



The Scrambled States of America

By Deborah J Short, Josefina Villamil Tinajero, Alfredo Schifini

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A wacky cross-country adventure starring the fifty states!

"Well, it was just your basic, ordinary day in the good old U. S. of A. States all over the country were waking up, having their first cups of coffee, reading the morning paper, and enjoying the beautiful sunrise.

All the states, that is, except for Kansas."

At the first annual "states party," Virginia and Idaho hatch a plan to swap spots so each can see another part of the country. Before the party is over, all the states decide to switch places. In the beginning, every state is happy in its new location. But soon things start to go wrong. Will the states ever unscramble themselves and return to their proper places?

Packed with madcap humor and whimsical illustrations, this quirky story-starring all fifty states-is chock-full of introductory facts and silly antics that will make learning geography as much fun as taking a vacation.

This title has Common Core connections.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

One day, Kansas wakes up grumpy. The other 49 states are stretching, yawning, and pouring maple syrup onto each other's pancakes, but irritable Kansas announces to his kindly neighbor Nebraska that life is dull and changes *must* be made: "All day long we just sit here in the middle of the country. We never GO anywhere. We never DO anything, and we NEVER meet any NEW states!" Nebraska, sick of hearing North Dakota and South Dakota bicker all the time, agrees to help organize a party for all the states. It's a hit! Late into the evening, Idaho and Virginia get up onto the stage and suggest that all the states change places. What a state of affairs. Minnesota, who switches places with Florida, gets a sunburn. Kansas, having traded places with Hawaii, gets lonely and sings some soggy blues so sad that a shark sheds a mournful tear offshore. Nevada and Mississippi fall in love. Despite the initial excitement, the new arrangement just doesn't feel right. The states manage to swim, fly, bike, and hitchhike their way home, and everyone goes to bed in the right place--even Kansas is happy to be home after such an adventure. This wacky, thoroughly engaging tale of mixed-up geography is a good bet for some awards. Perhaps best of all, the large format and riot of detail allow for plenty of amusing asides. Books that claim to "make geography fun" usually have to be taken with a dose of skepticism: so often, the teaching is there and the entertainment isn't. This delightfully quirky and original book shows how it should be done. (Ages 4 and older) --*Richard Farr*

From Publishers Weekly

"Keller endows each of the 50 states with a unique personality and, as all of them develop a case of wanderlust, she presents geography lessons as clever quips exchanged across state lines," said PW in our Best Books citation. Ages 4-9.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 3-5-A geography lesson par excellence, this clever picture book also offers great extension opportunities for the classroom. Through the voice of Uncle Sam, Keller suggests that the individual states of America have become tired of their physical positions and bored with their contiguous partners. So they decide to switch: Arizona, for example, trades places with South Carolina, Florida with Minnesota, and Kansas with Hawaii. Before long, however, they discover, as Dorothy did in *The Wizard of Oz*, that there's no place like home, and they all return, amid much mayhem, to their original spots. In following their journeys, children will not only become involved in their stories but will also learn a lot about the "the good old U.S. of A." Keller's imaginative story, her pop-art illustrations that sprawl in and around the text, and her amusing asides will have kids quickly chiming in with sayings of their own. The clever personifications of the states will stimulate students to research the individual characteristics of their own homes, as well as those of the other states. A graphic fact chart is appended along with a montage of funny cartoons that show mixed-up sites and mascots, as Kansas sunflowers cross the Golden Gate Bridge, Florida oranges race Kentucky Derby horses, and the Statue of Liberty greets the faces on Mt. Rushmore.

Barbara Elleman, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI

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Users Review

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John Ward:

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