

# THE EMPIRE STATE



FUN FACTS FOR NEW

YORK STATE STUDENTS



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Dear Student:

Hello! I am your New York State Senator. It is my job to help make State government work for you, your family, and all of our friends and neighbors. I work for you and everyone else in our community. Through my job in the State Senate, I am trying to make New York a better place in which to grow up, live, work, and raise a family. One of the things that is very important to me is that all young people—like you—are provided with the chance to get a good education. Knowledge is the key to success, and it's fun to learn new things. That's why I've prepared this brochure to help you learn about New York State's government and history. I hope you enjoy it!

If I can ever be of any assistance to you and your family, I hope you will call or write to me. I look forward to serving you!

Sincerely,

*Jim Tedisco*

Senator Jim Tedisco  
49th Senate District



# HISTORY OF NEW YORK

Five days after the Declaration of Independence, the people of New York met in convention in Kingston to vote their support and form their own state government. Although their state was the scene of nearly a third of the battles fought in the American Revolution, and their major port and city was occupied, New Yorkers still managed to supply large quantities of food, clothing, lead and iron to General Washington, as well as to serve valiantly in the Continental Army. New Yorkers saw the christening of the American flag when the Stars and Stripes was first flown in battle at the defense of Ft. Stanwix in Rome.

The Colony of New York became a state on April 20, 1777, with the adoption of its first constitution—12 years before the Federal Constitution. After the adoption of the Federal Constitution, New York City was chosen to be the nation's first capital and was the site of the inauguration of George Washington as President on April 30, 1789.

The first seal of the State of New York was created in 1777. It took the place of the Crown Seal, which was used when New York was a colony. The state seal that is used today was commissioned in 1882. It was the fifth time the seal was changed. The seal appears on the state flag, on printed material authorized by the state and in state buildings and offices. The state seal is kept in the custody of the Secretary of State.



# WHAT THE SEAL MEANS

## Lady Liberty

Lady Liberty, on the left, was used on the state seal almost 100 years before the Statue of Liberty was built. She represents freedom for the people of New York. Held high on a staff in her right hand is a peasant cap, representing democratic rule by the people. Her left foot is stepping on a crown, representing the rejection of royalty.

## Eagle

The American eagle is a symbol of strength, independence and freedom. The eagle is also one of our national symbols.

## Globe

The globe points to the Atlantic Ocean and North America, showing New York's place in the world.

## Lady Justice

Lady Justice, on the right, is blindfolded to make sure that she does not discriminate against anyone. The scales of justice in her left hand are balanced to give equal weight to both sides of all issues. The sword in her right hand represents the swift and powerful enforcement of the law.

## Sun

The sun, with a smiling face, is seen rising over the three mountain ranges.

## Mountains

The three mountain ranges of New York State are shown. They are the Catskill, the Adirondack and the Allegheny mountains.

## Boats

A ship and a sloop are shown about to pass each other.

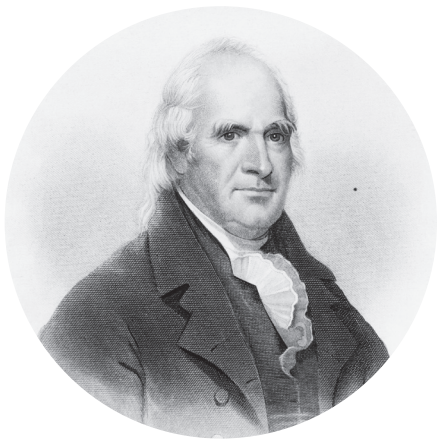
## River

The river represents New York's great waterways and shows how commerce began in the state.

## Excelsior

The motto, meaning, "Ever Upward," is on a ribbon below the state seal.



