Mementos of My Visit to the State Capitol

Date of my Visit: ____________

Can you Recognize our State’s Leaders?

Autographs of those I saw at the Capitol:

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Created and designed by:
La. House of Representatives
Communications Office
The dream of Governor Huey P. Long, the "new" State Capitol is now a symbol of pride and history for Louisiana. Completed in 1932, it only took 14 months to build. The building itself stands on a 27-acre lot and cost a mere five million dollars to build.

If you get the chance to visit Baton Rouge, this magnificent building is a must see. The tallest capitol in the United States at 450 feet and 34 floors, the front staircase is engraved with the names of the 50 U.S. states in the order they were admitted into the Union.

The inside is just as beautiful, decorated with marble, bronze, murals, and sculptures. To get into both the Senate and House chambers you have to pass through beautiful bronze doors that literally weigh a ton each!

Ironically, Huey Long was assassinated in the Capitol in 1935, just three years after its completion. He is buried on the grounds of the building, and there is a statue of his likeness that faces the front of the Capitol.

Group tours are offered by appointment, and are available seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
The Louisiana Legislature

Louisiana's state government looks a lot like our federal government. We have three branches: Legislative, Executive, and Judicial. The Legislative Branch makes laws for the state, the Executive Branch enforces the laws passed by the State Legislature, and the Judicial Branch makes sure these laws don't violate either our state or federal constitutions. We're going to focus on the Legislative Branch.

There are two groups of people that make up Louisiana's Legislature. One is the House of Representatives, the other is the Senate. Since we have two houses, our Legislature is called "bicameral." In the Latin language "bi" means two, and "cameral" means house. There are 105 state representatives and 39 state senators. They are elected to represent us every four years, called a term.

Every year, the Legislature meets in Baton Rouge, our state capital, to participate in legislative sessions. A session is when they get together to debate each other's ideas to improve our state. They write their ideas down, and we call these documents bills. If a bill gets the okay from both Houses, and the Governor likes it, it becomes a law.

In even-numbered years we have a Regular Session in which all kinds of bills are introduced. In odd-numbered years we have Fiscal Sessions in which bills dealing with money matters may be introduced. Additionally, each member may prefile (file before session begins) not more than 5 bills that are not about money matters. Each member may also prefile an unlimited number of local or special bills(bills that do not affect the entire state) and 5 more fiscal or local bills once session begins.

We also can have Special Sessions. If the Legislature is not in session, and something happens that needs to be discussed by both Houses, the Governor, or the Legislature itself can call a Special Session.
House of Representatives

The state is divided by population into 105 areas, called districts. Before someone can go to Baton Rouge as a Representative, he or she has to be elected by the voters living in one of these districts to represent them in the Legislature.

Do you think you’d like to be a state Representative one day? Well, there are a few requirements you’ll have to meet before you can try. First, you have to be at least 18 years old and a registered voter. That makes sense because you have to be 18 before you can register to vote anyway! Next, you have to have lived in Louisiana for at least two years. You also have to live in the district you want to represent. Anyone interested?

Here’s another bit of trivia for you. All the bills that deal with funding have to start out in the House of Representatives. Senators can’t write those kinds of bills.

Now, in each session there are hundreds of bills Representatives have to consider making into laws. It would take forever if they heard every one! Fortunately for them, the House is split up into committees that hear bills first. For example, if a bill is about putting computers into every classroom in our state, then the Education Committee reviews it. If they like the bill they’ll send it to the entire House to hear. If they don’t like it they just throw it away. This is how most of the bills are "killed."

A bill can go through lots of changes if it’s lucky enough to become a law. On average, only a small percentage of bills introduced make it through the whole process and become laws!
There are 39 Louisiana State Senators. Each Senator represents a district, a particular area of the state, and is elected by voters in that district. Frequently Senators are identified by the district they represent. If you read or hear about a Senator representing District 3 or District 35 or any of the 39 districts, you can easily find out which part of the state that Senator represents by finding the district on a Senate District map like the one you see here. For instance, the District 3 Senator represents a portion of New Orleans, while the District 35 Senator represents an area in North Louisiana.

To be elected a Louisiana State Senator, you must meet the same requirements as to be elected to the House of Representatives. As a Senator you will represent more people than a Representative. Each Senator represents about 108,000 people and each Representative represents about 40,000.

