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Florida Statehood

Well, here we are! This is the week you've been waiting for. In this issue, after hundreds of years of Spanish, French and English conflict, the great territory of Florida finally became the great state of Florida. This was a day to be proud of and a day of controversy. Come look as we travel through time into history ...

On March 3, 1845, almost 70 years after the United States declared independence from England, Congress decided that not one, but two, great territories could become states. Why two at once? That's a simple question, but the answer isn't so simple.

At this time, America was still a very young country. Like most youngsters, it was going through some growing pains and making some mistakes. About half the country was opposed to slavery, while the other half was in the habit of depending upon slavery to make a living.

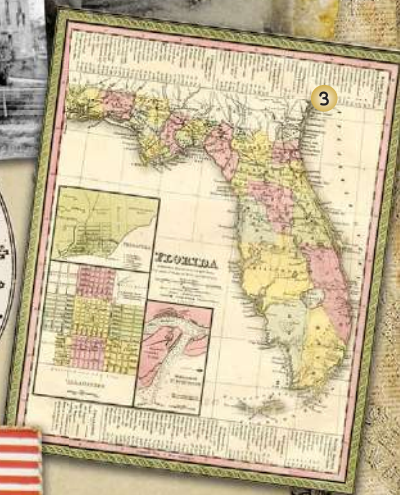
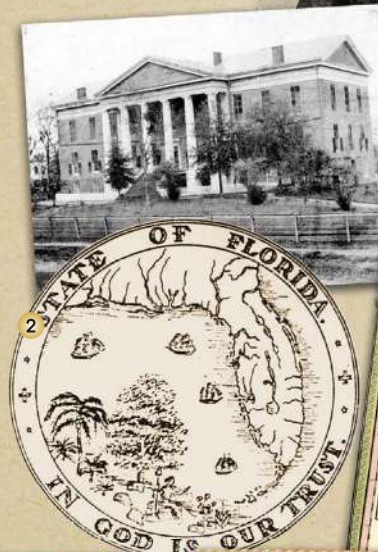
In 1693, the king of Spain freed African slaves in the Florida territory, but slavery had long since moved south to Florida again by the time the United States took it over as a territory in 1821. The Union became worried that one more slave state would give slave owners too much power in the government. They tried to solve this problem by granting statehood to two different territories at the same time: the slave-holding state of Florida and the free state of Iowa. What a balance! The politicians in Washington, D.C., were able to breathe easily for a while. But what was happening here in Florida?

The road to statehood for Florida had not been a smooth one. There was a great deal of controversy (heated discussion). People argued about everything, from where the state capital should be to what hotels to stay in during the government conferences. But once the arguing was over, our

state wound up smelling like a rose, with senators and representatives speaking for us in the U.S. government and a terrific state song as a bonus.

Iowa didn't have it easy either. Even though Congress agreed to let them become a state at the same time as Florida, arguments over boundaries kept that from happening until December 1846.

So strap yourselves in and get ready for a ride! This week's issue is about music, animals, flags, duels, rules, mighty men, refugees and important decisions. Hang on!



- 1) The flag went from 26 to 27 stars.
- 2) The original state Capitol and seal.
- 3) Florida map around statehood
- 4) William Dunn Moseley was the first governor of Florida.

Florida Next Generation Sunshine State Standards: SS.4.A.1.1: Analyze primary and secondary resources to identify significant individuals and events throughout Florida history. SS.4.A.1.2: Synthesize information related to Florida history through print and electronic media. SS.4.A.3.9: Explain how Florida (Adams-Onís Treaty) became a U.S. territory. SS.4.A.4.2: Describe pioneer life in Florida. SS.4.A.6.1: Describe the economic development of Florida's major industries. SS.4.A.6.2: Summarize contributions immigrant groups made to Florida. SS.4.A.6.3: Describe the contributions of significant individuals to Florida. SS.4.A.9.1: Utilize timelines to sequence key events in Florida history. SS.4.C.1.1: Describe how Florida's constitution protects the rights of citizens and provides for the structure, function, and purposes of state government. SS.4.E.1.1: Identify entrepreneurs from various social and ethnic backgrounds who have influenced Florida and local economy. SS.4.FL.2.7: Planning for spending can help people make informed choices. Develop a budget plan for spending, saving and managing income. SS.4.FL.3.2: Explain that when people save money, they give up the opportunity to buy things now in order to buy things later. SS.4.FL.3.3: Identify ways that people can choose to save money in many places – for example, at home in a piggy bank or at a commercial bank, credit union or saving and loan. SS.4.FL.3.5: Identify the significance of Fort Mose as the first free African community in the United States. SS.4.G.1.1: Identify physical features of Florida. SS.4.G.1.2: Locate and label cultural features on a Florida map. SS.4.G.1.4: Interpret political and physical maps using map elements (title, compass rose, cardinal directions, intermediate directions, symbols, legend, scale, longitude, latitude).



