



# YOUR KEY

to the  
**Virginia General Assembly**

An Information and Activities Book for grades 1-3





# 🔑 Key Areas of Virginia Geography



**Richmond is the capital of Virginia. Senators and Delegates come to the Capitol to make laws.**

**The Appalachian Mountains are to the west and the Chesapeake Bay is to the east.**

**Washington, D.C. is the capital of the United States.**

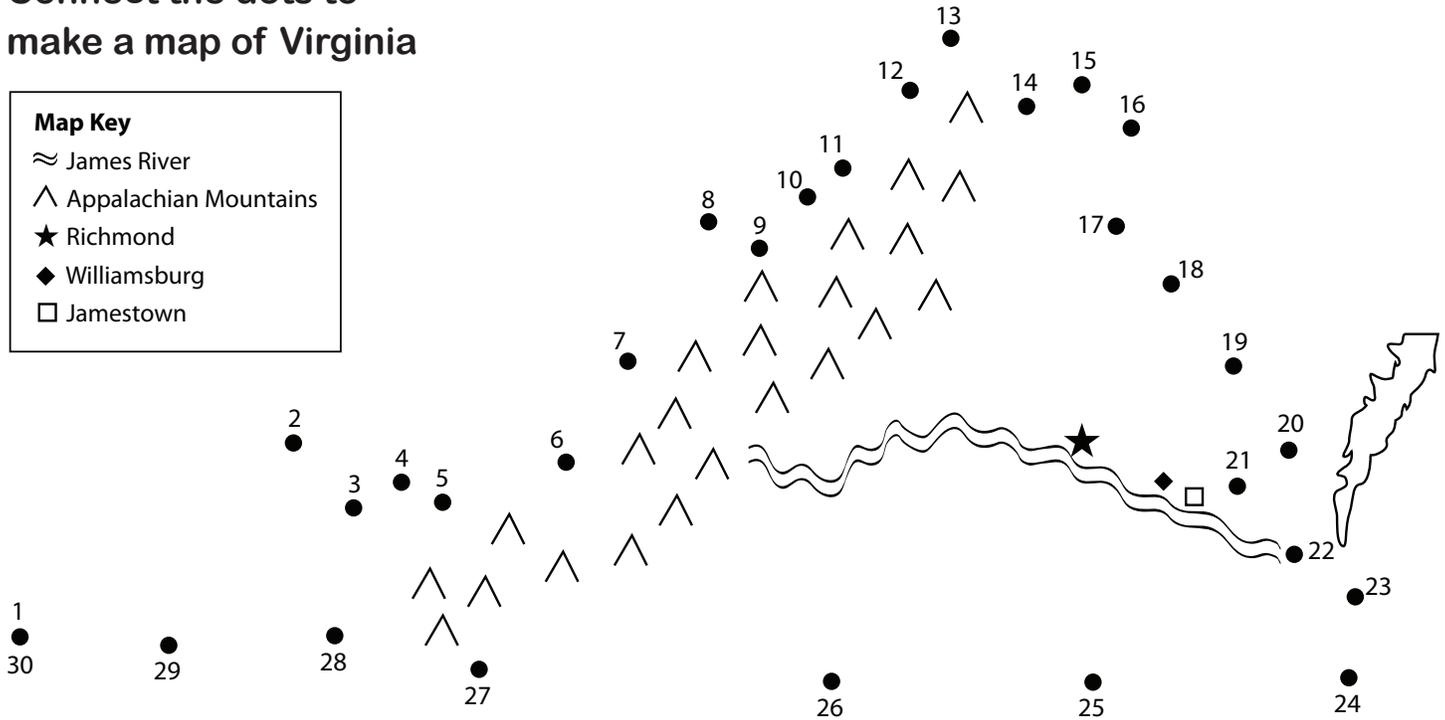
**Richmond is approximately 100 miles south of Washington, D.C.**

# 🗝️ Key Points on a Map

Connect the dots to  
make a map of Virginia

**Map Key**

- ≈ James River
- ^ Appalachian Mountains
- ★ Richmond
- ◆ Williamsburg
- Jamestown



The General Assembly first met in Jamestown in 1619. In 1699 a decision was made to move the capital of Virginia from Jamestown to Williamsburg.



