Today is Kansas Day!
Kansas became a state on January 29, 1861.
Every year people across Kansas recognize this special day.
There is a lot to learn about Kansas!
Kansas is a plains state located in the Midwest region of the United States.
The capital of Kansas is Topeka.
Kansas is known as the Wheat State because there is so much wheat grown there. Wheat is made into flour which is used to make many different types of food like cookies, bread, cake, pasta, and pizza!
The state animal is the buffalo. Buffaloes once roamed all through the Great Plains. The buffalo is a symbol of strength.
The state flower is the sunflower. Sunflowers can grow up to 15 feet tall! During the early stages of growth, the head of the sunflower moves toward the sun throughout the day.
The state bird is the Western Meadowlark. Meadowlarks build their nests on the ground. Their song sounds like a flute!
The state reptile is the Ornate Box Turtle. Box Turtles are called ornate because their shells have a colorful and detailed design on them. Box Turtles are able to completely withdraw all body parts inside their shells when they are in danger.
The state insect is the Honeybee. Honeybees are very important to farmers. They spread pollen from one plant to another helping them grow and produce food.
The state amphibian is the Barred Tiger Salamander. Tiger Salamanders can grow up to 14 inches long. They are nocturnal and are able to regrow their limbs if they become damaged.
The state tree is the Cottonwood. Cottonwood leaves are diamond shape and turn yellow in the fall. Pioneers were happy to see these trees after they had traveled a long distance without shade or firewood.
These symbols help tell the story of Kansas...
A story of brave pioneers who explored and settled among the wildlife creating the motto: Ad Astra per Aspera which means to the stars through difficulty...
A story of farmers who built homes and grew crops...
A story of towns and cities that expanded across the state...
A story of friends and families who share Midwestern values appreciating the love of community and friendliness...
A story for you and me to celebrate!
Written By:
Kristy Nerstheimer
Brookridge Elementary
Overland Park, Kansas

Photographs By:
Read Kansas!
Photo contest Winners:
Katie Brady
Wakefield, Kansas
Nora Hein
Hillsboro, Kansas
And Photographer:
Patricia Berning
Overland Park, Kansas