



## *Sister-State Relationship*

**OVERVIEW:** Many people in Nebraska are not aware that our state participates in a formal sister-state relationship with the province of Taiwan in the People's Republic of China (PRC). The activities in this lesson are intended to acquaint students with the sister-city relationships that many Nebraska cities have with different cities worldwide. This lesson can be combined with the other lessons in order for students to simulate a trip to our sister-state and/or their sister-city.

**ECONOMIC CONCEPTS:** The students will learn about:

1. economic systems
2. international trade

**OBJECTIVES:** The students will be able to:

1. explain the rationale for establishing sister-state and sister-city relationships.
2. observe the existing sister-city relationships in Nebraska.
3. list the similarities and differences between Nebraska and its sister-state of Taiwan, China.

**NEBRASKA STANDARDS:** 8.3.7, 12.3.13

**MATERIALS:**

1. Why Have a Sister City, Student Handout
2. Similarities and Differences Between China and the United States, Teacher Information
3. Comparison of China and the United States, Student Worksheet
4. Similarities and Differences Between Taiwan and Nebraska, Teacher Information
5. Comparison of Taiwan and Nebraska, Student Worksheet
6. Nebraska Sister Cities, Student Handout
7. International Pen Pals, Student Handout

## PROCEDURE:

1. Tell the students that Nebraska and Taiwan have what is known as a "sister-state" relationship. In order to help them understand what a sister-state is, ask them the following questions:
  - How do you meet friends? (they might answer that they are people who have the same interests or that they met through mutual need and then became friends.)
  - Making friends takes time to build trust and establish mutual interests.
  - You have to be a friend to keep a friend - it takes effort on your part.
2. Relate the discussion of students' personal friendships to that of a sister-state relationship. Distribute the student handout *Why Have a Sister-City* and compare it with the students' answers in procedure #2.
3. Sister-Cities International is an organization acting as the link to help cities around the world find compatible "partners." Very simply stated, a Sister-City relationship occurs when an American community (of whatever size or character) joins with a community in another nation to develop friendly and meaningful exchanges; the two may propose a formal affiliation. The ideal affiliation involves citizens, businesses, and civic organizations in both communities engaging in continuing projects of mutual interest.
4. Ask the students to speculate on why Nebraska has a sister-state tie with Taiwan, China. Why China and not England? (Lead the students' answers to a discussion of interdependence.) Ask them what country would most benefit from what Nebraska has to offer. Before the leaders of Nebraska chose Taiwan, they had to ask themselves:
  - What countries currently trade with Nebraska? Nebraska produces (exports) food products, industrial machinery and technology, while China consumes (imports) food and technology.
5. Review Nebraska's trading partners. Since Nebraska is in the middle of the United States, it could look in any one of four directions to find an appropriate connection. (Direct the students' attention to the map or globe as you point to each of the following directions.) Nebraska already trades with many of these nations.

- North - Canada grows more grain than the country needs and is about as technologically advanced as the United States. Canada would like to sell grain and technology to us. Canada is currently our #1 trading partner.
- South - Latin and South America would probably buy some grain or technology, but the nations in that area are heavily indebted now. There is potential here, but there is also a high risk that Nebraska might not get paid for its goods and services. Also, other nations trade heavily with Latin American countries.
- East - The Europeans have joined together into the European Union (EU) to produce grain and other goods. The EU has a food surplus that they want to sell. Many European nations would also like to sell technology to the United States, but we are equally advanced and can make our own advancements.
- West - The U.S. has an established trade record with Asia, so it is logical for Nebraska to consider an Asian country when establishing a sister-state relationship. The United States has recently signed a trade agreement with Japan to sell them beef (from Nebraska) and citrus products. Japan is currently our #3 trading partner.

China is also potentially a major trading partner. China, with nearly 25% of the world's total population and limited farmland, often needs to buy grain and food products because it cannot produce enough for its citizens. In addition, China needs technology to improve their agricultural production because it would like to be self-sufficient in grain production eventually. Therefore, Nebraska leaders decided to pursue a relationship with Taiwan, China.

6. To learn more about the People's Republic of China and Taiwan, have students do research on the topics covered in the worksheets on the United States-China and/or Nebraska-Taiwan connections. After completion, have students report on the similarities and differences between the nations and our state. Information sheets are also included for educators. A useful website to use for country research is the CIA World Fact book and can be found at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>
7. Many cities in Nebraska have established sister-city relationships all over the world. The student handout entitled Nebraska Sister Cities can be used

as either a handout or an overhead. If located in or near one of these cities, a comparison table to investigate the similarities and differences could also be used.