Another difference between the Senate and the House of Representatives is the special authority and responsibility of the Senate to confirm the appointment of persons to important state jobs. Senators review the qualifications and background of each person and in a public vote decide whether or not to approve -confirm - a person to the job.

As in the House, the members of the Senate are assigned to various committees to better discuss the hundreds of bills considered at each session. Each committee debates bills on certain subjects. For instance, the Finance Committee discusses the state budget bill, while the Transportation and Highways Committee discusses the speed limit bill. Committee members must agree to let the full Senate consider the measure. No bill can become law unless both the House and the Senate approve it.
Do you know who the first inhabitants of Louisiana were? They weren't French, Spanish, English, or American. They were the Native Americans! The earliest known tribes in what is now our state date back to about 3,000 years ago. That was even before the Roman Empire developed! There were over 20 tribes of Indians located in Louisiana.

The first European explorers to our state were Spanish, but since they didn't find any gold or silver they lost interest and left. The French were the first ones to try to settle the rugged lands of Louisiana. French explorer La Salle came down the Mississippi from Canada in 1682 and named the new territory he found Louisiana in honor of France's King Louis XIV.

This new territory changed hands in 1762 because France lost the French and Indian War. The Treaty of Fontainebleau gave Spain control of Louisiana. Nobody told the French settlers living there until 1764! The Spanish didn't have control for very long. In 1800 another treaty gave control of Louisiana back to France.

As confusing as this all was to the people living in Louisiana, it didn't end there.
In 1803, with the U.S. only 27 years old, U.S. President Thomas Jefferson felt it was in his country's best interest to gain control of New Orleans because of its port. President Jefferson sent diplomats to France to ask Napoleon if he would sell the city. Napoleon decided to sell the entire Louisiana territory for just $15 million. The Louisiana Purchase nearly doubled the size of the United States! Thirteen of our present states came from this territory. In just 41 years the people living in the Louisiana territory belonged to three different countries!

After the Louisiana territory split into smaller pieces, what we now know as Louisiana officially became a state in 1812. It was the 18th state admitted into the Union.

The cultural diversity found in our state is a result of its unique history. Our French heritage is evident in the dialect spoken by many Louisiana natives, our parish system (all other states have counties), and our system of law (we have the Napoleonic code law system while other states have common law). If you take a stroll in New Orleans' French Quarter you'll see some beautiful examples of Spanish architecture!
The first Governor's mansion was built before the Civil War, but because of the persistence of Gov. Huey Long it was replaced in 1930. Wanting a new mansion in which to live, Gov. Long asked the Louisiana Legislature to give him the money to fund his project. Instead of letting their refusal keep him down, he took Louisiana prisoners to the old mansion and had them tear it down! The Legislature had to give him the money to build a new one!

In 1960 there was a push to replace the Long Mansion with one that reflected Louisiana's rich architectural heritage. So, using the Oak Alley antebellum plantation home as a model, a new Governor's Mansion was built. Completed in 1963, the current mansion overlooks the Capitol Lake in Baton Rouge.

At 25,000 square feet, the mansion has 3 floors, a basement, 8 bedrooms, and 16 baths - 60 rooms in all! In the center of the Stair Hall floor is the state seal made by artists using 2,500 pieces of inlaid stone. They added a Louisiana touch to the seal, a Magnolia blossom. This flower has special meaning in our state, do you know what it is? If you keep reading you'll find out!
STATE SEAL:

Adopted in 1902 and redesigned in 2010, the Great Seal of Louisiana was first created at the request of Gov. W. W. Heard in an attempt to have one seal used consistently throughout Louisiana government.

The state seal and the state flag are similar in that the brown pelican and its chicks are white on a rich blue background. The mother pelican tears at her own breast to feed three chicks. The image is symbolic of the strength, majesty and self-sacrifice of a state willing to protect and nourish its citizens. The three drops of blood are grouped in a triangle to create the center of the entire image.

STATE FLAG:

In Louisiana history, there have been 10 flags to fly over what is now the state of Louisiana. The flags of five nations have flown over our state: France, Spain, Great Britain, the U.S., and the Confederate States of America. The current flag was adopted in 1912 and redesigned in 2010.

