

Celebration of the Century

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Grade Level Expectations (GLEs)

Social Studies and English Language Arts GLEs are given for lessons and activities. Please see pages 115 and 116 for the text of each GLE and for additional GLEs. Lessons and activities incorporate basic literacy strategies and Comprehensive Curriculum instructional ideas and methods.

Louisiana has a story unlike any other state; I am pleased to participate in the planning and celebration of this milestone.

Jay Dardenne
Lieutenant Governor
State of Louisiana

We want full participation from every city, town, and parish around the state in celebrating the birthday of Louisiana's statehood. It's a time for us to be proud of our state, and we want everyone to be excited about the commemoration and take part in the celebration.

Lieutenant General (Retired) Russel L. Honoré
Chairman
Louisiana Bicentennial Commission

200 YEARS IN THE MAKING

INTRODUCTION



On April 30, 1812, the United States admitted Louisiana as the eighteenth state into the Union. Louisiana was the first state to have a majority Catholic French - and Spanish-speaking population, reflecting its origins as a colony under France from 1699-1763 and Spain from 1763-1803.

Admission of the Orleans Territory as a state followed years of lobbying efforts by prominent citizens, both American and Creole. Men such as the French-born planter Julien Poydras and American attorney Edward Livingston sought the greater political rights that statehood bestowed. By 1810, they had convinced Territorial Governor William C. Claiborne that the Orleans Territory qualified for statehood. In late 1811 and early 1812, Louisianans wrote the first state constitution, which Congress approved. On

April 14, 1812, President James Madison signed the bill approving statehood. The bill designated April 30, 1812 as the day of formal admission.

Although there were conflicts regarding law, language, politics, and culture, Louisiana's distinctive French Catholic Creole culture eventually blended with the American English Protestant culture to create a distinct Creole-American society.

Two hundred years after statehood, Louisiana remains one of the most distinctive states in the union. The state's rich Creole heritage is evident in the use of the civil law system, the organization of parishes as local political units, and the celebration of Catholic traditions such as Mardi Gras. Louisiana is also one of the most patriotic of states, with consistently high rates of military service and an all-American spirit. Therefore, as Louisiana commemorates this important bicentennial event, we can also celebrate the distinct Creole-American culture that U.S. statehood has fostered.