8. The International Pen Pals student handout can be used when corresponding with a formal or informal sister-city.
9. If interested in simulating the process of finding a sister-city, Sister City International has listed six steps that are recommended. If your city has a sister-city, ask one of the original planners to tell the class about the process. Pass out the worksheet on reasons to have a sister-city and have students read through the steps carefully before they decide on their choice for a sister-city. The class should fill out the United States City Profile form used by all who apply to the Sister Cities International organization. Have the students write their Chamber of Commerce about any sister-city and the types of programs they have developed.
10. Extension Idea: Invite a speaker or student who is fluent in Chinese to help with the pronunciation as well as speak on life in the People's Republic of China.

#### **RESOURCES:**

Sister Cities International: <http://www.sister-cities.org>

CIA World Fact Book:

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>

Flag website: <http://www.theodora.com/flags>

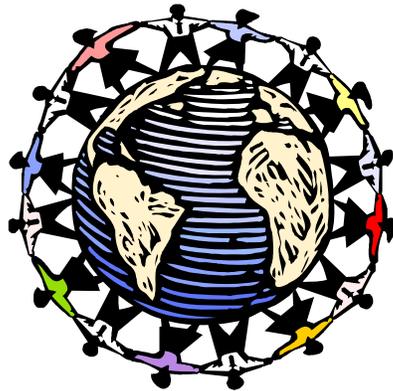




## Why have a Sister-City?

A Sister-City Program helps the citizens of both communities become directly involved in international relations in many unique and rewarding exchanges, which benefits everyone. It enables all who participate to:

1. Exchange ideas and personal visits with their counterparts in another culture on a direct, personal basis.
2. Establish an identity as members of the family of man involved in the constructive process of building world peace.
3. Develop a way for many and diverse elements of every community to come together to enjoy and profit from a cooperative program.
4. Open new dialogues with another culture to find unique solutions to improving the quality of verbal life.
5. Participate in a program with every real partner in another country so all members of the community can feel they are contributing to international understanding in a direct, personal way.
6. Better understand your own community by interpreting your way of life to the people of another culture.