The capital of Virginia remained in Williamsburg from 1699 to 1780.

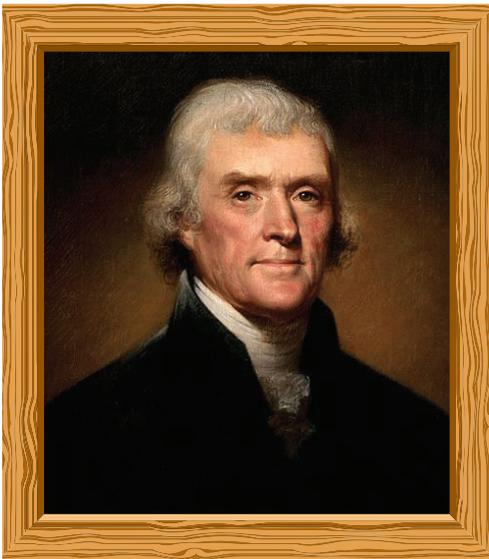
The General Assembly of 1780 decided to move the capital of Virginia from Williamsburg to Richmond for its central location.

# 🔑 Key Moments in Virginia History



**George Washington was the first President of the United States.**

A statue honoring George Washington is located in the Rotunda of the Capitol.



**Thomas Jefferson designed the State Capitol in Richmond which was completed in 1788.**

He was the third President of the United States. Jefferson is known as the author of the Declaration of Independence. His name is one of seven on a tablet in the Senate Chamber at the State Capitol honoring the Virginians who signed the Declaration of Independence.

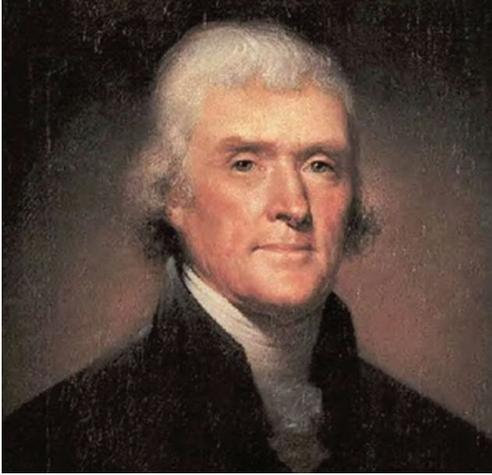


**Virginia is known as the “Mother of Presidents.”**

Eight U.S. Presidents, including Washington and Jefferson, were born in Virginia. A bust honoring each Virginia-born president can be found in the Capitol Rotunda.

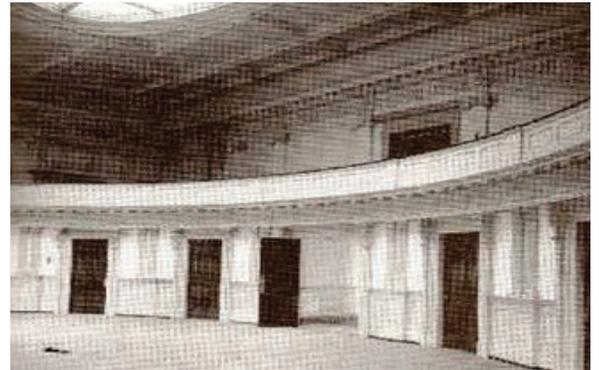
Photo courtesy of Edward Crim

# 🔑 Key Points in Time for Mr. Jefferson's Capitol



Thomas Jefferson agreed to design the Capitol and the cornerstone was laid.

**1785**



John Peebles designed the west and east wings of the Capitol. It took two years to complete the wings. They were finished in 1906. The Senate meets in the west wing and the House of Delegates meets in the east wing.

**1906**

1775

1850

1900

**1788**

The assembly began meeting in Mr. Jefferson's Capitol in 1788.



