

Lesson 7: Alaska and Hawaii

☐ Getting Started

Two states joined the United States at a much later date than the first forty-eight: Alaska and Hawaii. These two states are unique because they are not geographically connected to any of the other states.

If you are using the "Timeline of American History," add the date when Hawaii became a U.S. territory (1900) and when Alaska was purchased from Russia (1867).

Stuff You Need

- "Timeline of American History"* (optional)
- *Smart About the Fifty States* by Jon Buller
- construction paper* (Activity 3 - Option 2)
- crayons, markers, or colored pencils* (Activity 3 - Option 1)

Ideas to Think About

- How do the different regions shape American culture?
- How does the history of a state shape its culture?
- How does the environment affect the people who live in a region?

Things to Know

- Hawaii and Alaska are located in different geographical locations than the other forty-eight states.
- Temperatures in Alaska are very cold.
- Hawaii has a tropical climate.

☐ Reading and Questions

Read about the states of Alaska and Hawaii in *Smart About the Fifty States*. There are no tasks with the readings today because you are making an "About" page for both states.

Activities

☐ Activity 1: About Alaska and About Hawaii

Since Hawaii and Alaska are such different states, complete sheets for both states

("About Hawaii" and "About Alaska") that include the following information:

- State (List the name.)
- Climate (Describe the overall climate of the state and how it changes with the seasons.)
- Natural resources (List and/or illustrate at least five natural resources found in the state.)
- Important landforms and bodies of water (Describe important landform(s) and bodies of water in the state. Include at least one landform and one body of water.)
- Culture (Describe the people and their way of life. What unique traditions do they have? How are they recognized by the rest of the country?)
- Wildlife (Illustrate and label at least two plants and two animals found in the state.)
- Famous person (Describe a famous person from the state and what the person has accomplished.)
- Jobs (List two important industries in the state.)

To find more information about Alaska and Hawaii, use the following websites or an encyclopedia.

**Alaska: Kids' Corner**

www.beyondthepage.com/link/13710/

Follow the links on this website to learn information about Alaskan geographical features, culture, wildlife, and more.

**Hawaii — Britannica Kids**

www.beyondthepage.com/link/13711/

**National Geographic Kids: Hawaii**

www.beyondthepage.com/link/13712/

This article provides a wide variety of facts about Hawaii.

☐ **Activity 2: Hawaiian Luau**

Hawaii has a unique culture that is different from any in the continental United States. Hawaii is made up of many little islands, each with its own name. Hawaii has some of the most beautiful beaches in the world and some amazing volcanoes. Vacationers from all over the world visit the state of Hawaii. On the "Hawaiian

Luau" page, read about a special Hawaiian tradition and answer the following questions.

☐ **Activity 3: Alaska**

Choose one of the following options to complete.

Option 1: Alaskan Summer Scene

Many people think of Alaska as a cold and dreary place, but the state comes to life in the summer months. Alaska is famous for its amazing wildlife, and every year thousands of tourists take cruises to Alaska to enjoy its enchanting beauty.

Add five native Alaskan animals to the "Alaskan Summer Scene" sheet. Try to draw the animals accurately, with as much detail as possible. Include at least one mammal, one bird, and one insect in your drawing. Color the picture after you complete your drawings.

Option 2: Food Chains

Cut strips of different colors of construction paper. Create two food chains that could be found in the forests of Alaska. Record the names of the food chain members on the strips of paper and link them together. Both chains should have at least three links. Remember to begin each chain with a producer.

Wrapping Up

Review your notes about the states of Hawaii and Alaska.

It's time to practice learning your state capitals. Watch the video at the following link and sing along.



Wakko's 50 State Capitals with Lyrics/Subtitles

www.beyondthepage.com/link/13713/

Life Application (Optional)

Imagine you've just arrived in Hawaii, stepping onto the warm sandy beach with the sound of ocean waves in the background. The sun is setting, and tiki torches flicker in the evening breeze. You've been invited to a Hawaiian luau, a special celebration filled with delicious food, lively music, and exciting traditions. Tonight, you'll bring a little bit of Hawaii into your home by creating your own mini-luau experience!