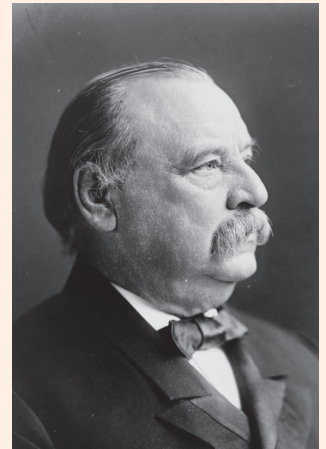
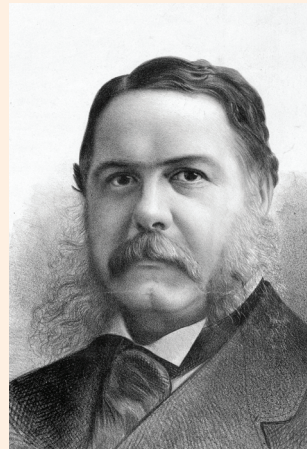
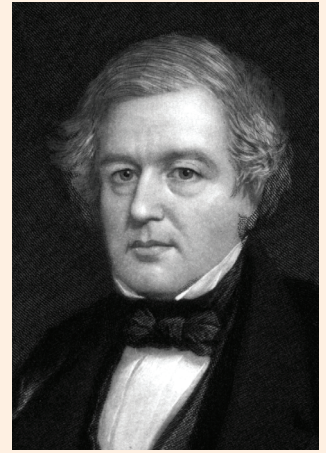
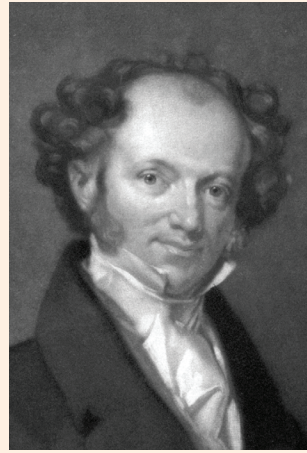




# HISTORY OF NEW YORK

## DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- ☞ From 1624 up until 1664 New York was known as the colony of New Netherland, a name given to it by its original Dutch settlers.
- ☞ In 1664, New Netherland was conquered by the English, and named New York in honor of the Duke of York.
- ☞ In 1776, New York declared its independence from England and became one of the original 13 states of the Federal Union.
- ☞ In April of 1777, New York's first Constitution was adopted. The first governor of New York State, George Clinton, was inaugurated that July.
- ☞ Our first president, George Washington, was inaugurated in 1789 in New York City, which was the first capital of the new nation. (It is said that George Washington also gave New York its "Empire State" nickname during a visit in 1784.)
- ☞ In 1848, the first Women's Rights Convention was held in Seneca Falls, New York.
- ☞ In 1884, as a gesture of friendship, France presented the Statue of Liberty to the people of the United States. This beacon of freedom has stood in New York Harbor since 1886.
- ☞ In 1892, Ellis Island opened in New York Harbor, and served until 1954 as our nation's primary gateway to liberty and opportunity for immigrants seeking a better life in the United States. It is said that 40 percent of our nation's population is descended from the 12 million immigrants who landed there.
- ☞ In 1917, the New York State Legislature passed an amendment to the State Constitution providing women the right to vote. Nationally, women's suffrage was not approved until 1920, when the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution was ratified.



## GOVERNMENT

A number of presidents have been closely associated with the history of New York State, including **Martin Van Buren, Millard Fillmore, Chester Arthur, Grover Cleveland, Theodore Roosevelt** and **Franklin D. Roosevelt**.

Elected officers of the state government, chosen for four-year terms, include: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General and Comptroller. Legislative power of the state is vested in two houses: the Senate, consisting of 63 members, and the Assembly, consisting of 150 members.



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# SYMBOLS OF

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## State Fruit

**Apples** were introduced in the 1600s by European settlers who brought seeds to New York. Dried apples were a staple for colonists, and hard apple cider was a popular drink.



## State Snack

Designating **yogurt** as the state snack was initiated by the fourth-graders at Byron-Bergen Elementary School from Bergen, New York. Making yogurt the official state snack raises public awareness of its health benefits and credits the dairy industry for being the nation's top yogurt producer.

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# NEW YORK STATE

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## State Motto

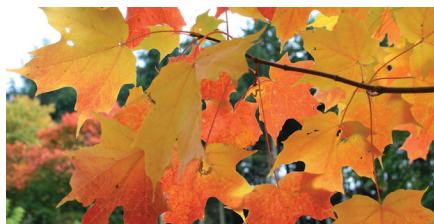
**Excelsior** (Ever Upward). In 1784, during a tour of the state's harbors, waterways and fertile interior, George Washington referred to New York as the "Seat of Empire." Since then, New Yorkers have worked ambitiously to live up to the state's motto and to make "The Empire State" the national leader it is today.

## State Fossil

During the Silurian Age (over 400 million years ago), **Eurypterus Remipes**, an extinct relative of the modern king crab and sea scorpion, crawled along the bottom of the shallow, brackish sea that extended from Buffalo to Schenectady and south to Poughkeepsie, roughly along the route of the New York State Thruway.

