EXPLORING FLORIDA

History, Culture, and Nature

An Activity Book
Featuring Artwork by Christopher M. Still

MUSEUM of Florida History
About the Artwork
In 1999, the Florida House of Representatives commissioned artist Christopher M. Still to create ten murals to hang in its Capitol chambers in Tallahassee. These meticulously researched works of art are intended to inspire House members with images of Florida's history and natural beauty. Eight of the paintings represent different eras in state history from prehistoric times to the present. Two murals depict underwater scenes—one featuring the animal life present in Florida springs and the other portraying the complexity of Florida’s coral reef system. More information about each painting can be found on the artist’s website christopherstill.com/fl-house-of-reps.

About the Artist
Christopher M. Still was born in Clearwater, Florida, in 1961. By the age of four his family knew he wanted to be an artist. Perhaps the only thing he loved more was fishing. Early on his teachers fostered his talent by providing him with art materials, and allowing him to complete some assignments with drawings or paintings. He received a full scholarship to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and furthered his education with an apprenticeship and studies in Europe. In 2010, he was inducted into the Florida Artists Hall of Fame, and he is the Artist in Residence for the Florida Legislature. In 2016, he received an honorary doctorate from Florida State University. His paintings can be found in museums and private collections throughout Florida and the U.S., including the Governor’s Mansion of Florida and the Smithsonian Institution.

Created and produced by the Museum of Florida History and the Division of Cultural Affairs, Florida Department of State.

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In April 2013, Florida commemorated the 500th anniversary of the first known landing of Europeans on its soil. The expedition led by Juan Ponce de León in 1513, followed by other Spanish and French explorers and colonists, encountered diverse and well-developed groups of native inhabitants, whose predecessors had occupied the peninsula for at least 12,000 years.

Florida’s human and natural landscapes have changed dramatically in the last five centuries. To help young people visualize and appreciate Florida’s growth over time, this booklet features ten paintings by artist Christopher M. Still and related activities that explore different facets of our state history and natural environment.
People first reached Florida at least 12,000 years ago. The Florida coastline was very different then. Many large animals that lived then (such as the saber-tooth tiger, mastodon, giant armadillo, and camel) are now extinct.

The people who lived in early Florida hunted small animals and gathered wild plants for food. Sometimes they hunted large animals. They also ate nuts and shellfish. They lived in areas where fresh water, firewood, and stones were available. They used stone, bone, wood, and shell to make tools. Native peoples’ ways of life changed over time.

About 1,000 years ago, some native groups in Florida began to grow corn, beans, and squash. They traded with people outside Florida. Some societies built large mounds made of soil. Today we can learn about their culture by studying objects they left behind, including clay pottery and wooden carvings.
Find the food-gathering tools used by Native Americans. What foods were gathered here? Go to christopherstill.com/fl-house-of-reps and click on this mural to be directed to a link with information to help you identify the objects.
Web Quest

Archaeologists find objects buried in the ground that people from the past left behind. Studying these objects can tell us a lot about how people lived and worked.

Your task for this Web Quest is to be a virtual archaeologist and “dig up” objects on the Florida Memory website that were used by Native Americans before 1513.

Directions:
Go to floridamemory.com.
First search “indian tool,” then search “shell dipper.”
Additional topic to search: archaeological excavation

Questions to answer:
What kind of objects do you think these are (tools, toys, jewelry)?

How do you think they were used?

Did you find other items similar to these in additional searches?

Can you tell which regions in Florida the objects came from?

Can you tell which Native American group made these objects?

What do you know about the people who lived in Florida before European explorers arrived in 1513?

The people who lived in early Florida hunted animals, caught fish, and gathered wild plants for food. They lived in areas where fresh water, firewood, and stones were available. They used stone, bone, wood, and shell to make tools.

Sketch or paste your favorite objects.
Five Flags Over Florida

1. Spanish soldiers and explorers used a flag bearing the Cross of Burgundy when they occupied Florida from 1565 to 1763.