Our state motto "union justice confidence" is inscribed beneath the pelican and her nest.
The state Emblem of Military Service is the Honor and Remember Flag. The Honor and Remember flag is displayed over the State Capitol on Memorial Day and Veterans Day.
STATE BIRD:
The Louisiana state bird is the Eastern Brown Pelican. Found from South Carolina all the way to Brazil, it is famous for its large bill. The bottom part of this bill has a pouch that can be greatly enlarged. This is useful because when they go to catch a fish to eat they scoop up the water the fish is swimming in, making it easier to catch.

STATE FLOWER:
Have you ever noticed how many Magnolia trees there are in your neighborhood? Well, in 1900 the Louisiana Legislature did. Because of the large number of these trees found in Louisiana, they decided to make the white blossom of the Magnolia tree Louisiana's state flower.
STATE FRESHWATER FISH:

Also known as "sac-a-lait," the white perch is Louisiana's state freshwater fish. This fish is green or brown on its back, and bright silver to white on its belly. Easiest caught when using live minnows as bait, the largest one caught in Louisiana weighed in at a whopping 6 pounds! Did you know that after the female white perch lays her eggs, it is the male that guards the nest to make sure they are safe?

STATE MAMMAL:

With small eyes and thick black fur, the Louisiana Black Bear can be found in swamps, coastal marches, and sugarcane fields near the Atchafalaya Basin. During the warm months the black bear eats oak bark and fruits, and hibernates in hollow logs and large tree cavities during winter. Although once found in large numbers throughout Louisiana, our state mammal had become threatened because its stomping grounds are being taken over for agricultural use, and it lives with the constant threat of poaching. Thanks to restoration and conservation efforts, our bear is no longer on the endangered species list.
STATE TREE:
Louisiana did not have a state tree until 1963. Out of the many varieties of trees found in our state, the Louisiana Legislature picked the bald cypress to be our state tree. One of the most important sources of timber for Louisiana, the "cypress" is found all over the state. However, the best places to look for the tree are poorly drained floodplains.

STATE DOG:
In 1979 the only dog native to Louisiana became our state dog, the Catahoula Leopard Dog. A cross between a dog raised by Indians of the Catahoula Lake region and a Spanish "war dog," this dog is well known for its unusual eyes and webbed feet. The color of its eyes can be brown, green, blue, or glass (white). Also, the Catahoula are great hunting dogs. What else do you expect of the state dog of Louisiana, also known as "Sportsman's Paradise?"
STATE REPTILE:
If you go to the lowlands and waters of Louisiana you might bump into the state's reptile, the alligator. Found in the southeast portion of the U.S., the alligator's colors range from dull gray to dark olive. Despite its vicious reputation, this large reptile takes better care of its young than some other animals do. However, if you see one you'd better stay out of its way because grown males can weigh up to 550 pounds and grow to 12 feet in length.

STATE CRUSTACEAN:
Called "crawdads" and "mudbugs" in other parts of the U.S., crawfish are Louisiana's state crustaceans. There are so many in Southern Louisiana that this region is commonly referred to as the crawfish capital of the world. Although many crawfishermen still use swamps and marshes as their main hunting grounds for these small, lobster look-a-likes, the crawfish industry has become so big in Louisiana people have developed crawfish farms.
The official State Mineral is the agate, as found in Louisiana gravel. Agates are polished and often used to make jewelry.
STATE FRUIT
Strawberries have been grown in Louisiana since the 1860's, but it wasn't until 2001 that the strawberry became the state fruit, replacing the cantaloupe. The city of Ponchatoula is most known for its production of strawberries. In 1999, the United States Postal Service even introduced a strawberry stamp, and held its opening ceremony in Ponchatoula. Approximately half of the money that the state earns from fruit comes from strawberries. The strawberry has its own commissioner, and most importantly, its own festival held every Spring in Ponchatoula.
STATE VEGETABLE:
The official state vegetable is the sweet potato. Louisiana is the second largest sweet potato growing state in the United States and the sweet potato is the most valuable vegetable crop grown in Louisiana. It is worth about $65 million to Louisiana farmers each year. People call sweet potatoes grown in Louisiana “yams.” Sweet potatoes have a bright orange flesh color. Native Americans were already growing sweet potatoes when Columbus arrived in America in 1492. Today, people enjoy sweet potatoes in casseroles, desserts, salads, pastries, cakes, pies, side dishes and soups.