## State Tree

The **sugar maple** yields a sweet sap for syrup and sugar in the spring; its heavy crown of leaves turns brilliant colors in autumn. The wood makes fine furniture and burns well in woodstoves and fireplaces.



## State Flower

The **rose**, wild or cultivated, in all its variety and color, was made the state flower in 1955. Ever popular, it was at the top of a school children's poll of favorite flowers in 1891.

## State Shell

The **Bay Scallop** is our state shell and comes in a variety of colors with about 17 to 20 ribs. The Bay Scallop lives in shallow waters, usually where eel grass is present, and can live up to 20 months.

## State Muffin

The **apple muffin** was created for the Bear Road Elementary School children in North Syracuse, who were instrumental in making it the official state muffin.

## State Bird

The once-prolific, **Eastern Bluebird** has been making a comeback from low numbers in the 1950s. Many people provide special nesting boxes along fence rows for bluebirds.



### State Animal

To provide beaver pelts to European markets, fur traders settled in the early 1600s near the present capital at Albany to trade with Indians.

Adult **beavers** are three to four feet long and weigh 40 to 50 pounds.



### State Gem

The wine-red **garnet**, which is an eye appealing gem as well as a prized industrial abrasive, is the state gem.



### State Fish

Found in hundreds of lakes and ponds in the Adirondack Mountains and scattered in cool, clear streams throughout the state, native **brook trout**, called brookies or speckles, provide fine angling and the best of eating.



### State Beverage

**Milk** contains vital nutrients that keep us healthy, and it is an important element for helping to develop strong bones and teeth. There are also many products that we all enjoy derived from milk, including ice cream, butter, yogurt and cheese.

### State Flag

The device of arms of the state flag was adopted in 1778, and the present flag is a modern version of a Revolutionary War flag. It is dark blue with the State Coat of Arms in the center. The Coat of Arms shows Liberty and Justice standing on either side of a shield upon which is emblazoned the sun rising behind a range of mountains. A three-masted, square-rigged ship and a Hudson River sloop signify commerce. Beneath the shield is the state motto. The original flag is at the Albany Institute of History and Art.

### State Song

#### "I Love New York"

Words and music by Steve Karmen

*"I love New York. (repeat three times)  
There isn't another like it.  
No matter where you go.  
And nobody can compare it.  
It's win and place and show.  
New York is special.  
New York is diff'rent 'cause there's no  
place else  
on earth quite like New York and  
that's why  
I love New York."* (repeat three times)



## FUN FACTS ABOUT NEW YORK STATE

You have to be  
**18 YEARS**  
old to vote.

There are  
**ONE VOTE**  
can decide who wins  
an election.

According to the  
2010 census  
**19,378,102**  
**PEOPLE**  
live in New York—that  
ranks New York state  
3rd in the United States.

The state capital  
is located in  
**ALBANY**

There are  
**62 COUNTIES**  
in New York State.

New York  
City is the  
**LARGEST**  
city in New  
York State.

New York is  
**47,224**  
square miles.

Mount Marcy is  
**5,344 FEET**  
high.

The Hudson River is  
**300 MILES**  
long.

Taughannock is New  
York's highest  
waterfall. It is  
**215 FEET**  
high.

There are  
**4,000 LAKES  
AND PONDS**  
in New York. The Barge  
Canal System is  
**800 MILES**  
long, including  
lakes and rivers.

The Governor Thomas  
E. Dewey Thruway is  
**559 MILES**  
long, making it the  
longest toll expressway  
in the world.

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE! NEW YORK...BY THE NUMBERS

Test your numeric knowledge of New York State (say that ten times fast!) and its government by matching the questions below with the correct answers on the right.

- |      |   |   |  |
|------|---|---|--|
| 1777 | • | • | a) How many State Senators are there in the New York State Legislature?  |
| 63   | • | • | b) How many Assemblymembers are there in the New York State Legislature?   |
| 150  | • | • | c) How many counties are there in New York State?  |
| 3    | • | • | d) How old do you need to be to vote in New York State?  |
| 1797 | • | • | e) How many votes does it take to win an election in New York State?   |
| 19   | • | • | f) According to the 2010 census, there are more than ____ million people living in New York State.                           |
| 18   | • | • | g) What year did Albany become the State Capital of New York?  |
| 2    | • | • | h) When did the City of Kingston in Ulster County become the first capital of New York State?                                |
| 62   | • | • | i) How many United States Senators represent the people of New York State in the United States Congress in Washington, D.C.? |
| 1    | • | • | j) How many "senators" represent you? (Careful...trick question!)  |



