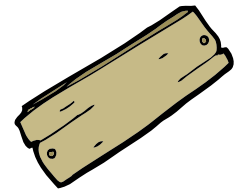
Frisbee



Raw Potato



A Box of Candy



A Piece of Wood

Choose a person to send your letter to.



Historian



A 3-5th Grader



Famous Singer



Governor of Kansas

Other (Describe who you will send your letter to)

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Write a greeting.

A greeting is a phrase used to identify the person you are writing to. Example greetings include:

- Hey Carl,
- Dear Antonya,
- Dear Dr. Gordon,

In the box to the right, write the greeting you will use.

Write the body of your letter.

The body includes information that you want to share with the reader. The body can also include questions that you ask the reader. That way, the reader can answer your questions when he or she writes back!

In the body of your letter, explain how Kansas got its name. You must also explain why you think it is important to learn about the history of a state's name. In the box below, write notes about what you will include in the body of your letter.

Write a closing and signature.

The closing is the word or phrase that a writer puts before tells the reader that the email is done. If your email is to a friend or family member, you might use "Love" or "Your friend" as your closing. If your email is more serious, you might write "Sincerely" as your closing. The signature is where you sign your name so people know who sent them the letter. Example closings and signatures include:

- Love, Jessica
- Your BFF, Reuven
- Sincerely, Nandina

In the box to the right, write the closing/signature you will use.

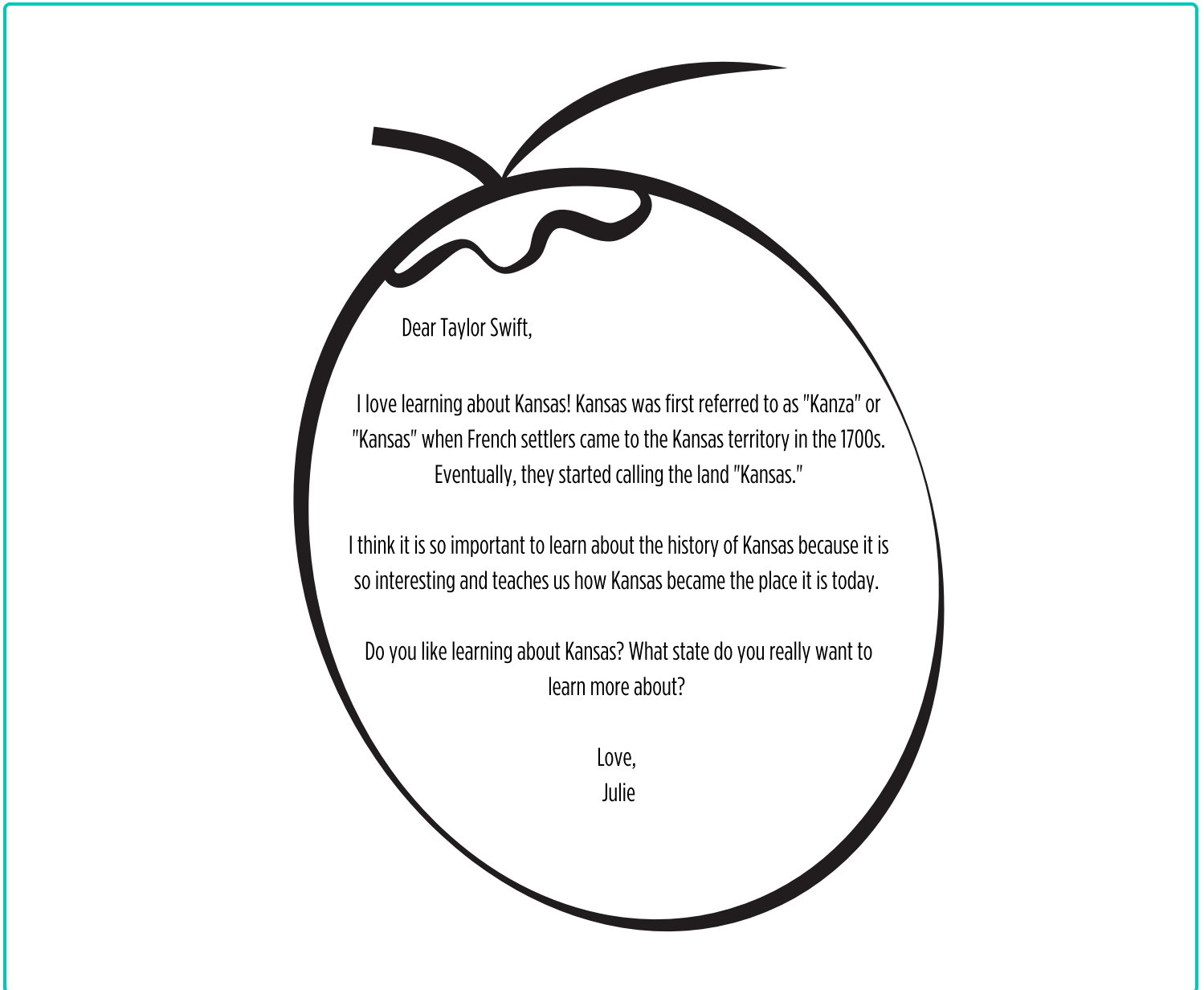
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Step 3: Design and Write Your Letter

On the next page, draw the item you will use to send your letter. For example, if you are sending your letter on a coconut, draw a picture of a coconut. Then, you write your letter inside the picture that you drew!

Here is an example:



Extra Time? Use craft supplies to build a three-dimensional model of your unconventional piece of mail!