STATE VEGETABLE PLANT:
The Creole Tomato is the state’s official “vegetable plant.” The Creole Tomato plant was developed for our state’s hot muggy bayou climate. It is known for disease resistance and productivity in hot weather. It’s fruit, the Creole tomato, is used in sauces, soups, salads, side dishes, and even desserts.
STATE JELLIES:
Louisiana has 2 state jellies. They are mayhaw and sugar cane. The mayhaw fruit grows on trees from Texas to Florida. It is a member of the hawthorne family and is a cousin of the rose. Grant Parish is listed as one of three areas with the most mayhaw trees. The fruit resembles a crabapple. Cane Jelly is the first new product created from sugarcane in more than 200 years. The jelly comes in a variety of flavors, including barbecue and pepper.

STATE MEAT PIE:
Louisiana is known for its delicious food. That is why it is no surprise that we have an official state meat pie. It is the Natchitoches Meat Pie named for the oldest town in our state. The pie, which is filled with meat and seasonings and fried, has been popular in Natchitoches since the 1700s and was sold by street vendors. Today you can find them in restaurants and at the annual Natchitoches Meat Pie Festival.
STATE CUISINE:
Gumbo is the official state cuisine (food) of Louisiana. Gumbo is an African word that means okra but gumbo doesn’t always have okra as an ingredient. It is a spicy, thick, soup-like dish made with a roux (browned flour and oil or butter), vegetables, and meat, seafood, or both and served over rice. There is even a gumbo made with eggs! Some people use file’, the ground leaves of the sassafras tree, to thicken and flavor gumbo. This dish is so popular that several festivals and cook-offs are held each year from North to South Louisiana to celebrate this Louisiana food.
The State Gemstone is the cabochon-cut gemstone or LaPearlite, made from the shell of the Crassostrea virginica mollusk (oyster shell) found in the waters off the coast of Louisiana.

The smooth round gemstones are very pretty mounted on a ring or hanging from a necklace.
STATE SALTWATER FISH:
The Spotted Sea Trout or the Speckled Trout is the official state saltwater fish. Spotted seatrout have a streamlined body that is dark silvery gray on the back, shading to white below. The upper parts of the fish have an iridescent sheen and have a few to many black dots. The dorsal and tail fin are always spotted. The Spotted Sea Trout has one or two large sharp canine teeth located at the front of the upper jaw.

STATE AMPHIBIAN:
The green tree frog is the state amphibian of Louisiana. It is considered to be one of the most beautiful tree frogs in North America. A yellow stripe runs from its jaw along each side to its hip. The green tree frog is tiny -- it only grows to be about 1 3/4 to 2 1/2 inches long. Its toes end in round pads which helps it to climb trees easily. The green tree frog can jump from 8 to 10 feet.
The state donut is the beignet. Beignets are like a sweet doughnut, but the beignet is square-shaped and does not have a hole. They are fried and served hot then topped with powered sugar.

The State Wildflower is the Louisiana purple iris. Our iris has been long associated with the fleur de lis, which is highly symbolic of the French influence in our state. In French, fleur de lis literally means "lily flower" and is widely believed to be a stylized version of the Iris.
STATE SYMBOL: The Fleur-de-lis is the State Symbol of Louisiana. The shape of a fleur-de-lis is a stylized lily. It is both a symbol of the state's French heritage and more recently used as a symbol of support for hurricane recovery.
"Throw me something Mister!!" For a lot of families in South Louisiana, those are the words babies learn after they master "Mama" and "Dada." A long standing tradition in our state, the Mardi Gras celebration brings fun, laughter, color, and "throws" to all who participate in its festivities.

A festival brought to Louisiana from Paris, France, the first daytime parade held in New Orleans was in 1838. Although most think of floats, beads, and costumes, Mardi Gras is in fact a religious celebration. The Carnival season was created as a time when people have fun before beginning the Lenten season of fasting which leads to Easter Sunday.

During the Lenten season, followers of Catholicism are not supposed to eat meat on Fridays. Traditionally, on the Tuesday before Lent begins they celebrated by eating all the meat they had in storage. This is why it is called Mardi Gras, which means "Fat Tuesday."

