

Name: _____

History of the Kansas State Fair

Engineers are people who design structures, like buildings and tunnels. Some engineers design rides that can be found at amusement parks or state fairs. Today, you will imagine that you are an engineer who is designing a new ride for the Kansas State Fair. Follow the steps below.



Step 1: Learn about the Kansas State Fair

Read the information below. Then, answer the questions.

A state fair is an event where people go to have fun, eat food, and spend time together. Here are a few examples of popular activities that people do at a state fair!

Ride amusement park rides



This is a Ferris wheel, a popular ride at a state fair.

Play games and win prizes



This is a game is called ring toss. The goal is to toss the ring and wrap it around the top of the bottle. If you can get the ring around the bottle, you win a prize.

Eat yummy food



Funnel cakes are a popular sweet treat that you can buy at most state fairs.

Most people do not know that the Kansas state fair has been around for over 100 years. Kansas held its first official state fair in 1913 in Hutchinson, Kansas. People traveled to Hutchinson by horse and wagon to attend the fair!

People learned about the fair through posters, newspaper advertisements, and people talking about it. Later, the fair would advertise on the radio and television. Today, there is an entire website where people can learn about the state fair!

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The first state fair in Kansas had horse races, called the Kansas Derby, car races, and motorcycle races. Many people didn't own cars in the early 1900s. As a result, they were excited to watch car races at the fair.

In addition to the races, the fair also had a midway. A midway is a place where people could play games, eat, go on rides, or see some kind of entertainment. One of the popular rides was called the Old Mill. People boarded small boats that carried them through dark tunnels. The ride is still going today!



Because the Kansas State Fair was such a special occasion, people dressed up in their fanciest clothes.

The first fair also featured new technology to grow food and farm. Inventors and farmers would show off new tools, like tractors. They would also show off new methods of growing and harvesting crops, like corn. Inventors and farmers wanted to show off their new machinery and inventions so that people would buy their products. Farmers would also teach people about new ways of raising livestock, like cows. People could also compete to win prizes if they had the best new invention, the biggest piece of corn, or the best looking livestock!



By the mid-1920s, the Kansas State Fair became a popular place for children to visit. At the fair, children learned about farming and other information they would need to know once they became adults. The Kansas State Fair was like a large outdoor classroom!

In the late 1940s, Cessna used the Kansas State Fair to show off a new plane they designed! People were very excited to see this new plane design since many people had never seen a plane up close before.

By the mid 1950s, the Kansas State Fair started to be filmed for television! This meant that people who couldn't attend the fair could watch the fair's events on television for the first time. During this time, the state fair continued to grow and added larger attractions, like carnival rides.



While the fair has changed and grown over time, some things still remain the same! The Kansas State Fair is still held in Hutchinson, Kansas each year. It is also still a place for people to gather, go on rides, play games, eat food, and have fun. The fair continues to have competitions that people can enter. For example, people can still enter their livestock in competitions and win prizes.

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In addition, the state fair continues to have activities and games for children and adults. For example, people can enter the butter sculpture competition! Kids create a 3-D object out of butter. The sculptures are judged based on originality, design, detail, and creativity. This sculpture is of a girl driving a tractor with a pumpkin. It took 1600 pounds of butter and 85 hours to sculpt it!



Answer the questions below using complete sentences.

1. Why do you think farmers enjoyed the fair?
2. How has the fair been both educational and fun throughout history?
3. Describe one way that today's fair is similar to earlier fairs. Then, describe one way the fair is different from earlier fairs.

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4. Why do you think state fairs have continued to be held for so many years?

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Step 2: Design a Ride

As an engineer, you will design a new ride for the next state fair! Your ride will honor the long history of the Kansas' state fair. Fill in the information below to design your ride.

Choose a theme

Choose a theme from the list below. Your theme must be incorporated into the design of your ride.

- Agriculture theme: This theme should focus on the Kansas state fair's commitment to showcasing new agriculture inventions and having competitions.
- Transportation theme: This theme should focus on the Kansas state fair's long history of showcasing cars, motorcycles, and airplanes that people had not seen before in person.
- Entertainment theme: This theme should focus on the unique activities and games at the fair, like the butter sculpting competition, food and music, and fun rides.

Your theme _____

Draw your ride on the next page.

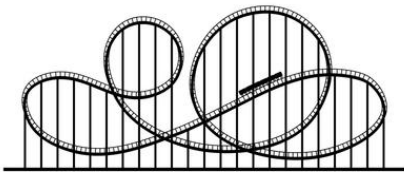
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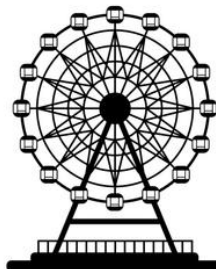
Draw a picture

In the box below, give your ride a name and draw a picture of what your ride will look like. Make sure to incorporate your theme! For example, you might design a roller coaster that looks like a giant piece of corn if you chose the agriculture theme.

Need help getting started? Here are a few examples of rides you can design:



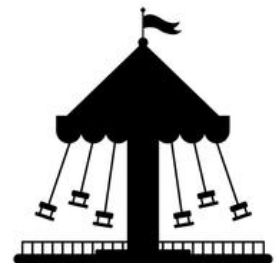
Roller Coaster



Ferris Wheel



Carousel



Swing Ride