Photo courtesy of the Library of Virginia



L. Douglas Wilder was the first African-American to serve in the Senate after Reconstruction.

**1969**



In 2007, a new underground addition opened under the South Lawn.

**2007**

William Reid was the first African-American to serve in the House of Delegates after Reconstruction.

**1967**

Carolyn Burfeind and Colleen Hallahan were the first female pages appointed in the House.

**1973**

1950

2000

**1924**

Helen Moore Henderson and Sarah Lee Fain were the first women to serve in the House of Delegates.

**1971**

Sallie McCutcheon was the first female page appointed in the Senate.

**1988**

Yvonne B. Miller was the first African-American woman elected to the Senate.

**1968**

Vincent Tucker was the first African-American page appointed in the Senate. Thomas O. Sanderson was the first African-American page appointed in the House.

**1980**

Eva Scott was the first woman to serve in the Senate.

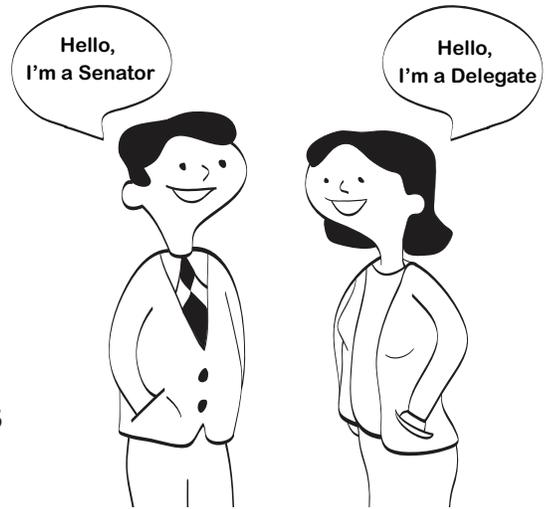


Photo courtesy of the Library of Virginia



# Learn the Key Steps to How a Bill Becomes a Law in Virginia

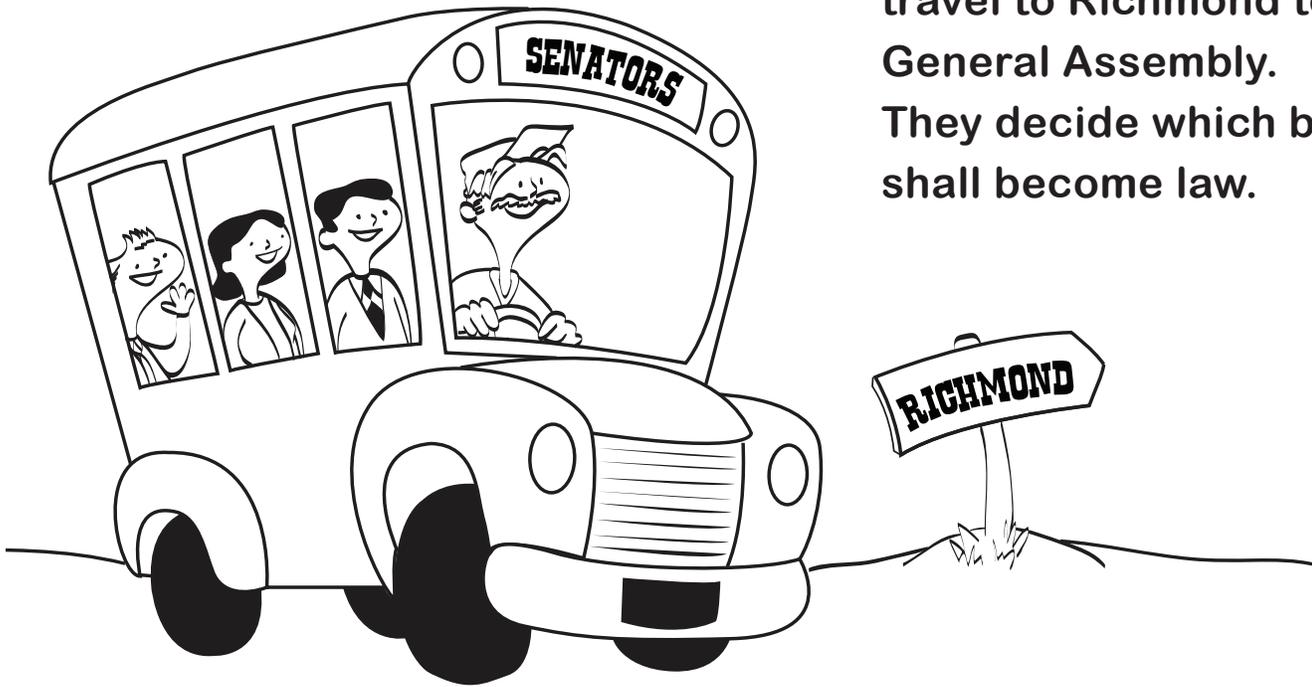
The Senate and House of Delegates make up the General Assembly. There are 40 Senators and 100 Delegates. Members of the General Assembly create and change the laws of Virginia. They are elected by the people in Virginia. Senators serve four-year terms and Delegates serve two-year terms.



