Learning our way to California: Fun Facts

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**Unit Topic or Theme:** Geography and using the internet as a resource

**Grade:** 5th Grade

**Lesson Topic or Theme**: United States (States and Capitals)

**Lesson Objectives:**

* The students will be able to name all the State Capitals
* They will be able to navigate their way across the country by learning and answering interesting facts about various states, from Massachusetts to California
* They will be able to use the links on the website to work their way through and complete a scavenger hunt

**Instructional Technique:** The students will first engage in a class discussion about the different states, and we will go through the capitals as a class. Then the class will break into groups to work on the state capital matching worksheet to review the class discussion. After completing this worksheet students will then go online and complete the Learning Our Way to California website. As they go through the online journey they will need to complete the scavenger hunt, answers will be found off of links which are attached the pages with the correct answer.

**Instructional Materials:**

* United States map
* State Capital matching worksheet
* Computers for all student
* Learning Our Way to California website
* Scavenger hunt worksheet

**Theoretical Perspective:** It is important for students to know about the country that they live in. There have been many studies reporting that geographic illiteracy in American children and adults is becoming more common and this poses a problem for the future.

**Procedure:**

**Day 1:**

1. The class will have a discussion about the United States including: where different states are on the map, where students have been and cover all the capitals and states. This could be made into a game which you make all students stand then call on each student to name at least one state capital before they are able to sit down. **(45 minutes)**
2. Worksheets will be handed out and students will break into groups, of two or three, to match the States with their Capitals. **(20 minutes)**
3. As a class we will correct the worksheet by having the students take out their red pens and mark the ones they got incorrect. Students will volunteer their answers then pass it into the teacher for the teacher to record. **(10 minutes)**

**Day 2:**

1. Students will now be working on the computers individually. Assign each student to a computer, hand out the scavenger hunt worksheet and have them not touch anything **(5 minutes)**
2. Once all students are settled, demonstrate to the class how to get to the website: Learning Our Way to California. Instruct the kids to go through the questions and complete the scavenger hunt using the links connected to the pages. **(15 minutes)**
3. Instruct the class that they have 30 minutes to work on the website and scavenger and they are not too go to any other links that are not attached to the class website. IF they have questions the teacher will be walking around to answer them. **(30 minutes)**
4. Once 30 minutes has passed instruct the students to pass in their completed scavenger hunt and then ask for volunteers to tell you what were some of the fun facts they learned along the way **(10 minutes)**

**Evaluation:**

**Students will be able to name all the State Capitals**

* Completion of the matching worksheet will indicate that students are able to name State Capitals. Grading as a group provides instant feedback to correct and incorrect answers.

**Students will learn answer interesting facts about various States**

* Completion of the Learning Our Way to California will indicate that students have learned facts about the States. Completing the scavenger hunt will also verify that they connected to links to learn more interesting facts.

**Able to use the website and links to find information**

* Making sure students are able to use a computer for references is important and through completing the website and the scavenger hunt, you will be able to see if they were able to find the correct answers by using the internet in the correct way.

**Concerns or questions you have about teaching this lesson?**  
    It is important to make sure that students are trying to get the correct answers and completing the scavenger hunt. Teachers should circulate the room to check on student progress. It is also important to make sure students are not going onto other sights while they are supposed to be working on the assignment. Make sure to focus their attention!