

Welcome To Kentucky

Story By: Andrew Frinkle

I live in Kentucky. It is an Appalachian state. Kentucky is famous for fried chicken, elk, coal, caves, college basketball, horse racing, and bluegrass music! It is the 37th largest state, making it a little below average. It is 26th in population size, making it almost perfectly average. You might know some of the major cities, like Louisville, Lexington, Georgetown, Frankfort, or Elizabethtown. The state capital is Frankfort. Now that you know some of the basic facts about Kentucky, let me tell you a little more about my state.

Kentucky was originally held by Indian tribes like the Shawnee and the Cherokee. Later, settlers from Virginia began expanding into the territory. Eventually, these settlers asked the government to let them separate from Virginia to be their own state.

Kentucky was an important agricultural community, famous for cash crops and livestock. Farming and agriculture are still important in Kentucky. Goat farming, corn, and beef cattle production are very big industries in Kentucky.

Later, Kentucky became important for coal and mining. The mountains are filled with coal and caves. The largest cave system in the world, Mammoth Caves, is in Kentucky. Kentucky also has the most miles of rivers you can paddle a boat down in the country, despite not being that large of a state. Kentucky also has the highest number of turkeys and deer per person of any state. It's also home to the largest herd of elk in the eastern United States. Kentucky has a lot of resources, doesn't it?

More recently, manufacturing has become important in Kentucky. Baseball wouldn't be the same with Louisville Slugger baseball bats. Ford trucks, particularly the F-150, are built in Kentucky. You can also find some good food in Kentucky. Haven't you heard of KFC? The Colonel perfected his recipe in Corbin Kentucky. I bet we've almost all had a piece or two of his special recipe! The BBQ around here isn't bad, either!

Raising horses is also a big deal. Haven't you heard of the Kentucky Derby? It's probably the most famous horse race in America. Running since 1875, the Kentucky Derby is part of a two week festival in Louisville. That mile and a quarter run is the biggest day in horse racing.

Kentucky is pretty famous for music, too. It is home to many famous singers and musicians of many different styles. You can find blues, country, Christian, and many other types of music, but none are as popular as Bluegrass music. The fertile soils of the state are great for a bluish grass known as bluegrass. This grass is the reason for the name of the music, a part of central Kentucky, and the state's nickname, *The Bluegrass State*.

Now that you know a little more about Kentucky, are you thinking about visiting? It can be a fun place to visit. Hope to see you soon!



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Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. How is Kentucky's population ranking?
 - A. about average
 - B. way above average
 - C. really low
 - D. it doesn't say

2. True or False: Kentucky is home to Mammoth Caves
 - A. True
 - B. False

3. Which of these is Kentucky NOT famous for?
 - A. Bluegrass Music
 - B. Fish
 - C. Elk
 - D. Fried Chicken

4. Which of these is not something named after a type of grass in Kentucky?
 - A. central Kentucky
 - B. The state's nickname
 - C. a kind of music
 - D. A kind of ice cream

5. SHORT ANSWER: Would you like to visit Kentucky? Why or Why Not?

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