Step 1: Set the Scene

To make your luau feel as real as possible, you'll need to create a fun Hawaiian atmosphere. Ask a family member to help you:

- Find a Hawaiian-style playlist (ukulele music is perfect!) and play it in the background.
- Decorate your space with paper flowers, tropical colors, or even a few seashells.
- If you have leis (flower necklaces), wear one! You can even make your own by cutting out paper flowers and stringing them together.

Step 2: Prepare a Hawaiian Treat

Food is a big part of a luau, so let's make a Hawaiian-inspired snack. Here are two easy options:

- Pineapple Kabobs – Cut pieces of pineapple, banana, and grapes, and slide them onto a skewer for a tropical fruit treat.
- Hawaiian Smoothie – Blend a banana, pineapple, and coconut milk with ice to make a refreshing island drink.

Step 3: Learn the Hula

The hula is a traditional Hawaiian dance that tells stories using graceful hand and arm movements. Watch a short hula video online and try following along. Pay attention to how the dancers move their hands to show waves, wind, or the sun. Now, try making up your own hula dance!



Learn how to Hula in Miss Jessica's World | Teaching Kids Cultural Dance | Dance for kids
www.beyondthepage.com/link/13714/

Step 4: Play a Fun Game

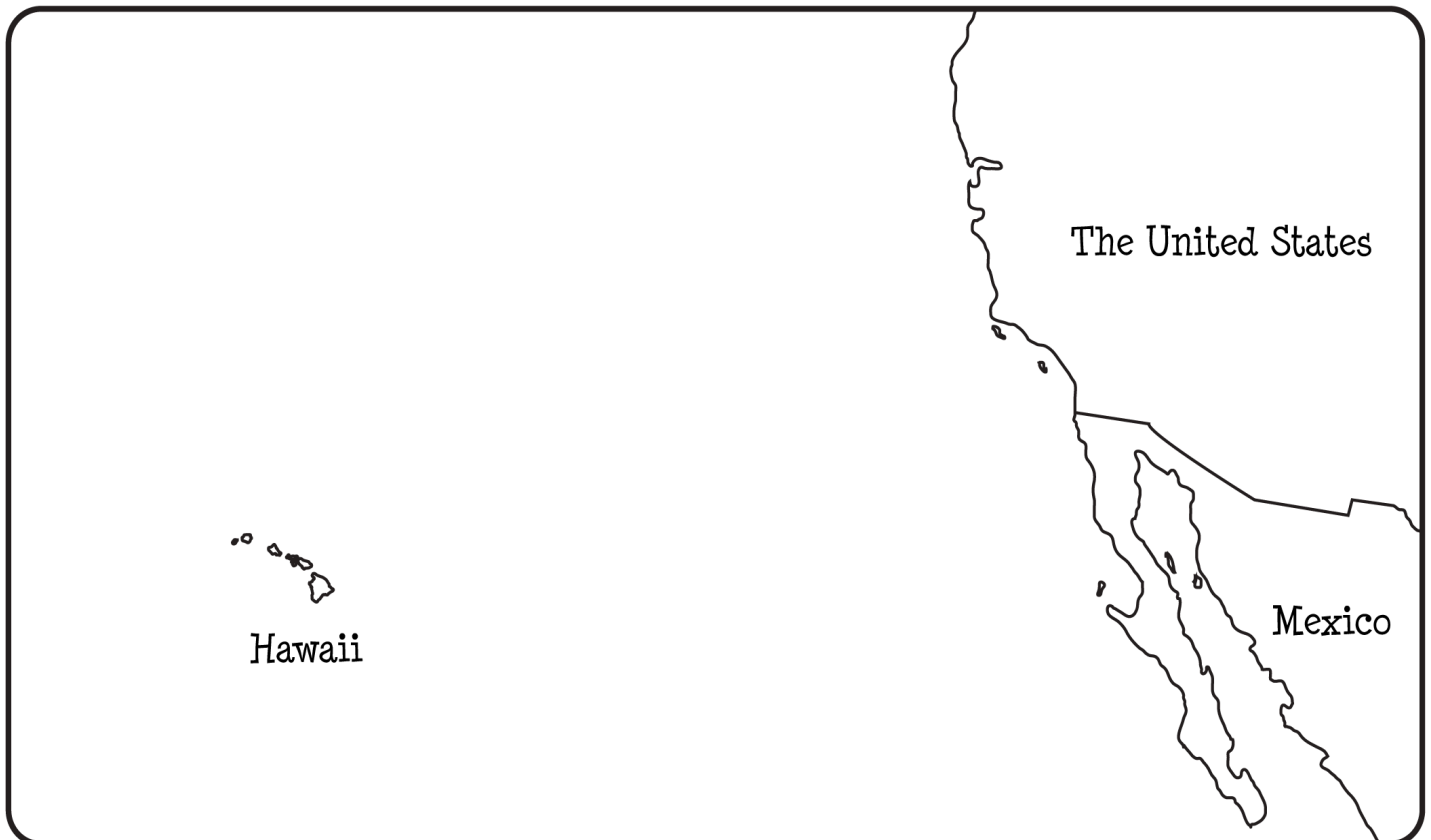
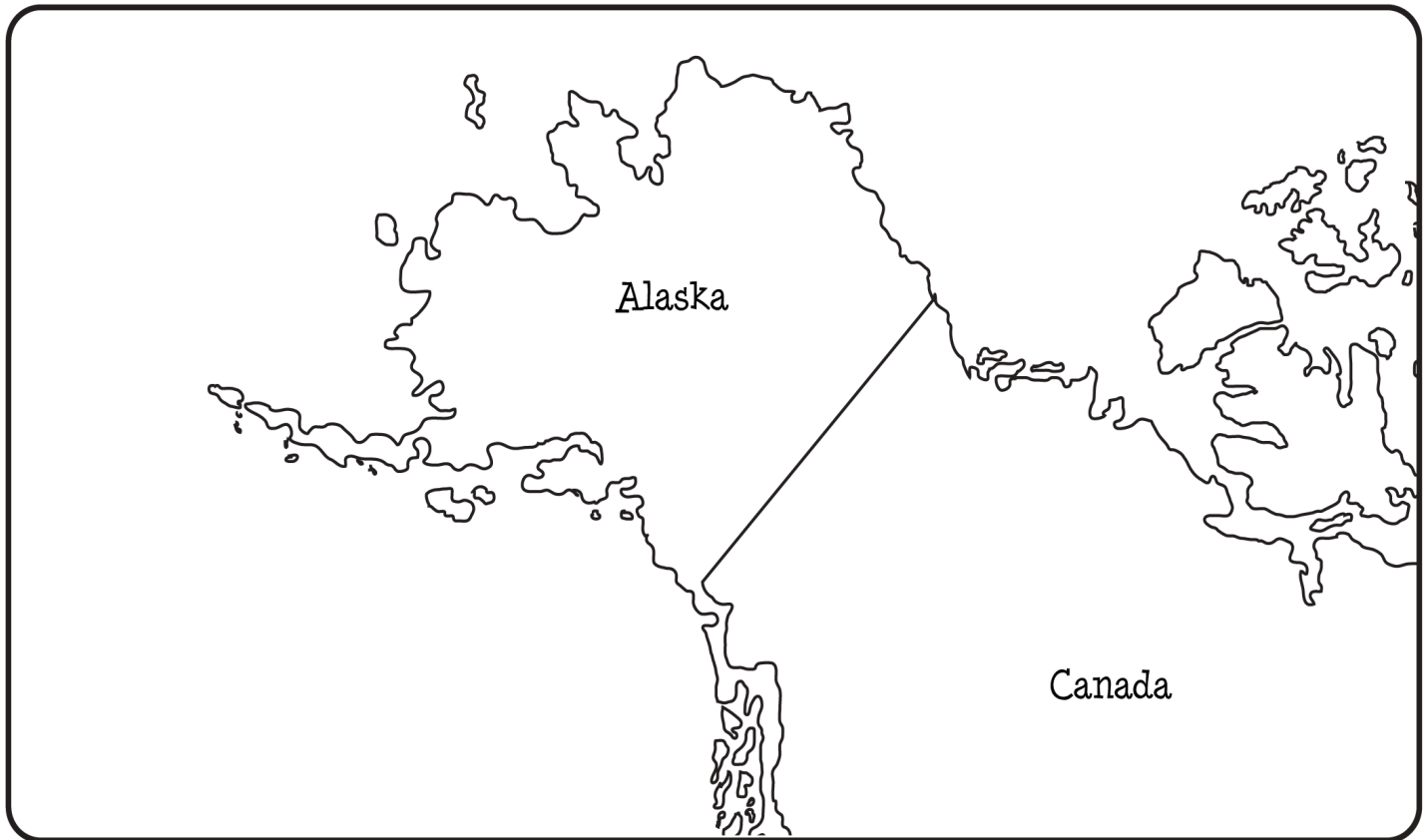
At a real luau, people enjoy Hawaiian games. Try playing the limbo by having someone hold a stick while you and your family take turns bending backward to go under it. How low can you go?

