

Western States of America

6 Articles

Check articles you have read:

☐

Washington State
139 words

☐

Oregon
135 words

☐

California
100 words

☐

Utah
359 words

☐

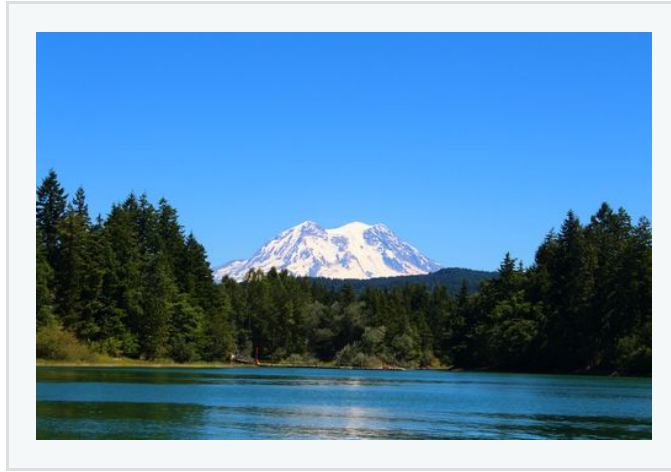
Nevada
124 words

☐

Colorado
89 words

Washington State

This text is from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.

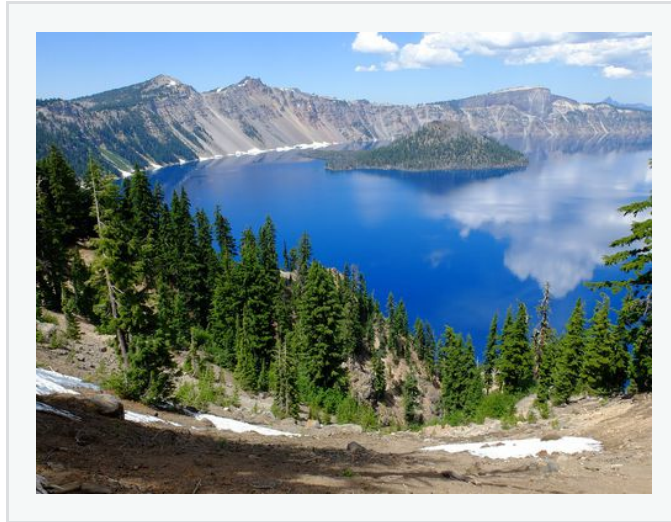


Photograph of Mt. Rainier

In 1853, the Washington Territory was formed from part of the Oregon Territory. Named in honor of George Washington, Washington was the 42nd state to join the Union, in 1889. Its coastal location and Puget Sound harbors give it a leading role in trade with Alaska, Canada, and the Pacific Rim. The state has two major mountain ranges -- the 7,000-foot Olympic Mountains surrounded by temperate rain forest on the peninsula west of Puget Sound, and the more majestic Cascade Range, which boasts the 14,410-foot Mount Rainier and the volcanic Mount St. Helens, which erupted twice in the 1980s. Although the capital is Olympia, most people live in the metropolitan areas of Seattle-Everett and Tacoma. The state tree of the "Evergreen State" is the western hemlock, and the flower is the western rhododendron.

Oregon

This text is from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.



Photograph of Crater Lake National Park

Spanish sailors in search of a northwest passage were the first Europeans to see what is known today as Oregon. Settlers traveling in wagon trains over the Oregon Trail in the 1840s followed the missionaries who had come in the 1830s. Oregon was admitted as the 33rd state in 1859. Oregon is a state of great natural beauty with places such as Crater Lake National Park and the Columbia River Gorge. Its mountains, covered in forests, make Oregon the leading state in the production of wood products. The state flower is the Oregon grape, and the capital is Salem. The origin of the state's name is unknown, but one theory holds that it may have come from the Wisconsin River, shown in a 1715 French map as "Ouaricon-sint."

California

This text is from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.



Forest of Redwood Trees in California

Nicknamed the "Golden State," California is the third largest state in area after Alaska and Texas. The discovery of gold and the immigration in 1849 of thousands of "forty-niners" in search of the precious metal helped California's admission into the Union in 1850. Today, California, land of the giant redwoods, has the highest population of any state in the nation and is America's principal agricultural state. It is also the home of Hollywood, the center of America's movie and television industry. Its capital is Sacramento and the state flower is the golden poppy.

Utah

This text is from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.



Photograph of Salt Lake City

The state known as Utah began when Brigham Young led a group of Mormon pilgrims seeking freedom from religious persecution into the Great Salt Lake Valley, where they established a settlement in 1847. The state gets its name from the Ute, an Indian tribe who lived there before the pioneers arrived. The golden spike completing the first transcontinental railroad line was driven at Promontory, Utah, in 1869, leading to a further influx of settlers. Utah was admitted as the 45th state in 1896. The capital, Salt Lake City, is also the world headquarters for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and Mormons make up 70 percent of the population. The sego lily is the state flower of the "Beehive State."

