



Kansas State Capitol

Guide for Young People



Ad Astra, the statue by Richard Bergen, was placed on the Capitol dome October 2002

Curriculum Packet For Teachers of Grades 4-7



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Prepared in consultation with the
Kansas State Department of Education



The Kansas State Capitol Guide for Young People Curriculum Packet is intended to supplement the **Kansas State Capitol Guide for Young People**. Both are available free of charge through the Kansas State Historical Society's web site (<http://www.kshs.org>) and the Kansas Department of Education's web site (<http://www.ksde.org>).

The following Kansas History Indicators are addressed in this curriculum packet:

KH:G4:B3:I7

The student explains the origin of the name "Kansas" (i.e., from the Kansa Indians).

KH:G4:B2:I1

The student explains how important buildings, statues, monuments, and place names are associated with the state's history.

The Curriculum Packet contains six Graphic Organizers for students to complete. These are divided into three sections (with their accompanying Graphic Organizers):

- **Symbolism of the Kansas Capitol Dome Statue**
 - Who Are the Kansa? (1 page)
 - Finding Your Way (2 pages)
 - Say It Again (1 page)
- **Topping the Dome: Selecting a Symbol**
 - What Are They Saying? (2 pages)
 - What's On Top? (2 pages)
- **Names as Symbols**
 - Native American Place Names (2 pages)

For each section, the teacher is provided with a Main Point and Background information for the lesson. Answers for the Graphic Organizers, when necessary, are provided immediately following each Graphic Organizer. Answers for the Word Search Puzzle in the "Kansas State Capitol Guide for Young People" are also supplied.

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Symbolism of the Kansas Capitol Dome Statue

Main Idea:

A symbol is something that represents ideas and beliefs of a group of people. The statue placed atop the Kansas Capitol Dome, *Ad Astra*, is a multicultural symbol. It represents beliefs and ideas of diverse contemporary Kansans.

Background:

Construction on the Kansas Capitol began in 1866 and the building was finished in 1903. Designs for the Capitol called for a statue to be placed on the top of the dome. However, controversy over the statue continued for more than a century. The selected statue represents a multicultural symbol with elements from at least three cultural perspectives:

1. The form of the statue is that of a Kansa warrior. The Kansa are the people from whom the state takes its name. Selection of a Kansa warrior represents a Native American perspective and highlights the contributions of native peoples to the history of Kansas.
2. Focus of the statue faces toward the North Star. This represents the symbol of finding one's way. The North Star, while important to Native Americans, is not symbolic of Native American life. Instead, it represents a navigational tool used by pioneers and travelers. It would be quite out of character for a Native American warrior to aim a bow and shoot an arrow toward the North Star.
3. The name selected for the statue, *Ad Astra* is from the Latin language. Its significance with the statue is because the phrase comes from the Kansas state motto: *Ad Astra Per Aspera*, which means "To the Stars Through Difficulties." *Ad Astra* is not an Indian word or name.

Graphic Organizers:

Who Are the Kansa?
Finding Your Way
Say It Again

Topping the Dome: Selecting a Symbol

Main Idea:

To reach compromise means expressing opinions and recognizing controversy.

Background:

Selecting art for public buildings is often difficult. Art in public buildings is often selected for its symbolic nature. Not everyone always agrees on the selection of a symbol. With different opinions comes controversy and group members must work to reach a compromise. By focusing on works of art selected to adorn our government buildings, students can better appreciate opinions, controversy, and compromise. This section also looks at how surrounding states reached compromise on their capitols.

Graphic Organizers:

What Are They Saying?

What's On Top?

Names As Symbols

Main Idea:

Names for places and organization are often given out of respect or to honor and create a living memorial to a person or group of people. These names become symbols.

Background:

In Kansas, many place names come from the Native Americans who have lived in Kansas. These names have often changed through time. Place names were first recorded by explorers who came to the place we now call Kansas. Spelling was inconsistent in the native languages of these explorers (primarily French and Spanish). In addition, Native American names and words sounded strange to the explorers who simply recorded the sounds that they heard. Through time the spelling and pronunciation of these names has changed so that their original sound and meaning is often lost.

Among Native Americans, names were given to people based on their accomplishments in life or based on physical or personality characteristics. Throughout life Native Americans often had several different names. These names might have many words to them, but not the standard first and last name that we utilize today. Often names of a respected family elder would become the last name for several members of the family as they adopted the European naming tradition we use today.

Graphic Organizer:

Native American Place Names