Step 5: Say "Aloha!"

At the end of your luau, gather your family and practice some Hawaiian words! Here are a few to try:

- Aloha – Hello or goodbye
- Ohana – Family
- Mahalo – Thank you
- Luau – A Hawaiian feast

Alaska and Hawaii

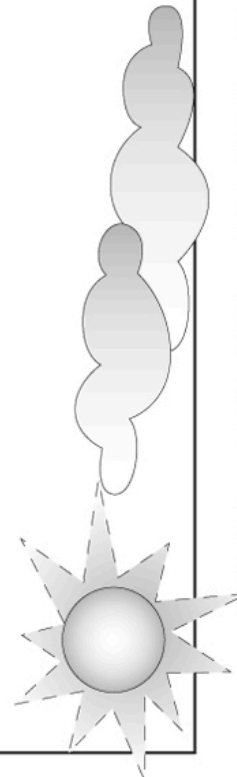


About Alaska

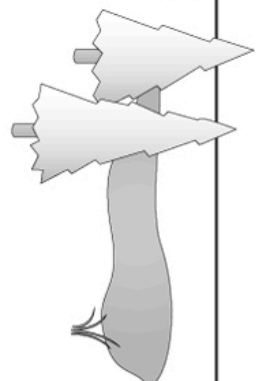
States



Climate

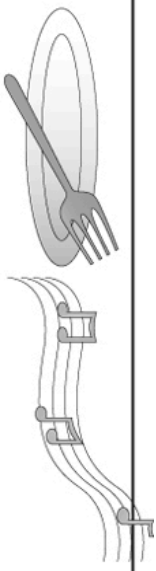
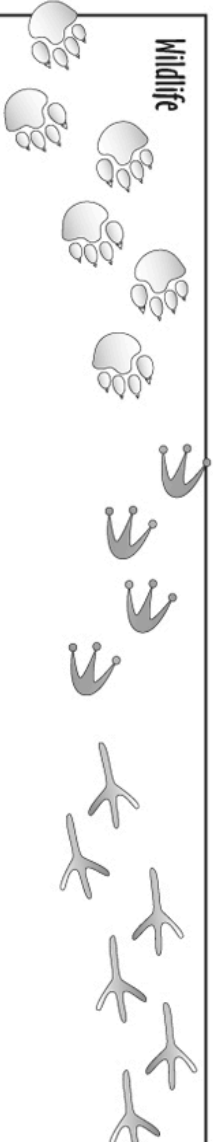
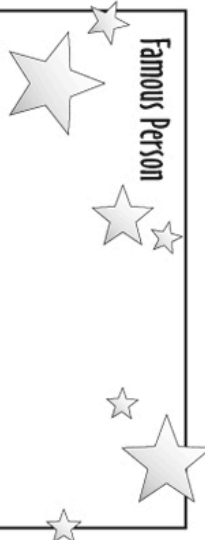
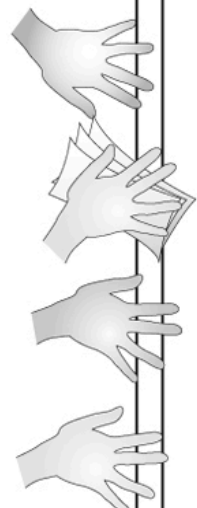