## UNSCRAMBLE NEW YORK

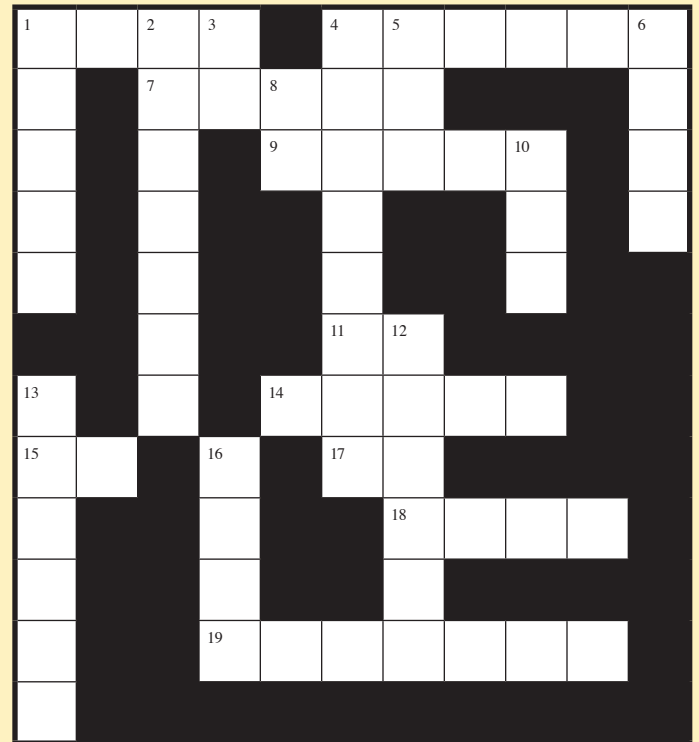
Find and circle the words listed below that refer to New York State and its government. Words can go forwards, backwards, across, up, down, and diagonally!

Legislature	The Senate and Assembly together
Governor	The State's Chief Executive
Empire State	New York's nickname
Vote	To say "yes" or "no" to a piece of legislation
Veto	When the Governor says "no" to legislation passed by the Senate and Assembly
Legislation	A proposal to make a new law
Bill	Another word for a piece of legislation
Capitol	The building in Albany where the Legislature meets to vote on new laws
Senator	A member of the Senate, like me!
Assembly	One of the two houses of the State Legislature; the other is the Senate
Excelsior	New York State's motto means "Ever Upward"
Muffin	Thanks to a group of third-graders from upstate New York, our State has an official muffin. The apple muffin, to be exact!
Committee	A group of senators or assemblymembers who meet to discuss bills having to do with education, the environment, or other specific issues
Rose	New York's official flower
Ladybug	New York's official insect
Law	A bill that has been approved by the Senate, the Assembly and the Governor

L	L	I	B	Q	R	O	T	A	N	E	S
E	E	Z	A	L	A	B	Y	N	R	T	E
G	B	G	O	V	E	R	N	O	R	A	E
I	R	O	I	S	L	E	C	X	E	T	T
S	Y	P	R	S	B	D	A	I	O	S	T
L	L	L	U	A	L	E	W	N	B	E	I
A	B	O	C	D	S	A	I	E	F	R	M
T	M	T	T	O	L	F	T	G	H	I	M
I	E	I	R	E	F	O	J	U	K	P	O
O	S	P	L	U	V	M	N	O	R	M	C
N	S	A	M	P	Q	R	S	T	E	E	U
V	A	C	W	X	L	A	D	Y	B	U	G

## NEW YORK'S "OFFICIAL" CROSSWORD PUZZLE

In this puzzle, almost all of the words refer to something "official" in New York State. Give it a try!



### ACROSS

- New York's official State beverage
- The official animal
- The State fruit
- The \_\_\_\_\_ maple is New York's official tree
- What the Scarecrow sang in the "Wizard of Oz": "I only had a brain..."
- The official State fish
- The State's motto means "ever \_\_\_\_\_ ward"
- Your dentist may be a doctor of dental surgery, or in short, a D \_\_\_\_\_
- "I Love New York" is our State's \_\_\_\_\_
- The Bay \_\_\_\_\_ is New York's #1 shell
- wash the dishes, you could say you're on \_\_\_\_\_
- The official State bird
- The abbreviation for "electroencephalogram," a medical test that measures the activity of your brain. (And I know that yours is working overtime right now to solve this puzzle!)
- New York's official flower
- The abbreviation for "post script" at the end of letters
- The garnet, which is \_\_\_\_\_, is the official New York gemstone
- An extinct sea scorpion, also known as *eurypteris remipes*, is New York's official \_\_\_\_\_

