

Coins in the Classroom



Oh, the State I'm In

The U.S. Mint's 50 State Quarter Program

PURPOSE This lesson is designed for middle school students who have had little or no exposure to the world of numismatics. The purpose of this lesson is to make students familiar with basic terms used in numismatics and to acquaint them with the state quarter project currently undertaken by the United States Mint.

GOALS At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:
Write a formal letter requesting information.
List and define the parts of a coin.
Research specific time-sensitive and permanent information about a state of the United States of America.
Deliver a presentation based on research.

BACKGROUND The United States Mint introduced the States Quarters Program in 1999 to celebrate the statehood date for each of our nation's fifty states beginning with Delaware. The Mint has produced five different designs each year and is scheduled to produce the last state quarter of Hawaii in August of 2008. The Washington Quarter has been produced since 1932 and with the exception of the Bicentennial reverse; the state quarters represent the only significant change in design since the quarter's inception.

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. One state quarter for each student. Enough states have been honored so that you should be able to supply a different state quarter to each student. It is best not to include your own state.
2. 2x2 folders to use as storage for the coins.
3. Other methods of how coins can be stored. Examples include albums, flips, and housings used by professional grading companies often referred to as "slabs".



INTRODUCTION

Review with students how a territory can qualify as a state. Discuss the reasons particular territories have become states. Have students list the advantages achieved by a territory becoming a state. Ask students which of our states was the first state and which is the latest as well as the dates they were admitted to the Union.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

1. Have students select a quarter at random. Students are asked to look at their quarter and create a list of everything they see on the quarter. Students are then asked to refine the list to things that they believe appear on every quarter regardless of the state it represents.
2. Students will create a list of vocabulary terms used in numismatics. This list can include but is not limited to:
 - Obverse
 - Reverse
 - Field
 - Date
 - Motto
 - Mint Mark
 - Edge
3. Students will be shown the different ways a coin can be stored. Students will learn how to hold a coin.
4. Students will write a formal letter to their state's department of tourism requesting information.
5. Student will research their state information including state flag, population, climate, motto, and main industry. Some of this information is not time sensitive and can be researched in class using encyclopedias. Time sensitive information should be found using individual research outside of a classroom setting.
6. Students will present this information to the class and turn in a written report explaining why the design of their state quarter was chosen and what it represents.

CONCLUSION

After every presentation, have the class choose one fact from the presentation that they found particularly interesting. They are then to take that fact and turn it into the form of a question. At the end of all of presentations, the questions should be put together to construct a quiz.



INTERNET RESOURCES

Websites: www.usmint.gov
www.quarterdesigns.com