FLORIDA STATEHOOD

Waving in the Lonely Breeze

You can tell a lot about a place by its flag. An American flag has one stripe for each of the original 13 Colonies and a star for every state that is part of the country today. Each state also has its own flag, including Florida. In fact, Florida's flag has changed a few times since the 1800s. Florida's first unofficial flag had blue, orange, red, white and green stripes and the motto, "Let Us Alone!" A motto is a saying or slogan. Today, Florida's state motto is "In God We Trust." Florida has changed in many other ways since we were a territory. Let's look at a few of those changes.

East vs. West

Before Florida became a state, it was divided into two parts. Those areas were called East Florida and West Florida. Leaders in Florida and the United States weren't sure

whether the area should join the country as one state or two. Those in Florida wanted to remain separate, but leaders in Washington, D.C., did not agree. Slavery was one of the most important and controversial issues. Both East and West Florida allowed slaves. People who opposed slavery knew that having more slave states would make it harder to free the slaves. They did not want to add two more slave states at the same time. The argument continued as Florida got closer to becoming a state.

David Levy Yulee, a Florida Statesman

David Levy Yulee was an important person in that argument. He worked hard to make sure Florida joined the United States as a single state. Yulee's father had made a lot of money in the lumber business. The family used part of that money to buy 50,000 acres of land. They wanted to build a town for Jewish settlers. Yulee also helped build Florida's first cross-state railroad.

Yulee wrote a lot of letters and gave many speeches about Florida's future. He argued that

Florida would be better if it stayed as one state. He was so convincing that people all over Florida started to agree with him. Today, many historians believe that Yulee was one of the most important people involved with Florida's statehood. He had a vision for his state and worked hard to make it happen. Yulee would later become one of Florida's senators. This made him the first Jewish person to serve as a member of Congress (a gathering of representatives).

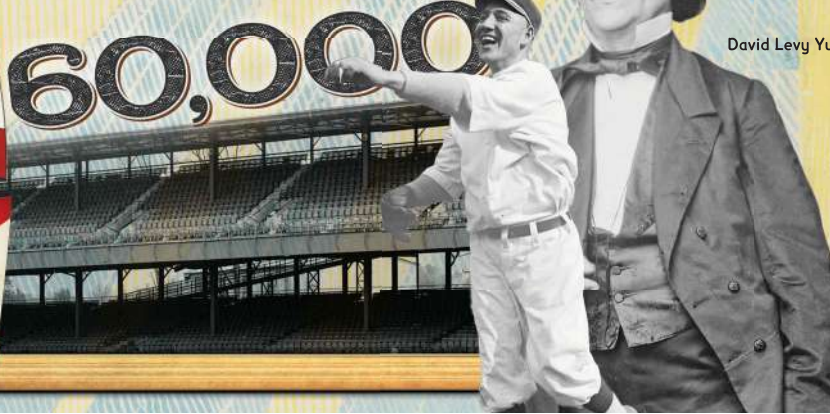
Becoming a State: The Magic Number

Population was an important part of becoming a state. Congress only allowed new states if the territory had enough citizens. In the early 1800s, that number was 60,000 people. That's enough people to fill about five minor league baseball stadiums. That may seem like a lot, but today,

Florida has a population of around 20 million people. That's enough to fill more than 1,500 baseball stadiums!



60,000



David Levy Yulee

Henry "Box" Brown

When Florida became a state, slavery was still a major issue in the United States. Southern states made heavy use of slaves on farms and plantations. Northern states did not use slaves and wanted to make slavery illegal.