## *Similarities & Differences Between China & the U.S.*

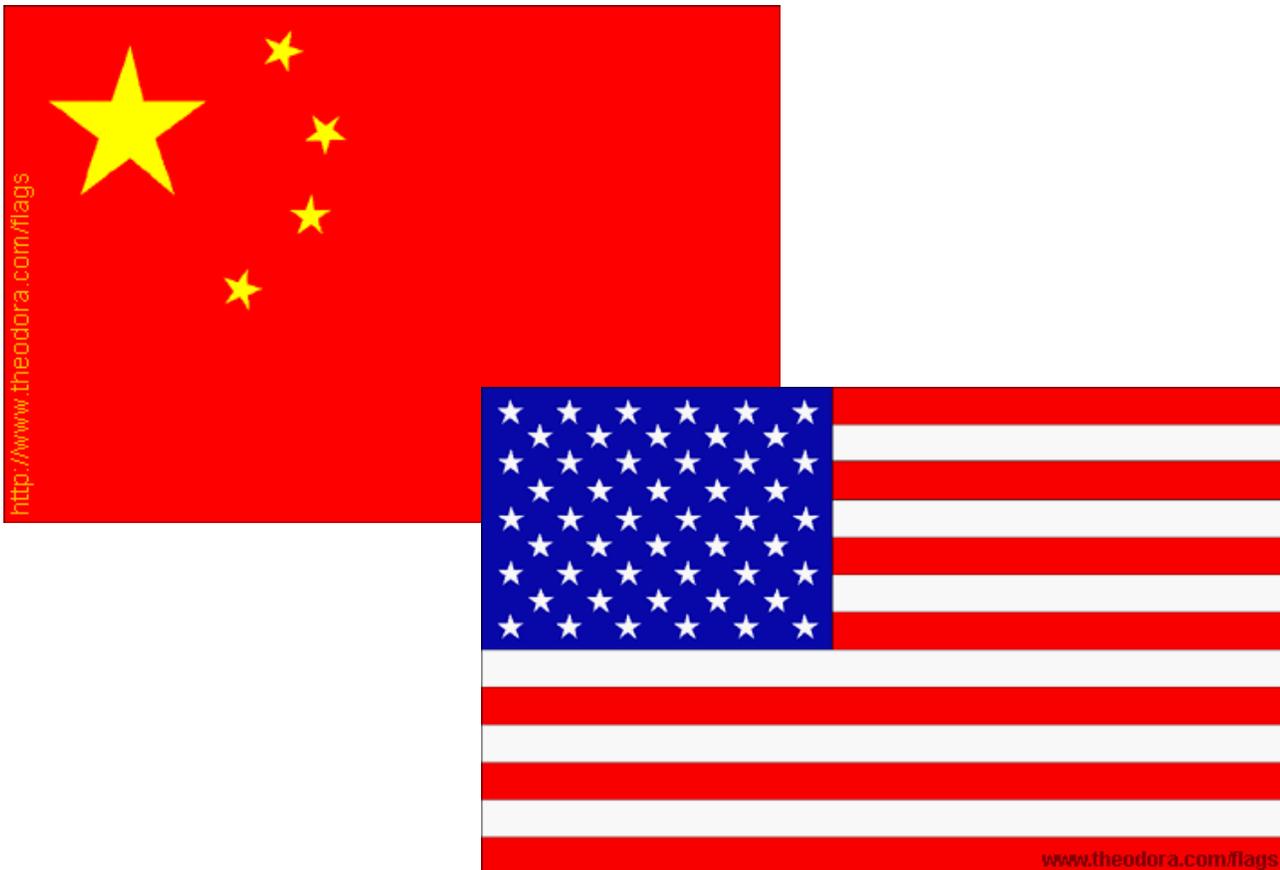
### **SIMILARITIES:**

1. Both the U.S. and China are large nations.
  - a. China - 3,691,500 sq. miles
  - b. U.S. - 3,675,545 sq. miles
  
2. Both nations are located between 45 and 15 degrees north latitude. The following cities are at about the same latitudes:
  - a. Beijing and Philadelphia
  - b. Chongqing and Houston
  - c. Harbin and Minneapolis
  
3. Both countries are bordered by oceans on the East.
  
4. Both countries have major mountain ranges in their western regions.
  - a. China - Himalayan Mountains
  - b. U.S. - Rocky Mountains
  
5. Both countries contain two major river systems.
  - a. China - Huang He (Yellow River ) and Yangtze (Chang Jiang)
  - b. U.S. - Missouri River and Mississippi River

### **DIFFERENCES:**

1. Thw two nations' populations are quite different.
  - a. China - 1,246,871,951
  - b. U.S. - 272,639,608
  
2. The two nations' population density are quite different.
  - a. China - 134 people per sq. mile
  - b. U.S. - 30 people per sq. mile

3. The U.S. population is clustered on East and West coasts. The Chinese population is clustered in an East-central corridor.
4. The U.S. is only 200 years old, while China is over 4,000 years old.
5. The U.S. rivers drain from North to South. The Chinese rivers drain from East to West.
6. The U.S. is bordered by two oceans and China only has one.
7. The Rockies are an interior chain of mountains stretching from North to South while the major Chinese mountain chain, the Himalayas, serve as the countries north-western border and runs from West to East.
8. The two countries differ greatly in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita.
  - a. China - \$3,600 per person
  - b. U.S. - \$31,500 per person





## *Comparison of China & the U.S.*

Research the following information and then look for similarities and differences between the United States and China. You will probably want to complete this chart on a piece of poster board or construction paper so you will have enough room for a thorough comparison of these nations.

	<b>China</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>Population</b>		
<b>Size</b>		
<b>Land Use</b>		
<b>Landforms</b>		
<b>Waterways</b>		
<b>Climate</b>		
<b>History</b>		
<b>Government</b>		
<b>Economy</b>		
<b>Quality of Life</b>		