Natural Resources



Important Landforms and Bodies of Water



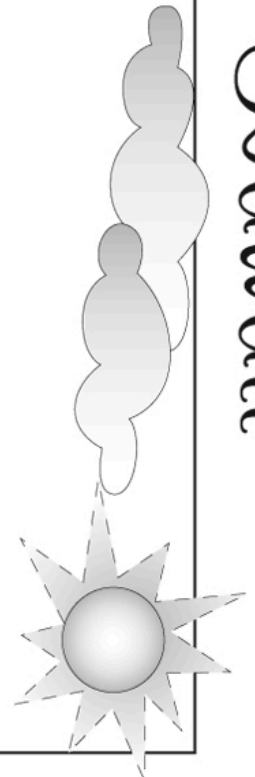
	Culture 
	Wildlife 
Famous Person 	
Jobs 	

About Hawaii

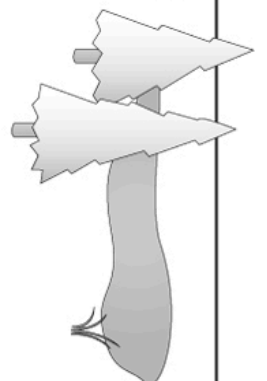
States



Climate

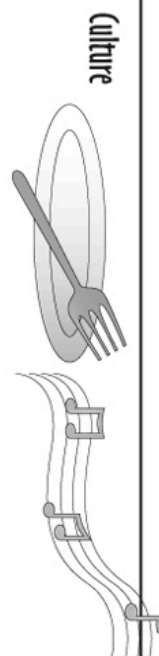
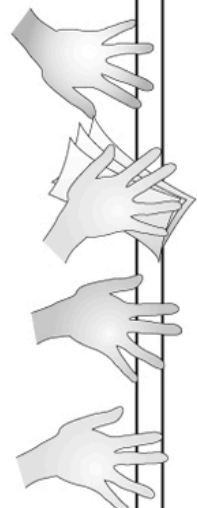
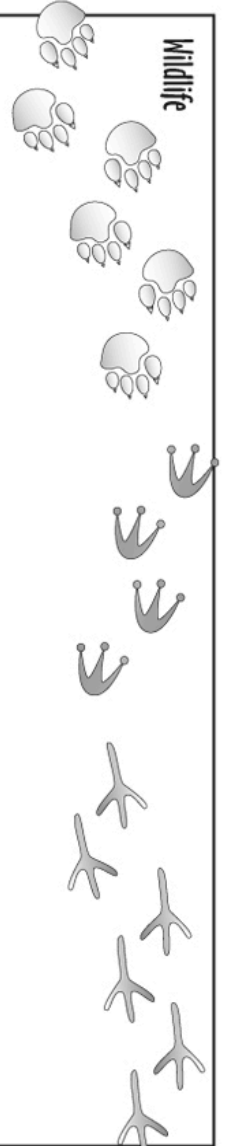


Natural Resources



Important Landforms and Bodies of Water



			Culture 
			Famous Person 
	Jobs 		Wildlife 



Directions: Read about the Hawaiian tradition of the luau and answer the questions.

The luau has a long and special history in Hawaii. Luaus were extravagant events where special foods were served and there was much dancing and singing. Historically luaus could last three or four days! They were held on special occasions such as weddings or to host foreign dignitaries.

The tradition of the luau still continues today, although lasting only for an evening. A luau is one of the special cultural events that tourists will experience when they visit the state of Hawaii. Guests at a luau today are greeted with a lei (a necklace made of native flowers strewn together) and an “aloha” (meaning hello in Hawaiian). In the Hawaiian tradition, guests of the luau can sit on mats around a low table and feast on a variety of amazing dishes, which always include a whole roasted pig! The dishes are made from foods that grow on the island. Guests enjoy traditional dances performed by dancers who are dressed in traditional costume. Musicians play throughout the meal; some of them play a ukelele, or small guitar.

