

# Great State Seal of Iowa

**Activity Overview:** Did you know that Iowa has a state seal? This activity has young historians creating and designing their own colorful Great State Seal of Iowa. What images would you pick to showcase the state?

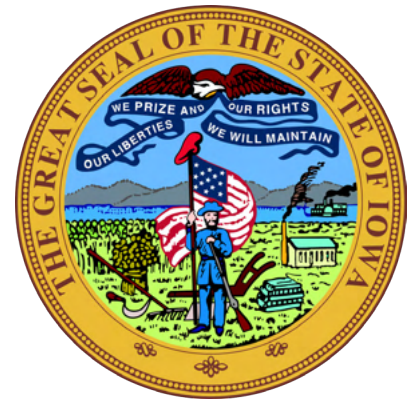
## Connection to Iowa History

A seal is an image or collection of combined images that represent a location and the people living in the space. Iowa's official Great State Seal was designed and approved by the General Assembly in 1847, one year after Iowa became a state. The seal has little changes or alterations from the original design. The Iowa governor has to approve all use of the state seal, and it cannot be used without their permission.

## Closer Look

The state seal captures what Iowans wanted to highlight about their new state. Since it was designed many years ago, some of the images and items depicted may no longer be relevant to modern Iowans. Let's take a closer look at what images were chosen for the Great Seal of Iowa:

- A citizen soldier
- A bushel of wheat and a farm plow to represent agriculture
- A bundle of lead to show the importance of lead mining
- Steamboat Iowa to represent trading and transportation along the river
- The state motto is also included within the symbol



## Instructions ([Video Instructions Available](#))

- 1 Examine.** Using the attached activity sheet, look closely and investigate the official Great State Seal of Iowa.
- 2 Take notes.** Answer the provided questions to gain a better understanding of the image. Why do you think the seal was designed this way?
- 3 Brainstorm.** Using the provided prompts, write your answers to the questions to help develop the design of your own version of Iowa seal.
- 4 Create.** Draw and color your own version of the Iowa seal using the provided drawing space. Be creative and make sure to represent Iowa in your design!
- 5 Share!** After you make your seal, share your work with the State Historical Museum of Iowa. Email a photo of your creation to [museum.education@iowa.gov](mailto:museum.education@iowa.gov). We want to share your creation with others!

## Materials

- ["Great State Seal of Iowa" worksheet](#)
- Pencil
- Colored pencils or markers

*Instructions continued on next page*

# Great State Seal of Iowa

## Instructions continued

### 6 Questions to Spark Learning

- Do you think the current state seal best represents the state of Iowa? Why or why not?
- Do you think state seals are important? Why or why not?
- How do you think state seals are used? How would you use your own state seal?

### 7 Additional Resources

Explore these resources below to learn more about historic river boats in Iowa.

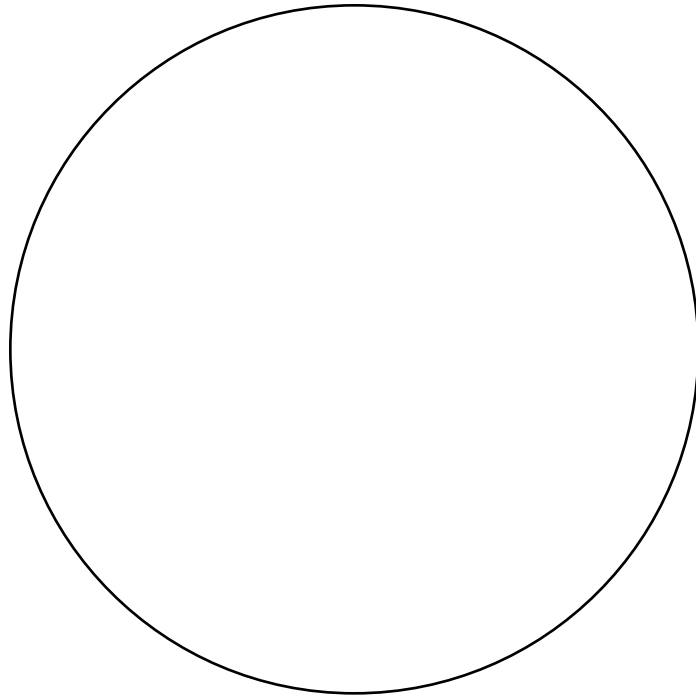
- [Iowa Official Register - State Symbols of Iowa](#)
- [The Goldfinch - State Symbols](#)
- [Annals of Iowa - The Great Seals of Iowa](#)

## Great State Seal of Iowa Worksheet

**Directions:** Use the questions below to examine the Great Seal of Iowa. Look closely at the current design choices. What does the design tell you about the state it represents?

*Use the Internet or find a book with an image of the Great Seal of Iowa to complete this section of the activity.*

What symbols or items do you see on the seal? Why do you think each was chosen?	
What words or phrases can you read on the seal? Why do you think those words were chosen?	
What colors are on the seal? Why do you think those colors were chosen?	
What are your overall thoughts about the seal design?	
Do you think it represents Iowa? Why or why not?	



Use this outline to create your own version of the Iowa seal. Think about what this new seal should look like using the questions below to help inspire your design. Be sure to incorporate some of your answers into your new seal design.

What are some key words that make you think of Iowa? <i>Examples: agriculture, education, Midwest</i>	
What are some images or symbols that make you think of Iowa? <i>Examples: farm fields, wind turbines</i>	
What do you want people to think about Iowa when they see your seal design?	

### Follow-Up Questions

How is your seal design different from the current Iowa state seal? How is it similar?	
Explain the different elements that you included in your seal design. Why did you include those elements?	