2. The 1564, French explorers established a short-lived settlement near present-day Jacksonville.

3. The flag of Britain flew over Florida from 1763 to 1784.

4. This flag was one of several flown in Florida during the Civil War from 1861 to 1865.

5. The design of Florida’s current flag was adopted in 1900.

To see more of Florida’s historic flags: dos.myflorida.com/florida-facts/florida-state-symbols/state-flag/floridas-historic-flags/

Use the pictures on this website to color Florida’s historic flags.
Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de León landed on Florida’s east coast in 1513. He called the area “La Florida.” Over the next fifty years, three Spaniards tried, but failed, to create permanent settlements in Florida. The French built a fort and settlement near Jacksonville, but it only lasted about a year. Spain finally achieved a permanent settlement when St. Augustine was founded in 1565.

The Spaniards established Catholic missions among the Apalachee and Timucua Indians. During the 1600s, many Florida Indians died of diseases. In the 1700s, Spanish Florida was attacked several times by English and French forces. The missions were destroyed, and many Indians were killed or enslaved. Later, Indians from the Carolinas and Georgia, ancestors of today’s Seminole and Miccosukee Indians, moved to Florida.

In 1763, Britain took control of Florida and divided the land into East and West Florida. St. Augustine and Pensacola were the capitals of these two colonies. During the American Revolution, the two Floridas remained loyal to Britain.

Spain took control of Florida again after the American Revolution. Spanish and American settlers came to Florida. Enslaved blacks escaped to Florida to seek their freedom. From 1817 to 1818, the U.S. government engaged the Seminole Indians in the first of three wars. When Spain transferred the peninsula to the United States in 1821, Florida became a U.S. territory.
Identify different pieces of the Spanish explorers’ uniforms. Go to christopherstill.com/fl-house-of-reps and click on this mural to be directed to a link with information to help you find the objects’ names. Look for photos at floridamemory.com to see how they compare with U.S. soldiers’ uniforms.
**Web Quest**

**Cartographers** are people who make maps and charts. They identify rivers, bays, forts, roads, and political boundaries of an area, such as cities, towns, and counties. Studying these documents can show us how the geography of an area changed over time.

Your task for this Web Quest is to compare a map of Florida from 1763 with a map from 1845 and identify the changes.

**Directions:**
View the 1763 Florida map on page 9 or on the Florida Memory website (floridamemory.com/items/show/35204).
On Florida Memory, search “Map of Florida” AND 1845.

**Questions to answer:**
The 1763 map includes words in Spanish. Why would Spanish names appear on an English map?

What natural feature formed the border between East and West Florida? What river marked Florida’s western border?

Examine the enlarged view of Pensacola. Where are the buildings? How many forts are identified? Where did ships usually anchor? What do the numbers in the middle of the bay represent?

What is the modern location and name for the Bay of St. Rosa? What evidence supports this conclusion?

What is the modern name for Cape Escondido? In which county is it located?

What major river in the northeast is represented on the 1763 map? What is the modern name for this river?
Under the Spaniards, St. Augustine had continued to serve as the capital of East Florida. Pensacola had remained West Florida’s capital. The U.S. combined the two Floridas into one territory. General Andrew Jackson set up a new territorial government in 1821. The young territory needed a new capital.

A site was chosen for the soon-to-be city halfway between the two original capitals. Tallahassee was established here as the capital of Florida in 1824. The first legislators met in a simple log cabin. Two years later, a new capitol building made of bricks was completed.

The territory’s economy was based on agriculture, and enslaved blacks worked on numerous cotton plantations and small farms. By 1840, almost half of Florida’s population consisted of blacks, and most were enslaved. Florida became the 27th state in 1845.
What city in Florida is represented in this painting? Here’s a clue: the log cabin was the first capitol. Go to christopherstill.com/fl-house-of-reps and click on this mural to be directed to a link with information on how Florida became a state.
How do historians use portraits? Historians use portraits to become familiar with the person they are researching. Because artists paint from their point of view, studying a group of portraits painted by different artists can tell us much more about the person.