Should you ever have the opportunity to visit this amazing state, a traditional luau is a must!

Questions:

How are luaus today different from what they were in the past?

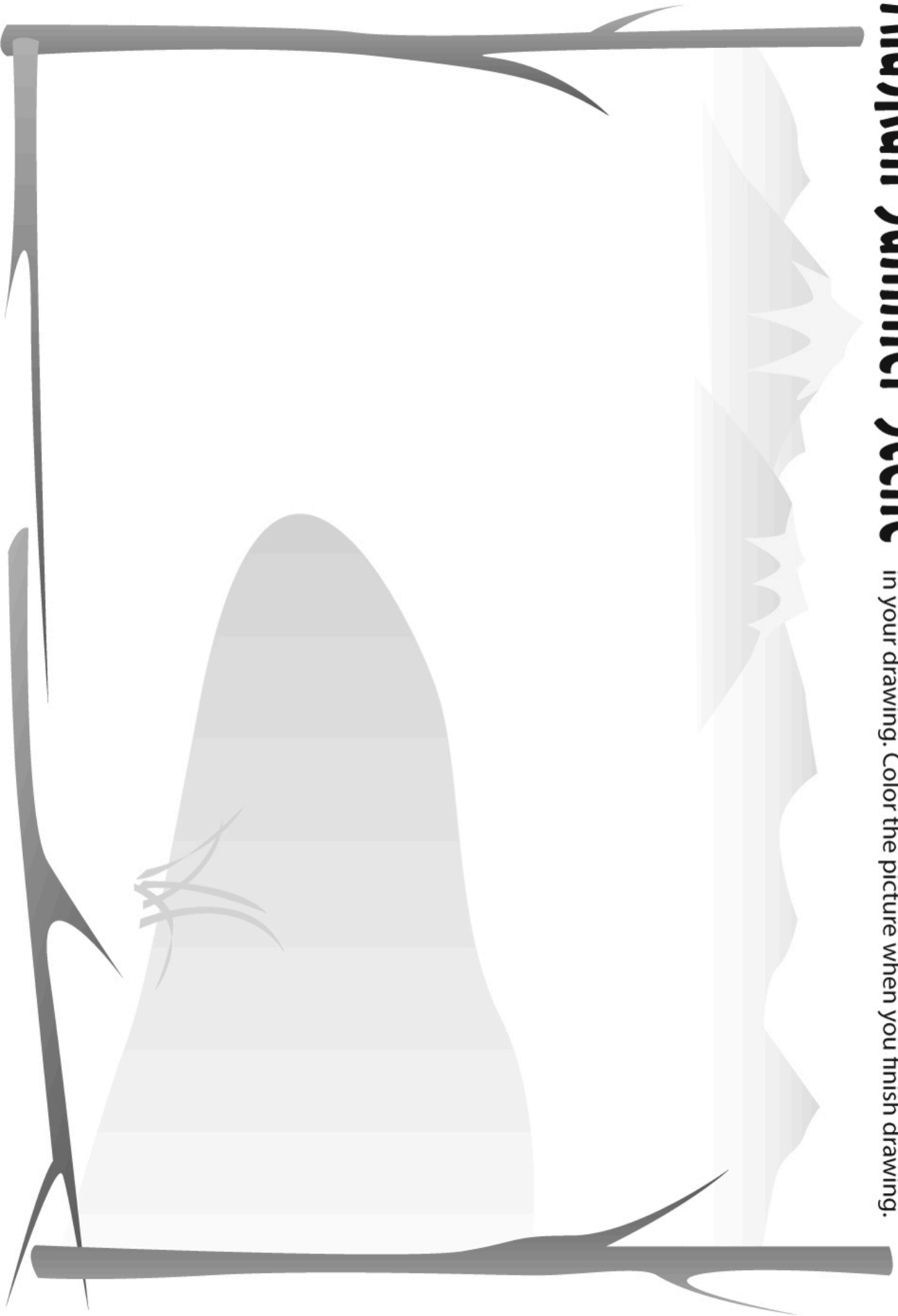
What elements of the luau are specific to Hawaiian culture?