The colors associated with this annual festival are purple, (symbol of justice), green (symbol of faith), and gold (symbol of power).
Give Me Louisiana
- Arrangement by John Schaum
- Words and Music by Doralice Fontane

(1st verse)
Give me Louisiana,
The State where I was born
The State of snowy cotton.
The best I've ever known:
A State of sweet magnolias,
And creole melodies
Oh give me Louisiana;
The State where I was born
Of what sweet memories
The mossy old oaks bring.
It brings us the story of our
Evangeline
A State of old tradition,
of old plantation days
Makes good old Louisiana
The sweetest of all States.

State Songs

You Are My Sunshine
- Words and Music by Jimmy H. Davis and Charles Mitchell

(4th verse)
Louisiana my Louisiana
the place where I was born.
White fields of cotton
- green fields of clover.
the best fishing and long tall corn:

Chorus

(5th verse)
Crawfish gumbo and jambalaya
the biggest shrimp and sugar cane.
the finest oysters
and sweet strawberries
from Toledo Bend to New Orleans:

Chorus:
You are my sunshine
My only sunshine
You make me happy
When skies are grey
You'll never know dear
How much I love you
Please don’t take my sunshine away.
State Song for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita recovery effort: "Come Back to Louisiana"

by Jay Chevalier and Bobby Attwood

"Since you left me the
  tears are fallin'
Can't you hear my lips a callin'
Come back come back to Louisiana
Katrina/Rita caused this aching
It's my heart you're breakin'
Come back come back to Louisiana
  Nothin' seems right
  No days just nights
Don't you know I'm lonely
  And I want you only
My pirogue' don't pole the same
Some times I don't know my name
Come back come back to Louisiana
Some times I think I'm dying
Even the willow trees are cryin'<
Come back come back to Louisiana."

State Environmental Song: The Gifts of Earth

by Frances LeBeau

See the world around you,
  All the wonders of the land,
The woods and fields and flowers,
  Sunny skies and seas and sands.

  It's a gift for all the people,
  To live in this great land.
  Where the beauty all around us.
  Teaches us to understand ...

That the gifts of earth are in our hands.
  To life we hold the key.
So let's clean America, make our land
  A home for you and me.

  Take a look around you,
  At the wonders of the land.
  Think about tomorrow.
  Take the time to understand ...

That the gifts of earth are in our hands.
  To life we hold the key.
So let's clean America, make our land a home for you and me.
State Pledge of Allegiance
"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the state of Louisiana and to the motto for which it stands: A state, under God, united in purpose and ideals, confident that justice shall prevail for all of those abiding here."

State Judicial Poem: "America, We The People"
by Sylvia Davidson Lott Buckley
"American We the people,
Justice, the word most sought by all seek God to bless the courts with truth, for through His wisdom we rise or fall.
America
We the People
Do honor this great lady fair, who with her mighty arms still holds, the scales of Justice for all to share.
America
We the People
Do offer threads of hope to all, for Justice covers everyone: she does not measure, short or tall.
America
We the People
Boldly make this pledge to thee, that Justice will, in mind and heart guide each destiny.
America
We.............the.........people."

State Cultural Poem: "I Am Louisiana"
written by Paul Ott
"I'm Spanish moss on a live oak tree
Cajun fried shrimp and a cypress knee
I'm Bienville, Captain Shreve, Beauregard,
Zach Taylor and Jean LaFitte
I'm New Orleans, the land of dreams
Creole cookin' and a Mardi Gras king
I'm a thoroughbred racin' at Louisiana Downs
Avery Island and a catahoula hound
I'm the Louisiana Hayride and the birth of the blues
The Evangeline. Chickory Coffee and Baton Rouge
I'm when the Saints Go Marchin' In . . . the Superdome
The Atchafalaya and an old plantation home
I'm Jambalaya, a catfish fry and a file' gumbo
A sugar cane patch, Pete Fountain,
French Quarter and Satchmo
Well, I'm the Mississippi River
As it rounds the bend
I Am Louisiana
Ya'll Come Back Again."
Additional Louisiana Symbols