Your task for this Web Quest is to study various portraits of Andrew Jackson to find facts about who he was.

Directions:
Go to floridamemory.com.
Search “Andrew Jackson” AND portrait AND 1767–1845.
Scroll through the search results to answer the questions.

Describe what is similar or different about how Jackson looks in the portraits.

What is he wearing in most of the portraits?

According to the search results, where is one of the portraits currently on display?

Find the silhouette. Click on the image for answers to fill in the blanks.
Andrew Jackson was Florida’s ___________ governor.
He served as the governor of the territories of _______ and _______ Florida from March 10 until December 31, 1821.

Find the medallion. Click on the image. What does it say?

Sketch or paste the most interesting portrait of Andrew Jackson.
Florida State Seal

Each state in the nation has a seal—-a visual image—-that illustrates its unique character. New and different seals were made for Florida when it became a territory in 1821 and a state in 1845, and after the Civil War. The state’s current seal was adopted in 1985. It features a steamboat on the water, a sabal palm (the state tree), and a native woman scattering flowers.

To learn more about Florida’s state seals: dos.myflorida.com/florida-facts/florida-state-symbols/state-seal/

Use the picture on this website to color Florida’s current state seal.
In the 1830s, the U.S. government decided to relocate the Seminoles to a new Indian territory, today’s Oklahoma. This sparked the Second Seminole War as the Seminoles resisted removal. The war lasted for seven years, from 1835 to 1842. Eventually, some Seminoles left on their own, some were captured and sent to Oklahoma, and others escaped to the Everglades in south Florida. About 5,000 Seminoles were removed from Florida. Only about 200 were able to survive in the Everglades.

Osceola was a Seminole war leader who refused to leave his home in Florida. He was a brave fighter, but he was captured and sent to prison. He died a short time later. He became famous because of his resistance to the policy of removal. Today, he is a symbol of the Seminole people of Florida.
Who is the man in this painting? Study what he is wearing, and go to christopherstill.com/fl-house-of-reps and click on this mural to be directed to a link with information about these objects. Would he typically have worn these items?
What do you know about the daily life of Seminole Indians?

The descendants of the 200 Seminoles who remained in Florida in 1860 lived in camps in the south Florida Everglades. Each camp had several open-air houses called “chickees” that were used for cooking, eating, sleeping, and working. The Seminoles also used new plants for food and medicine and developed a unique style of lightweight clothing. The campfire was the center of activity, and families gathered at night to share stories and legends.

Your task for this Web Quest is to study an old photograph to identify what daily life was like for Seminole Indians.

Directions:
View the photo on page 17 or on the Florida Memory website at floridamemory.com/items/show/69683.
Additional topic to search: “Bedell Collection”

Questions to answer:
What is your first impression about the photograph? __________________________________________

What is happening in the picture? ________________________________________________________

How would you describe the people (their age, clothing, expressions, relationship)? ____________

Make a list of activities that are taking place. Make another list of objects in the photograph. ____________

When do you think the picture was taken (the year, the time of day)? Where was it taken? How can you tell? ____________
Most people in southern states believed that slavery was necessary, but people in northern states did not. After Abraham Lincoln was elected President in 1860, Florida and other southern states withdrew from the United States because of this issue. Florida joined southern states in forming the Confederate States of America, also called the Confederacy.

The Civil War lasted from April 1861 to April 1865. Florida sent 15,000 men and many supplies, including salt, beef, cotton, pork, and other products, to help the Confederacy. Northern ships patrolling Florida’s coast tried to block supplies from coming and going. Many white and black residents helped the northern cause in quiet ways. Several battles took place, but Florida did not experience as much warfare as its neighbors to the north.

