

Cross-Curricular Cut

Social Studies



The Story Behind the Name

- 1 Look at the map. Where do you think places (cities, towns, mountains, rivers, etc.) get their names from?

Listening

- 2  Listen and fill in the missing words in the text.

Reading

- 3 Read the text and underline as many sources of place names as you can find. What information can place names give you about the people who named them?

Speaking

- 4 Talk about where various US cities, states, and towns get their names from. Give some examples.

Writing

- 5 **ICT** Research the origin of three town or city names in your country and write a short paragraph about where their names come from. Present your findings to the class.



American PLACE NAMES

Have you ever wondered where places get their names from? The origin of US state, town, and city names is often of historical, geographical, or cultural significance.

Some US city names reflect the ethnic make-up of the settlers, as they are named after places in the settlers' homeland. Boston and New York were named after the cities of Boston and York respectively in 1) by the pilgrims that first settled in those areas. Berlin, New Jersey was named after the city of Berlin by 2) settlers, and the state of New Mexico was named after 3) by Mexican settlers in the area.

Some place names in the US are descriptive of the topographical features of the area and reveal how the people at the time viewed nature around them. For example, the state of 4) received its name for its mountainous terrain by the Spaniards. Mississippi was named by the Indians and means "great river" or "gathering-in of all the water" in the Chippewa language.

Some places are named in 5) of important and famous individuals and thus tell us of significant figures of the time. The city of Houston was named in honour of General Sam Houston when he defeated the Mexican Army at San Jacinto. Georgia was also named for King George II of England. Similarly, 6) Nebraska and Roosevelt Island, 7) were named after two American Presidents, Abraham Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt respectively.

There is a story behind each place name. What's the story behind your city's name?