State Folk Dance: Square Dance
State Symbol of Cajun / Creole Heritage: Hoop nets, cast nets, and shrimp trawls
State Colors: Blue, White and Gold
State Day: Louisiana Day, April 30th
State Fossil: Petrified Palmwood
State Gemstone: LaPearlite
State March Song: "Louisiana, My Home Sweet Home." words by Sammie McKenzie and Lou Lavoy, music by Castro Carazo
State Musical Instrument: Diatonic Accordion (Cajun accordion)
Follow the Maze to Learn How a House Bill Becomes a Law

1. A representative introduces a bill in the House.
2. If the committee passes the bill, it is debated by the full House.
3. The bill is voted on in the House.
4. If the Governor vetoes the bill, it is dead unless the Legislature overrides the veto by a 2/3s vote of both houses.
5. If the Governor signs the bill, it becomes a law.
6. The bill is introduced in the Senate.
7. If the House passes the bill, it goes to the Senate.
8. The bill moves to a Senate committee for review.
9. The bill is then sent to the Governor.
10. If the House passes the bill, it goes to the Senate.
11. The bill moves to a Senate committee for review.
12. The bill is then sent to the Governor.
13. If the bill passes in the committee, the Senate votes on the bill's final passage.
14. If the bill is not passed in the committee, it is sent to a Conference Committee where it's changed to a form both houses agree on.
15. The Governor can sign or veto the bill.
Follow the Maze to Learn How a Senate Bill Becomes a Law

1. **Start**
   - A senator introduces a bill in the Senate.

2. **The bill moves to a Senate committee for review**

3. **If the bill is not passed in the Senate, it's sent to the Governor**
   - The Governor can sign or veto the bill.

4. **If the bill is passed in both the Senate and the House in the same form it is sent to the Governor**

5. **If the bill is passed in the committee, the House votes on the bill's final passage**

6. **If the bill passes in the House, it moves to a House committee for review**

7. **The bill is introduced in the House**

8. **If the Senate passes the bill it goes to the House**

9. **The bill is voted on in the Senate**

10. **If the Governor vetoes the bill, it is dead unless the Legislature overrides the veto by a 2/3s vote of both houses**

11. **Finish**
    - The Governor signs the bill, it becomes a law.
Name Louisiana's Elected Officials

My Statewide Elected Officials:

Governor:_________________________________________________
Lieutenant Governor:________________________________________
Secretary of State:__________________________________________
Attorney General:___________________________________________
State Treasurer:____________________________________________
Agriculture and Forestry Commissioner:_________________________
Insurance Commissioner:_____________________________________

My Local Elected Officials:

My State Representative:_____________________________________
My State Senator:___________________________________________
My Louisiana Supreme Court Justice:___________________________
My Mayor:________________________________________
My School Board Member:___________________________________
My City/Parish Council Member:______________________________
### Can You Decode Our State Motto?

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### Additional Patterns:

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<th>Louisiana Legislative Terms Word Scramble</th>
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Louisiana Legislative Word Search

From the list below, find and circle the words that are commonly heard in the Louisiana State Legislature. They can be read forward, backward, up, down, and diagonally.

Amend
Baton Rouge
Bills
Capital
Capitol
Chairman
Chamber
Committee
Constituent
Democrat
Election
House
Independent
Laws
Legislature
Louisiana
Passed
President
Public
Representative
Republican
Senator
Session
Speaker
Veto
Vote
**Louisiana Products**

Fill in the blanks with the word that fits the blank spaces and answers the clues listed at the bottom of the page. The blocked letters, read vertically, spell out the answer to the 10th clue. *(HINT: If the word does not fit the amount of blanks for that clue, it is NOT the right answer!!)*

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**Clues:**
1. Made from petroleum
2. It's slimy, has 2 shells, and can be eaten raw or cooked
3. Louisiana is one of the U.S.'s largest producers of this "sweet" crop
4. In the spring we have "boils" and eat these red crustaceans with family and friends
5. After falling off the tree, these nuts are used to make Louisiana pralines
6. This shellfish can also be boiled, but its pinkish white "meat" sure tastes good fried
7. These red berries are the main attraction at a Pontchatoula festival
8. Your clothes can be made out of this product's fluffy, white fibers
9. A big deal in Ruston, Louisiana, the skin of this fruit can sometimes be "furry"
10. The 18th state admitted into the U.S.