After the Civil War, the U.S. government set up a policy called “Reconstruction” in the South. It wanted states to accept new rules, including some to improve conditions for African Americans. In the end, though, blacks had little voice in government.
Did cows always live in Florida? Find the branding iron in the painting. What brand do you think this is? Go to christopherstill.com/fl-house-of-reps and click on this mural to be directed to a link with information about Florida cattle.
Historians study documents such as letters, diaries, memoirs, and photographs to interpret how historical events impacted people’s daily lives.

Your task for this Web Quest is to read an excerpt from a memoir and find images that relate to it to understand how the Civil War impacted people’s lives in Florida.

**Directions:**
Read the memoir excerpt on page 21. Search “salt factory” and “salt marsh.”

**Questions to answer:**
How did Joshua’s family feel about the war?

How old was he when he enrolled in the First Florida Reserves?

What was the inventive way to make salt?

What kind of meat did they preserve?

How does Joshua describe its appearance?

What do you know about Florida’s role in the Civil War?

During the Civil War, Floridians faced a shortage of many items, such as coffee, sugar, salt, and even shoes. People created alternative ways to produce these items. For example, people boiled sea water to produce salt so that they could preserve their meat.

Scroll through the search results of “salt marsh.”

Where are some salt marshes located?

What is the legend associated with the St. Mark’s Lighthouse?
But the most serious ill convenience however, that was felt was salt, having by our civilization been accustomed to a free and all most unlimited supply; to be suddenly cut off without a grain, was a situation that can be imagined, but not realized only by experience. It is true the South had a long coast line where unlimited quantities might have been manufactured (and it was done later on) we had no arrangements of making it, and iron mind you at this time was as scarce as hens teeth. There was no persons among us that understood the manufacture of it, and last but not least, was a dread of Yankee gun boats for while according to reports, our army had uniformly been successful on land; we had invariable been worsted where they could get at us with those invulnerable monsters, and the idea of setting up an industry right under the nose of the United States Navy was something we did not do until forced to do so. But the salt was gone and it meant we had to either have some, or quit eating, the one looked like an impossibility, while the other was a dreadful alternative.

About this time some inventive person discovered that by taking up the dirt out of the meat houses, and leaching it a fair article of salt could be made: this he published for the good of suffering humanity. Next day all hands went to work, erecting hoppers to leach the earth in, and improvising furnaces for the evaporation of the water after it had leached out the precious property, late in the evening we took a small run off, the product of which was about one gallon of I hardly know what to call it, it looked much more like mud than salt; but it was salty any how. The water leached abundance of other matter out of the meat house soil besides salt, but for the sake of what little salt there was in it we manufactured several bushels of it; and that winter 1862-63 we saved our pork with it. A piece of pork liberally smeared with it had the appearance of being wallowed in the mud. But even a new danger confronted us; the supply of dirt was limited, in fact it was all utilized the first season. So at the dawn of 1863 the prospect of a Salt famine added gravity to the already grave situation.

Excerpt from Joshua Hoyet Frier’s Civil War Memoir

Who was Joshua Hoyet Frier?

Joshua Hoyet Frier was born in Lowndes County, Georgia. He lived with his family near the Florida border. Frier’s father and brothers were opposed to secession. One brother eventually enlisted in the Eighth Florida Infantry Regiment and was killed by Confederate authorities after he deserted. On his seventeenth birthday, May 20, 1864, Joshua Frier enrolled in a Florida militia company that eventually became the First Florida Reserves, Company B. The unit remained in north Florida throughout its service. This selection is from his work, Reminiscences of the War Between the States by a Boy in the Far South at Home and in the Rank of the Confederate Militia.

State Archives of Florida
At the end of the 1800s, agriculture, cattle raising, and manufacturing became important. Roads and railroads were built to support these industries. Steamboats carried people, mail, and supplies along Florida rivers and to distant places.

Tourists began to arrive because of Florida’s natural beauty and mild climate. Land was cheap, so some people came to invest in businesses. The railroads allowed Florida products, especially citrus, to be sent to northern markets. During the Spanish-American War in 1898, Florida was the base for U.S. efforts to help Cubans win freedom from Spanish rule.