### DOWN

- "Excelsior" is the State \_\_\_\_\_
- New York's official insect
- When you have "kitchen patrol," and it's your turn to
- If it's made with apples, it's an official State \_\_\_\_\_
- Bills approved by the Legislature and Governor over the years that made these things official



## PHOTO & ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

### Front

“New York - the torch of the Statue of ‘Liberty,’ as it will appear when completed, on Bedloe’s Island,” 1885, published in *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*.

### Inside

“Entrance of the American Army into New York, Nov. 25th 1783,” ca. 1859. Chapin & P. Greatbach.

### History of New York

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

“Novi Belgii Novaeque Angliae,” ca. 1685, map by Nicholas Visscher.

“Portrait of James, Duke of York,” ca. 1660, Henri Gascars.

“Washington’s reception by the ladies, on passing the bridge at Trenton, N.Y. April 1789, on his way to New York to be inaugurated first president of the United States,” Currier & Ives, 1845.

“Arriving at Ellis Island,” 1907. Bain Collection, Library of Congress.

“Elizabeth Cady Stanton House,” Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress.

“Suffragette Mrs. S. Loebinger speaking from platform, New York,” Bain Collection, Library of Congress.

“George Clinton, head-and-shoulders portrait, facing right,” 1845-1890, engraving by John Chester Buttre after a painting by Ezra Ames.

“Statue of Liberty, New York Harbor,” 1905, Detroit Photographic Company.

### Government

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: “Martin Van Buren, president of the United States,” ca. 1839-1841, engraved by John Sartain after a painting by Henry Inman.

“Millard Fillmore,” ca. 1850-1853, John Sartain.

“James A. Garfield, Republican candidate for president - Chester A. Arthur Republican candidate for vice president,” ca. 1880, Vic Arnold.

“Grover Cleveland, head-and-shoulders portrait, facing right,” ca. 1903, Frederick Gutekunst.

“Theodore Roosevelt,” ca. 1905, Sidney L. Smith.

“Franklin Delano Roosevelt, head-and-shoulders portrait, facing slightly left,” ca. 1933, Elias Goldensky.

### Symbols of New York State

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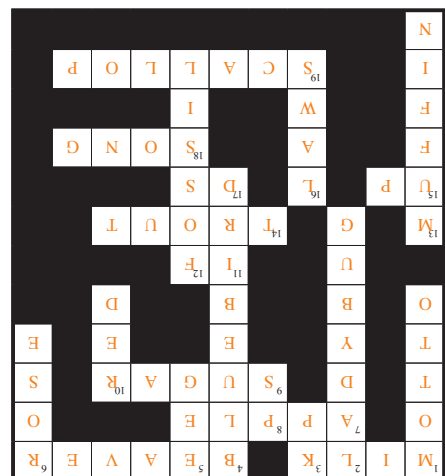
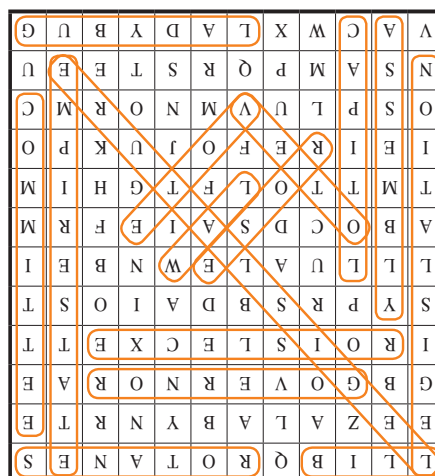
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## ANSWERS TO THE PUZZLES

For more fun facts about New York State, visit the “Kid’s Room” at the New York Department of State website at: [http://www.dos.ny.gov/kids\\_room/](http://www.dos.ny.gov/kids_room/)

- a) There are 63 State Senators.
- b) There are 150 Assemblymembers.
- c) There are 62 counties, including the five that make up New York City.
- d) You must be 18 to vote.
- e) Just one, and someday the one vote that decides an election could be YOURS!
- f) There were almost 19 million...or 18,976,457 people, to be exact.
- g) 1797.
- h) 1777.
- i) New York has two United States Senators.
- j) There! Two United States Senators and me, your State Senator!











NEW YORK  
STATE SENATE