Senators meet with their constituents to get ideas for new laws or to change current laws. Senators write the ideas into bills.

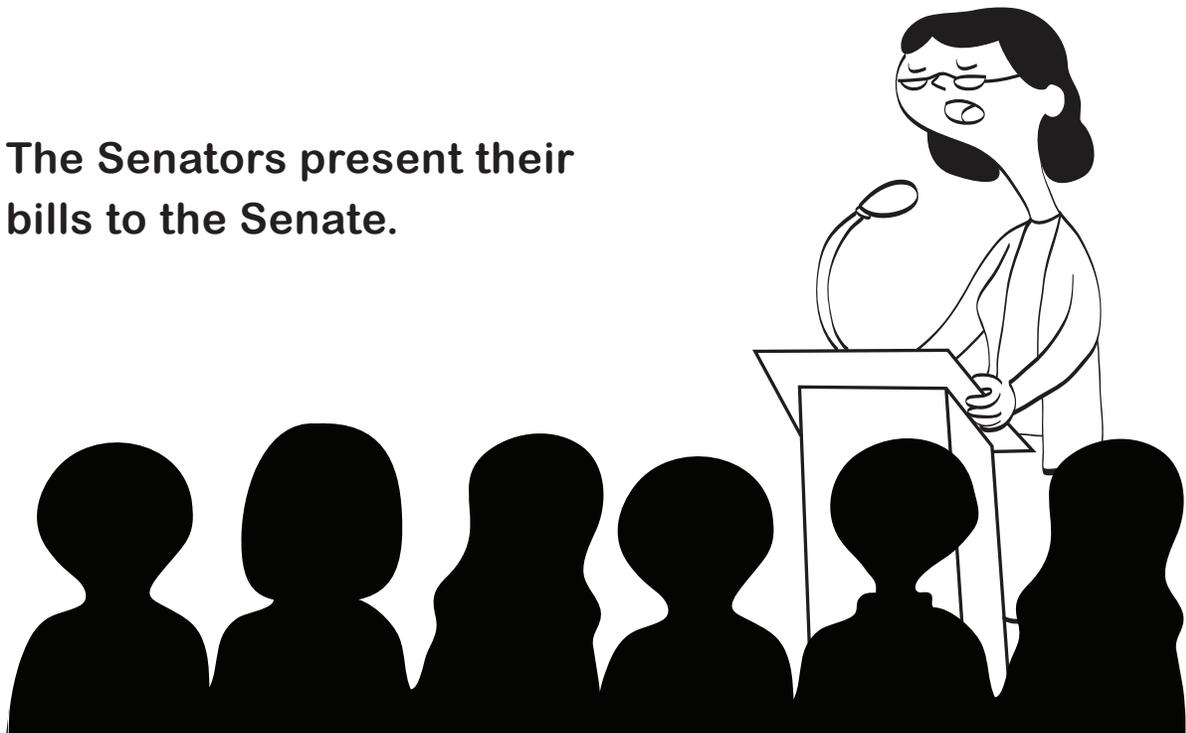
The General Assembly meets at the Capitol in Richmond every year in January for 45 or 60 days.