By the early 1900s, Florida’s population and prosperity were growing rapidly. After World War I, land developers, businessmen, new residents, and vacationers in vehicles added to this growth. Many people grew wealthy by buying, developing, and selling land. The potential of the Sunshine State seemed endless.
How is this steamboat similar to or different from boats you have seen? Find photos of boats at floridamemory.com to compare. Go to christopherstill.com/fl-house-of-reps and click on this mural to be directed to a link with information about steamboat travel in Florida.
Web Quest

Curators assemble exhibits to display and interpret a collection of related objects. Most exhibits are found in museums, but some can be found online. Exhibits are a great way to learn about interesting topics, and they can inspire us to learn more.

Your task for this Web Quest is to look through the Florida Memory online exhibit about baseball in Florida. When you are done, search the additional topics listed to learn more about this period of Florida’s history.

Directions:
View the Baseball Photo Exhibit at floridamemory.com/photographiccollection/photo_exhibits/baseball.
Additional photo exhibits to explore: Tin Can Tourism, Trains

Questions to answer:
What professional teams do you recognize in the exhibit? _____________________________________________
What cities had spring training? _______________________________________________________________
List the local teams in the exhibit. _____________________________________________________________
Who was John Henry “Pop” Lloyd? ___________________________________________________________
Which Florida governor is pictured wearing a New York Yankees uniform? What was the occasion? ________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
When did women play professional baseball? ____________ Why? ______________________________________
Where in Florida are the fields in the exhibit located? ___________________________________________

What do you know about baseball in Florida?
The development of transportation enabled people to come to Florida to live, work, vacation, and play baseball! Professional baseball leagues were created in the late 1800s, and many teams were located in northern states. As the sport became more popular, teams decided to train in Florida during the colder months.

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Symbols

State Reptile
Alligators symbolize Florida’s vast untamed wilderness and swamps. They are found throughout Florida and prefer lakes, swamps, canals, and other wetlands.

State Bird
The Mockingbird is a year-round Florida resident and often sings all night long, especially under bright springtime moonlight.

State Butterfly
The Zebra Longwing butterfly is found throughout Florida, although it is more common in south Florida, particularly in the Everglades National Park.

State Animal
The Florida Panther is a large, long-tailed, pale brown cat that grows to six feet or longer. They are the most endangered of all the Florida symbols and reside mostly in south Florida.

State Marine Mammal
The Manatee, also called a sea cow, is a gray, waterplant-eating, gentle giant that reaches eight to fourteen feet in length and can weigh more than a ton.

State Wildflower
The Coreopsis is a colorful flower used in Florida’s roadside plantings and highway beautification programs. It is found in a variety of colors ranging from gold to pink.

State Tree
The Sabal Palm is the most common palm in Florida. It grows in almost any soil and has many uses, including food, medicine, and landscaping.

State Shell
The Horse Conch also is known as the giant band shell. It is native to marine waters around Florida and can grow to a length of twenty-four inches.

To learn about all of Florida’s symbols: dos.myflorida.com/florida-facts/florida-state-symbols/
The land boom ended suddenly in 1926 when money and public trust ran out. The economy was damaged further by two serious hurricanes and a fruit fly invasion in citrus groves. Floridians already knew about hardship when the Great Depression descended on the nation in 1929.

From 1920 to the mid-1940s, Florida's government took steps to represent its citizens more fairly. Women gained the right to vote. A tax that had prevented poor people from voting was repealed. Changes in other election rules gave African Americans a greater opportunity to vote.
Which Florida industries are represented in this painting? Go to christopherstill.com/fl-house-of-reps and click on this mural to be directed to a link with information about Florida’s growth.
Crossword Puzzle

Across
1. The sea level was much lower 12,000 years ago, so the Florida ___________ was twice the size that it is now.
2. Spanish explorer ___________ landed on Florida’s east coast in 1513, and he called the area La Florida.
3. During the Civil War, Northern ships tried to ____ supplies from coming and going.
4. The _______ allowed Florida products, especially citrus, to be sent to northern markets.
5. During the _____-American War in 1898, Florida was the base of U.S. efforts to help Cubans win freedom from Spanish rule.
6. The _______ ended suddenly in 1926 when money and public trust ran out.
7. Because of its mild weather and landscape, the state became a major ______ site for men and women in the military.