Utah Pioneers

A Local Legacy

It's been called the largest human migration in American history. Do you know what that refers to?

By 1869, perhaps 70,000 members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, also known as Mormons, had walked or traveled in wagons across 1,300 miles of wilderness to Salt Lake City, Utah. Leaving 6,000 in graves along the way, the Mormons were searching for religious freedom. Their journey was equal to the distance from New York City to Miami, or Seattle to San Diego.

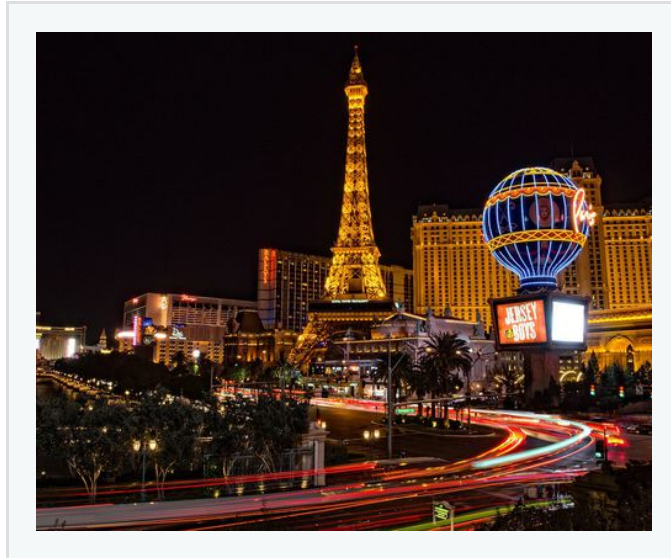
"This is the right place. Drive on." These were the words that Brigham Young, top Elder of the Mormons, said on July 24, 1847, as he lay sick in the back of a wagon. The place was the great valley

of the Salt Lake, in what would become the state of Utah. The Mormons wanted to leave the persecution they faced in the eastern part of the United States and start a community of their own out west. Once Brigham Young and his band of 148 Mormons had found "the place," more than 70,000 Mormons decided to follow.

Every year since 1849, Salt Lake City has remembered the Mormon pioneers on Pioneer Day. In 1997, a Mormon wagon train re-created the journey of these pioneers, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Brigham Young's arrival in Utah. The trip took three months!

Nevada

This text is from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.

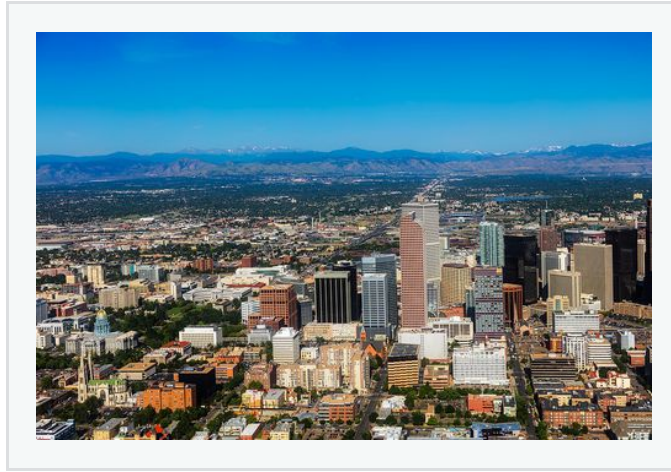


Photograph of Las Vegas at night

Nevada's name comes from the Spanish word meaning "snow clad" -- a reference to the snow-covered peaks of the Sierra Nevada. The discovery of the Comstock Lode, a massive deposit of silver, in 1859 brought many fortune seekers. Statehood followed shortly afterwards in 1864, when Nevada was admitted as the 36th state. Nevada is in a mountain region that includes semiarid grasslands and sandy deserts, and is the most arid (dry) state in the nation. Like oases in the desert, Nevada's two main cities -- Las Vegas and Reno -- attract fortune seekers from around the world hoping to strike it rich in the many casinos located there. The capital is Carson City, and the state flower is the sagebrush.

Colorado

This text is from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.



Photograph of Denver

Called the "Centennial State," because it became the 38th state when the U.S. turned 100 in 1876, Colorado is most closely associated with the Rocky Mountains and has numerous peaks over 14,000 feet. The state's name comes from a Spanish word meaning "red" or "ruddy," the color of much of the state's terrain. Today, Colorado is known for its vast cattle ranges, agricultural acreage, and snow-covered mountains that are ideal for winter sports. Its capital is Denver and state flower is the Rocky Mountain columbine.