Many slaves wanted to escape to freedom. Henry Brown was a smart, clever slave from Virginia. Luckily for Brown, he was friends with a man named James C.A. Smith. Smith knew a group of abolitionists in Philadelphia. An abolitionist was someone who worked to end slavery. Together, they came up with a plan. They put Brown in a wooden box that was about 3 feet long, 2 feet wide and 2 1/2 feet tall. They then mailed the box to the abolitionists in Philadelphia. The trip would take 27 hours.

The trip was very uncomfortable. There was only room for a small bag of water and a few biscuits. Many of the workers who handled the box ignored the "This Side Up With Care" sign, and Brown was often on his side or upside down during the trip. A few workers even used the box as a place to sit. The box was moved roughly from wagons, trains and ferries until it finally arrived in Philadelphia.

Word of Brown's escape quickly spread, even to slaves in Florida. Brown eventually had to move to England to escape from slave hunters. His story gave hope to slaves all over the country, and Henry "Box" Brown became an important part of the fight against slavery.



House Rules

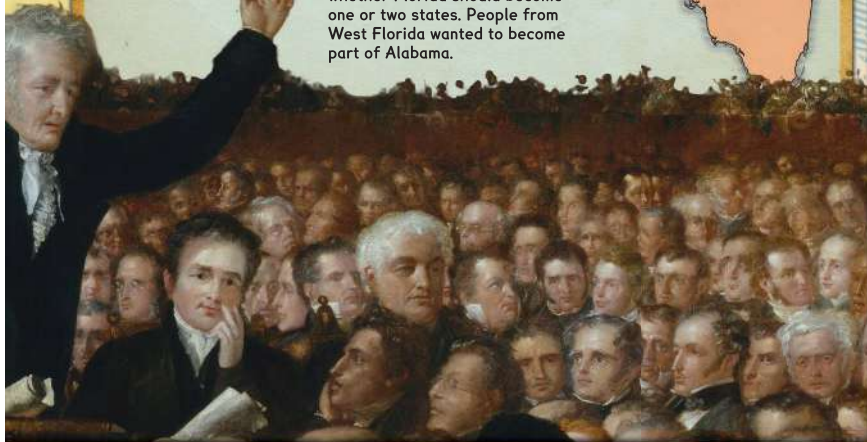
Another step to becoming a state was writing a constitution. Deciding on the laws for a new state was a big job. Florida's politicians had to decide what property needed to be taxed and by how much. Politicians are people who are involved in government. They also had to decide on the

rules for different offices like senator, judge and governor. Some of those rules seem strange to us today. For example, Florida's first constitution says that no one who had ever fought in a formal duel was allowed to hold any office in the state.

Once the constitution was finished, Florida was finally ready to become a state!



Florida's leaders argued about whether Florida should become one or two states. People from West Florida wanted to become part of Alabama.



TIMELINE

Spain gives
Florida to
the U.S.,
1821



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Second
Seminole War,
1835-1842



Florida
becomes
a state,
1845



Third Seminole
War,
1855-1858



American Civil
War,
1861-1865



Martin and Palm Beach Counties

Florida Counties

Martin County: The county seat here is Stuart. Martin is on Florida's Treasure Coast, and the coast is definitely its greatest treasure. You haven't lived until you've gone to the beach here to watch an enormous sea turtle lay her eggs. You can do just that at Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge, where all kinds of species are protected. (A refuge is a shelter for protection.)

Palm Beach: This is Florida's biggest county, and West Palm Beach is the county seat. Palm Beach is home to many interesting games, like the World Series of Poker, where the prize money is in the millions! There's also the International Polo Season. We're not talking shirts. It's horses, long sticks (mallets), balls and goal posts. This is not your typical playground game! Another popular game here is golf. There are hundreds of courses in Palm Beach County, and people come from all over to play here.



Financial Literacy

Budgets and Banks

A budget is a plan to spend and save money. The first step when making a budget is to keep track of how much income you earn every month. Income is the money you gain. The next step is to add up how much money you know you will have to spend. When you know how much money you make and how much you have to spend, you can see how much extra money will be left.