Down
8. In 1763, Britain took control of Florida and divided the land into ______ and West Florida.
9. The territory’s economy was based on agriculture, and enslaved blacks worked on numerous cotton _______ and small farms.
10. Indians from the Carolinas and Georgia, ancestors of today’s _______ and Miccosukee Indians, moved to Florida.
11. _______ was a Seminole war leader who refused to leave his home in Florida.
12. General Andrew _______ set up a new territorial government in 1821.
13. In 1860, Florida and other southern states left the United States because of _________.
14. After the Civil War, the U.S. government set up a policy called ________ in the South.
15. _______ carried people, mail, and supplies along Florida rivers and to distant places.

Answer Key:
Across: 1. PENINSULA; 2. JUAN PONCE DE LEÓN; 3. BLOCK; 4. RAILROADS; 5. SPANISH; 6. LAND BOOM; 7. TRAINING; 8. EAST; 9. PLANTATIONS;
Down: 8. EAST; 9. PLANTATIONS;
World War II helped to renew Florida’s economy. Because of its landscape and mild climate, the state became a major training site for men and women in the military. Airports and roads were constructed. This prepared the state for a large increase in population after the war. Newcomers from other states and countries helped to create a diverse population. Beginning in the 1950s, changes in laws and public education sought to protect peoples’ rights and prevent discrimination.

Florida’s economy became more diverse after World War II. Growth in tourism, agriculture, and other industries created jobs and opportunities, causing businesses and corporations to move to the state. The space industry brought people, technology, research, and media attention. Over time, legislation, education, transportation, health care, and the economy have kept pace with the needs of a dynamic and diverse population. Today, Florida’s citizens share a rich and varied heritage that is seen in every part of daily life.
Why is Florida known as the Sunshine State? Find the Florida symbols and go to christopherstill.com/fl-house-of-reps and click on this mural to be directed to a link with information about these symbols.
Web Quest

Your task for this Web Quest is to study posters from World War II to find out how the U.S. motivated citizens to support the war.

**Directions:**
Go to floridamemory.com.
Search these terms: “Woman Worker Poster,” “savings bond stamps,” “defense bonds stamps,” and “defense posters.”
Go to floridamemory.com/exhibits/floridahighlights/wwiiposters.

How did Florida support World War II?
During World War II, many items used every day were rationed so that there were enough supplies for the war. Posters were distributed around the country to encourage people to buy war bonds and conserve food, clothing, and gasoline. These posters also persuaded women to join the military as nurses or to work in factories.

Sketch your own poster to promote something you need or an issue that is important to you (i.e., recycling, eating more oranges, riding your bike).

What did the U.S. need people to do? ____________________________________________
How slow were cars supposed to drive? ____________________________________________
Why was this important? ____________________________________________
What role did women have during this time? _________________________________________
Math Game

Using the numbers in the grid, solve the formulas to discover important dates in Florida’s history. When you see a plus (+) sign, add the numbers together. When you see a minus (-) sign, subtract the second number from the first one.