What would you enjoy most about a luau?

Does your state have an event for tourists that reflects the culture? If so, describe it.

Alaskan Summer Scene

Directions: Add five native Alaskan animals to the Alaskan summer scene. Try to draw the animals as accurately and with as much detail as possible. Include at least one mammal, one bird, and one insect in your drawing. Color the picture when you finish drawing.



Lesson 7: Alaska and Hawaii

Getting Started

✿ Ideas to Think About

- How do the different regions shape American culture?
- How does the history of a state shape its culture?
- How does the environment affect the people who live in a region?

📖 Things to Know

- Hawaii and Alaska are located in different geographical locations than the other forty-eight states.
- Temperatures in Alaska are very cold.
- Hawaii has a tropical climate.

⦿ Skills

- Identify how energy is passed from one organism to another. (S)
- Describe a variety of environments found in the United States. (SS)
- Compare and contrast the physical and cultural characteristics of regions within the United States. (SS)

Introducing the Lesson

In this lesson, your child will continue his journey across the United States by exploring two of the most unique states—Alaska and Hawaii. Unlike the other forty-eight states, these two are not connected to the mainland, making them stand out both geographically and culturally. Encourage your child to think about what makes these states special. What does he already know about Alaska and Hawaii? How do their locations, climates, and ways of life differ from the rest of the country?

Through this lesson, he will discover Alaska's freezing temperatures, vast wilderness, and incredible wildlife, as well as Hawaii's warm tropical climate, volcanic islands, and rich traditions. He will also learn how the history of these states has shaped their culture and industries.

By the end of this lesson, he will have a better understanding of how these two states fit into the United States and what makes them so extraordinary.

Reading and Questions

There are no tasks with the readings today.

Activities

Activity 1: About Alaska and About Hawaii

Review your child's notes on Alaska and Hawaii, checking for accuracy and completeness. Encourage him to add any missing details or expand on areas where more information is needed. Discuss the unique differences between the two states, such as their climates, cultures, and industries, and how these factors

influence the daily lives of the people who live there. This is a great opportunity to help him connect what he has learned to real-world experiences, whether through travel, news, or geography.

Answer Key:

- Answers will vary. Sample answers are provided below. Accept other accurate responses.

- **Alaska**

Climate: Alaska has long, cold winters and short, cool summers. Northern Alaska has extremely cold winters, while southern coastal areas have milder temperatures and more rainfall.

Natural Resources: Oil, natural gas, gold, timber, fish, and zinc.

Important Landforms and Bodies of Water: Alaska is home to the Alaska Range, which includes Denali, the tallest mountain in North America. Important bodies of water include the Yukon River, Bering Sea, and Gulf of Alaska.

Culture: Alaska has a rich cultural heritage shaped by Alaska Native peoples, including the Iñupiat, Yup'ik, Aleut (Unanga), and Athabascan peoples. Traditional activities include fishing, hunting, storytelling, and creating artwork. Alaska is known for its wilderness, dog sledding, and the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

Wildlife:

- Plants: Sitka spruce, fireweed
- Animals: Moose, brown bear

Famous Person: Susan Butcher was a famous Alaskan dog sled racer who won the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race four times.

Jobs: Oil and gas production, fishing.

- **Hawaii**

Climate: Hawaii has a warm, tropical climate year-round. Temperatures change little between seasons, but winters are generally wetter, and summers are drier. Mountainous areas are cooler, and some high peaks receive snow.

Natural Resources: Fertile volcanic soil, fish, freshwater, forests, and geothermal energy.

Important Landforms and Bodies of Water: Hawaii is a group of volcanic islands in the Pacific Ocean. Important landforms include Mauna Loa, one of the world's largest active volcanoes, and Mauna Kea, the tallest mountain in Hawaii. The Pacific Ocean surrounds the islands.

Culture: Hawaii's culture is influenced by Native Hawaiian traditions and people from Asia, Europe, and other Pacific islands. Traditional Hawaiian practices include hula dancing, lei making, surfing, and storytelling. Hawaii is known for its aloha spirit, beautiful beaches, and unique island traditions.