It can be hard to figure out what to do with extra money. One option is to save it. Banks are a great place to keep any extra money you have. A savings account at a bank will earn interest and grow over time. If you give up buying something small now, you may be able to buy something bigger later.



Name _____

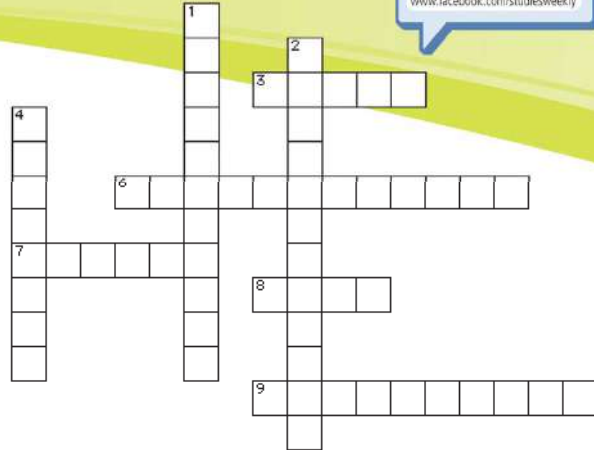


ACROSS

3. another word for a slogan
6. a person who worked to get rid of slavery in 19th-century America
7. shelter for protection
8. an old method of ending a quarrel (Two men walked 10 paces with backs facing, and then they turned and shot.)
9. a person experienced and/or involved in the art of government

DOWN

1. a discussion, often heated, in which differences of opinion are expressed
2. a document that holds a governing collection of rules for an organization
4. a formal conference of members representing a group



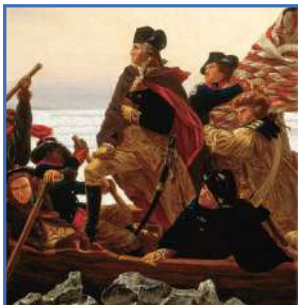
As you read this week's lesson, circle or highlight all proper nouns with any color pen or highlighter. This will help you find some of the crossword answers and get ready for this week's test.

Imagine you are Henry "Box" Brown. James C.A. Smith sealed you up in your box, and you traveled to Philadelphia for your freedom. You only had room to bring a small bag of water and a few biscuits. Write to tell the reader about your journey to freedom.

Make sure to include specific details about your trip and describe for the reader what it felt like inside the box.

Let's Write

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True Grits: Florida Pioneer Life in the 1800s

If you had been a child in Florida 150 years ago, this is how your mom might have called you to dinner: "Reckon it's time for victuals. We're fryin' up a cooter with fatback and grits. C'mon now, ya varmints, ya hear?" (If some of those words don't sound familiar, look at the end of this article.)



For Florida pioneers, fried turtle was an everyday meal. Grits, or coarsely ground corn, was also part of most meals. So there you are, trying to eat supper. There's no air conditioning, and it seems as if there are about a million mosquitoes per square inch flying around. One of your chores might be swatting mosquitoes during meals. And you thought setting the table was a pain!

Your parents got 160 acres of land from the Homestead Act of 1862. That was a lot of land to take care of. You spent your day grinding corn, spinning yarn, making soap, weaving Spanish moss or making turkey calls. You'd help farm and fish, make cornbread and keep the fire going. For fun, you might have a sack race. The grown-ups might have a skillet-tossing contest. If you were lucky, you'd get a stick of sugar cane to gnaw on all day. And if you were really lucky, you'd get to go to school for a few hours each week! Florida pioneers had true grits!

victuals (vit-tles): food

reckon: suppose

cooter: soft-shell turtle

fatback: chunks of fat from a pig's back, usually fried crisp

grits: coarse-ground corn made into creamy meal

varmints: small animals or affectionately, children

1. What other territory was working to become a state at the same time as Florida?
2. Why did Congress agree to let both territories become states?
3. On what date did Florida officially become a state?
4. What kept the other territory from becoming a state until December 1846?

5. Name one of the leaders who helped Florida become a state. What did that person do?
6. Who was Henry "Box" Brown?
7. What two bodies of water border both Martin and Palm Beach counties? (Hint: Look at the map with the Florida Counties article.)
8. How can budgets be useful?

Think & Review

9. West Florida tried to become part of what other state?
10. What requirement did Florida need to meet before it became a state?