Example: Florida became the 27th state in: A1 A2+C1 D1 D3-C2 = 1845

Questions

1. Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de León landed on Florida’s east coast in:
   A1 B2-A1 C1-B1 A1+B1

2. Britain took control of Florida in:
   D2-C2 A3-B1 B2 C1

3. Andrew Jackson made Florida a U.S. Territory in:
   B2-A2 A2+C1 D2-B2 A1

4. The Civil War lasted from April 1861 to April:
   A1 B2+B1 B2 B1+C1

5. Florida was the base of U.S. efforts to help Cubans win freedom from Spanish rule during the Spanish-American War in:
   C1-B1 D2 B2+C1 A3-A1

6. Florida’s economy had already been damaged by two hurricanes and a fruit fly invasion by the time the Great Depression descended on the nation in:
   A2-D1 D3-C1 B2-D1 A3

Bonus:
   World War II helped to renew Florida’s economy in:
   D3-C3 C2+B1 A3-A2 A3-D2
Florida’s springs provide homes for many kinds of plants, fish, and other creatures. As seawater cools in winter, manatees migrate to the springs’ warmer waters, joined by schools of fish and other marine life. The waters of the springs sustain the rivers that flow to the sea.

Springs form from water stored in an underground feature called an aquifer. Water collecting in the aquifer puts pressure on water already there. This pressure forces water to the surface, creating springs. Florida’s main aquifer, the Floridan Aquifer, consists of a porous rock called limestone that runs beneath the entire state. The Floridan Aquifer provides the water that supplies most of the state’s springs.

Florida’s earliest inhabitants visited the springs. Much later, springs drew the state’s first tourists. Florida’s springs release nineteen billion gallons of groundwater daily—more than any other spring system in the world. They support a growing number of people, along with plants, animals, and fish, and protecting them is vital to Florida’s future.
Study the manatees in the painting. How do you think they move through the water? What other kinds of underwater life do you see here? Go to christopherstill.com/fl-house-of-reps and click on this mural to be directed to a link with more information about the variety of underwater life.
Coral reefs teem with a wide variety of plants, fish, and other sea creatures. A reef develops from a single young coral called a larva, which attaches itself to the sea floor. As the coral grows, it releases calcium to make a hard shell in which it lives. Eventually, the coral reproduces and spreads to form the reef, but this takes thousands of years.

Corals work with zooxanthellae (zo-zan-thel-ee), a tiny algae, or type of plant. These little plants give oxygen and nutrients to the corals, and the corals provide fuel to help their partners convert sunlight into food.

Florida has its own coral reef called the Florida Reef Tract. This reef system extends from the clear waters west of the Florida Keys up the southeast Florida coast. The Florida Reef Tract forms the largest living coral reef system in North America. Coral reefs exist only in warmer waters. They are rare and fragile places.
Find the lobster in this image. Do you recognize any of the other kinds of sea life in this painting? Go to christopherstill.com/fl-house-of-reps and click on this mural to be directed to a link with more information.
High Points in Florida History

12,000 B.C.
People first moved into Florida at the end of the last Ice Age.

5,000 B.C.
People established the first permanent settlements, primarily on the coast.

A.D. 500
The Woodland culture emerged.

1200
The powerful Mississippian culture emerged.

1500
The Timucua, Calusa, and Apalachee were important Native American groups in Florida.

1783
Spain resumed control of Florida.

1818
Andrew Jackson invaded Florida during the First Seminole War.

1821
Through the Adams-Onís Treaty, Florida became a U.S. territory, with Andrew Jackson as the first governor.

1824
Tallahassee was established as the Florida capital.

1835
The Second Seminole War began and continued until 1842.

1864
Confederates defeated Union forces at Olustee.

1865
Victory at the Battle of Natural Bridge made Tallahassee the only Confederate capital east of the Mississippi River to avoid capture.

1868
 Floridians adopted a new federally mandated state constitution. A second state seal was adopted.

1885
A new state constitution was adopted, replacing the 1868 version.

1888
Railroad baron Henry Flagler completed the Ponce de Leon Hotel in St. Augustine.

1940
The Banana River Naval Air Station opened; later, it became Cape Canaveral Space Center.

1941
The U.S. entered the Second World War. Florida training bases opened all over the state.

1943
The Wainwright shipyard in Panama City built more than 100 Liberty Ships for the U.S. war effort.

1945
World War II ended.

1961
On May 5, Alan Shepard, the first American astronaut, was launched into space from Cape Canaveral Space Center (later called Cape Kennedy).
Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de León landed on the east coast and named it La Florida.