## *Similarities & Differences Between Taiwan & Nebraska*

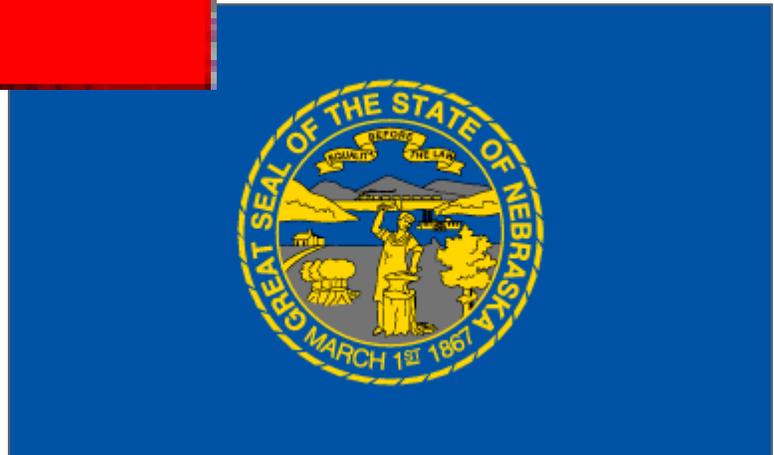
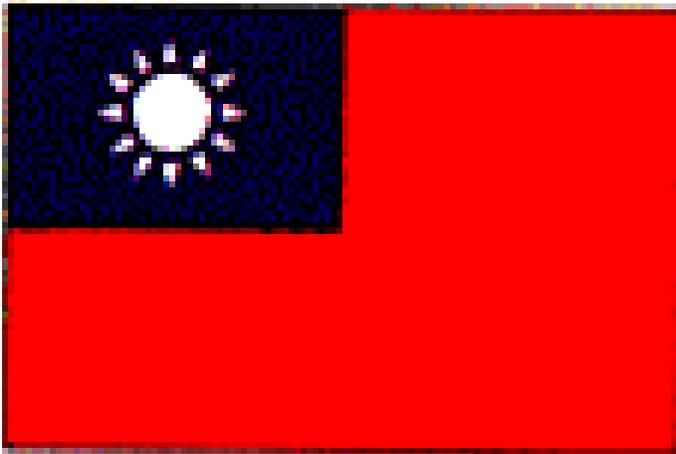
### **SIMILARITIES:**

1. Even though Nebraska and Taiwan are both part of larger countries, they both have their own capital city to house state government. Taiwan's capital city is Taipei and Lincoln's capital city is Lincoln.
2. Taiwan and Nebraska are both racially mixed.
3. Nebraska and Taiwan have almost identical unemployment rates. Nebraska's unemployment rate is 2.6% and Taiwan's unemployment rate is 2.7%.
4. Both Taiwan and Nebraska export electronic equipment.

### **DIFFERENCES:**

1. Nebraska is landlocked and Taiwan is a small island in the South China Sea.
2. Taiwan's chief exports include machinery and electronic equipment, information and communication services, and textiles. Nebraska's chief exports are crops, food products, and electronic equipment.
3. Taiwan and Nebraska have different land sizes.
  - a. Taiwan - 35,980 sq. km
  - b. Nebraska - 123,773 sq. km
4. Taiwan has a tropical, rainy climate, while Nebraska's climate is continental.
5. Nebraska and Taiwan have drastically different population densities.
  - a. Taiwan - 615 people per sq. km
  - b. Nebraska - 13 people per sq. km

6. Much of Nebraska's population is involved with agriculture, while Taiwan has only 10% of its labor force involved with acgriculture.
7. Taiwan's population is much larger than that of Nebraska.
  - a. Taiwan - 22,113,250
  - b. Nebraska - 1,657,000





## Comparison of *Taiwan & Nebraska*

Fill in the following information from your text and other appropriate resources. You will probably want to complete this exercise on either a piece of poster board or a piece of construction paper. When you have completed the assignment, look over the similarities and differences between Taiwan and Nebraska

**Taiwan**

**Nebraska**

**Population**

**Size**

**Land Use**

**Landforms**

**Waterways**

**Climate**

**History**

**Government**

**Economy**

**Quality of Life**



## *Nebraska Sister-Cities*

Arapahoe - Ozu, Japan

Boys Town - Ballymoe, Ireland

Hastings - Ozu, Japan

Lincoln - Khujana, Tajikstan

Lincoln - Taiping, China

Oakland - Hammenhog, Sweden

Omaha - Braunschweig, Germany

Omaha - Shizuoka, Japan

Omaha - Sialuliai, Lithuania

Seward - Leonberg, Germany

Scottsbluff/Gering - Bamiyan, Afghanistan





## *International Pen Pals*

In this activity, your teacher will provide you with a list of countries from which you can pick an international pen pal. The purpose of this project is for you to become aware of specific cultural differences between yourself and others. In your letter, you will want to provide the foreign student with an accurate look at what life in Nebraska and the United States is like and ask them appropriate questions so they will send you adequate information about their culture.

**Consider the following when writing your letter:**

1. Describe the American education system and explain a typical school day.
2. What is life like in their culture on a typical day?
3. Discuss families and typical family life.
4. What type of monetary system do they use?
5. What types of things do they like to buy if they have extra money?
6. Do they buy or use American products?
7. What is the most widely used form of transportation?
8. What type of clothing and fashions interest them?
9. What does their typical diet consist of?
10. What are the major religions in their area?
11. What are the major industries and resources found in their community?
12. What are their plans for the future?