Wildlife:

- Plants: 'Ōhi'a lehua, koa tree
- Animals: Hawaiian monk seal, nēnē (Hawaiian goose)

Famous Person: Duke Kahanamoku was a Hawaiian Olympic swimming champion who helped popularize surfing around the world.

Jobs: Tourism, agriculture.

Activity 2: Hawaiian Luau

Answer Key

1. They last only for an evening, not three or four days. In the past, a luau was held to commemorate a special event, but now they are done primarily for tourists.
2. Guests enjoy cultural foods, dances, music, and costumes.
3. Answers will vary.
4. Answers will vary.

Your child explored the unique culture of Hawaii by learning about the traditional Hawaiian luau. He read about how luaus have evolved from special gatherings to popular tourist events and discovered the different elements that make them special, such as food, music, and dance. After reading, he answered questions to reflect on what he learned, considering how cultural traditions can change over time while still preserving their significance.

Activity 3: Alaska

Your child will choose one of the following options to complete.

Option 1: Alaskan Summer Scene

For this option, your child illustrates five animals native to Alaska in a summer scene. Review his drawing to be sure it includes at least one mammal, one bird, and one insect. Possible mammals include moose, brown bears, caribou, wolves, and Dall sheep. Birds might include bald eagles, puffins, ravens, and sandhill cranes. Common insects include mosquitoes, bumblebees, and dragonflies. Encourage your child

to include accurate details, such as a moose's broad antlers, a puffin's colorful beak, or a bald eagle's white head and tail. Check that the animals are shown in appropriate habitats, such as bears near rivers, moose in forests or wetlands, and puffins along rocky coastlines. Discuss how Alaska's long summer days and warmer temperatures provide opportunities for animals to find food, raise their young, and prepare for winter.

Option 2: Food Chains

For this option, your child creates two food chains found in Alaska's forests. Review his chains to be sure each contains at least three links, begins with a producer (a plant), and shows how energy passes from one organism to another. One possible food chain is willow leaves → snowshoe hare → Canada lynx. Another is grass → vole → red fox. Other organisms might include berry bushes, insects, squirrels, owls, and wolves. Check that each animal eats the organism before it in the chain and that the chains represent realistic feeding relationships. Discuss how producers use sunlight to make food, herbivores eat plants, and predators eat other animals. Explain that the arrows in a food chain point toward the organism receiving the energy. Encourage your child to consider how removing one organism could affect the others in the chain.

Wrapping Up

In this optional activity, your child explored the culture and excitement of a Hawaiian luau by creating his own mini-celebration at home. He set the scene with tropical decorations and Hawaiian music, bringing the island spirit into the house. He prepared a Hawaiian-inspired snack, choosing between fruit kabobs or a refreshing smoothie. He also learned about the hula, watching a video and trying out traditional hand and arm movements that tell a story. For some extra fun, he played a Hawaiian-themed game, like limbo, testing his flexibility and balance. To wrap up the experience, he practiced saying Hawaiian words, like Aloha and Mahalo, making this a fun and interactive way to learn about Hawaii's unique traditions!

Questions to Discuss

- Would you rather visit Hawaii or Alaska? Why?
- How are Hawaii and Alaska different from the other regions in our country? (*Hawaii and Alaska are very different from the other regions in the United States because they are not connected to the mainland. Hawaii is a group of islands in the Pacific Ocean, while Alaska is far to the north, next to Canada. Hawaii has a warm, tropical climate with beaches, volcanoes, and lots of rainforests. It is the only state made up of islands, and its culture is influenced by Native Hawaiian traditions, like hula dancing and luaus. Alaska, on the other hand, is cold and snowy for much of the year. It has tall mountains, glaciers, and lots of wildlife, like bears and moose. Since it is so far north, parts of Alaska have sunlight all day in the summer and darkness almost all day in the winter! Even though they are different, both states are special because of their beautiful nature, unique cultures, and the way they add to America's history and resources.*)

Things to Review

Review the information your child recorded on the "About Alaska" and "About Hawaii" activity pages.