1562 Under the command of Jean Ribault, French Huguenots explored Florida.

1564 Led by Rene de Laudonnière, French settlers established Fort Caroline.

1565 Spaniards established St. Augustine, the first permanent European settlement in North America.

1763 After the Seven Years’ War, England acquires Florida and divides it into East and West Florida.

On March 3, Florida was approved for statehood.

The first state seal was adopted.

Political and cultural tensions were on the rise because of the national slavery debate.

The Third Seminole War was fought.

Union forces occupied Fernandina, Jacksonville, and St. Augustine.

The Spanish-American War saw embarkation camps at Tampa, Miami, and Jacksonville.

A land boom began in Florida.

A severe hurricane struck Florida, thrusting it into an economic depression.

Another hurricane struck south Florida, effectively ending the land boom.

A Mediterranean fruit fly infestation resulted in the massive loss of citrus crops.

The Spanish-American War saw embarkation camps at Tampa, Miami, and Jacksonville.

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Walt Disney World opened in Orlando.

A new state seal was created to correct inaccuracies dating to 1868.

Florida becomes the focus of world attention in the presidential election between George W. Bush and Al Gore.

Four hurricanes—Charley, Fran, Ivan, and Jeanne—hit Florida in a six-week period, impacting most counties.

Florida passes New York to become the nation’s third most populous state with almost 20 million residents.

Source: Florida Memory (floridamemory.com/exhibits/timeline) and Museum staff.
A Note for Educators

A selection of Next Generation Sunshine State Standards benchmarks for fourth- and fifth-grade social studies, art, and science are presented below. The content of this booklet can be aligned with benchmarks in other subjects, and activities can be adapted easily for younger and older youths.

Social Studies

SS.4.A.1.1 Analyze primary and secondary resources to identify significant individuals and events throughout Florida history.
SS.4.A.3.1 Identify explorers who came to Florida and the motivations for their expeditions.
SS.4.A.3.2 Describe causes and effects of European colonization on the Native American tribes of Florida.
SS.4.A.3.3 Identify the significance of St. Augustine as the oldest permanent European settlement in the United States.
SS.4.A.3.7 Identify nations (Spain, France, England) that controlled Florida before it became a United States territory.
SS.4.A.3.8 Explain how the Seminole tribe formed and the purpose for their migration.
SS.4.A.4.2 Describe pioneer life in Florida.
SS.4.A.5.1 Describe Florida's involvement . . . in the Civil War.
SS.4.A.7.1 Describe the causes and effects of the 1920s Florida land boom and bust.
SS.4.A.7.3 Identify Florida's role in World War II.
SS.5.A.1.1 Use primary and secondary sources to understand history.
SS.5.A.1.2 Utilize timelines to identify and discuss American history time periods.
SS.5.A.5.1 Identify and explain significant events leading up to the American Revolution.
SS.5.A.5.2 Identify significant individuals and groups who played a role in the American Revolution.

Visual Arts

VA.4.H.1.1: Identify historical and cultural influences that have inspired artists to produce works of art.
VA.4.H.1.3: Describe artworks that honor and are reflective of particular individuals, groups, events, and/or cultures.
VA.5.H.1.1: Examine historical and cultural influences that inspire artists and their work.
VA.5.C.1.2: Use prior knowledge and observation skills to reflect on, analyze, and interpret exemplary works of art.

Science

SC.4.L.17.2 Explain that animals, including humans, cannot make their own food and that when animals eat plants or other animals, the energy stored in the food source is passed to them.
SC.4.L.17.3 Trace the flow of energy from the Sun as it is transferred along the food chain through the producers to the consumers.
SC.4.L.17.4 Recognize ways plants and animals, including humans, can impact the environment.
SC.5.E.7.2 Recognize that the ocean is an integral part of the water cycle and is connected to all of Earth's water reservoirs via evaporation and precipitation processes.