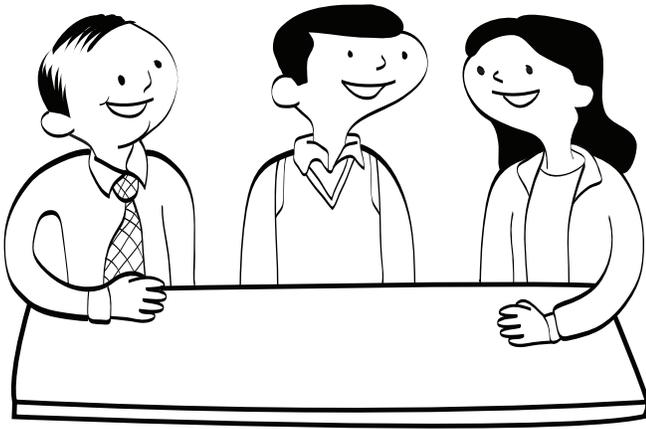




In January, the Senators travel to Richmond to the General Assembly. They decide which bills shall become law.

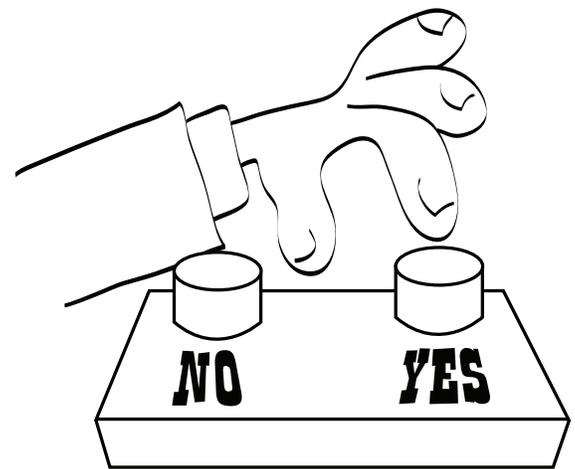
The Senators present their bills to the Senate.





Bills are then sent to a committee. The committee holds a meeting for the public and members of the legislature to talk about the bill.

The committee votes to pass the bill out of committee or to defeat the bill. If the bill passes, it goes to the floor of the Senate for all Senators to hear the reading of the bill. They vote yea (yes) to pass the bills and nay (no) to defeat a bill.



The bill is read to the Senate three different times. After the third reading, Senators may ask questions and debate the bill.



The Lieutenant Governor presides over the Senate and the Speaker presides over the House of Delegates.

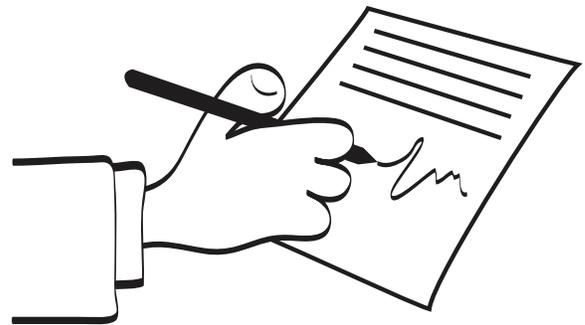
In the Senate, the Lieutenant Governor maintains order during debate. In the House of Delegates, the Speaker has a similar role.



A vote is taken to pass the bill. If the bill passes, it goes to the House of Delegates. The House of Delegates meets, reads, and votes on the bill. If the bill passes both the Senate and House of Delegates, it goes to the Governor.

The Governor has four choices:

- 1.** Sign the bill into law.
- 2.** Make changes to the bill and return it to the General Assembly.
- 3.** Veto the bill and return it to the General Assembly.
- 4.** Allow the bill to become law without his signature.



# 🔑 Key Items in the Senate Chamber



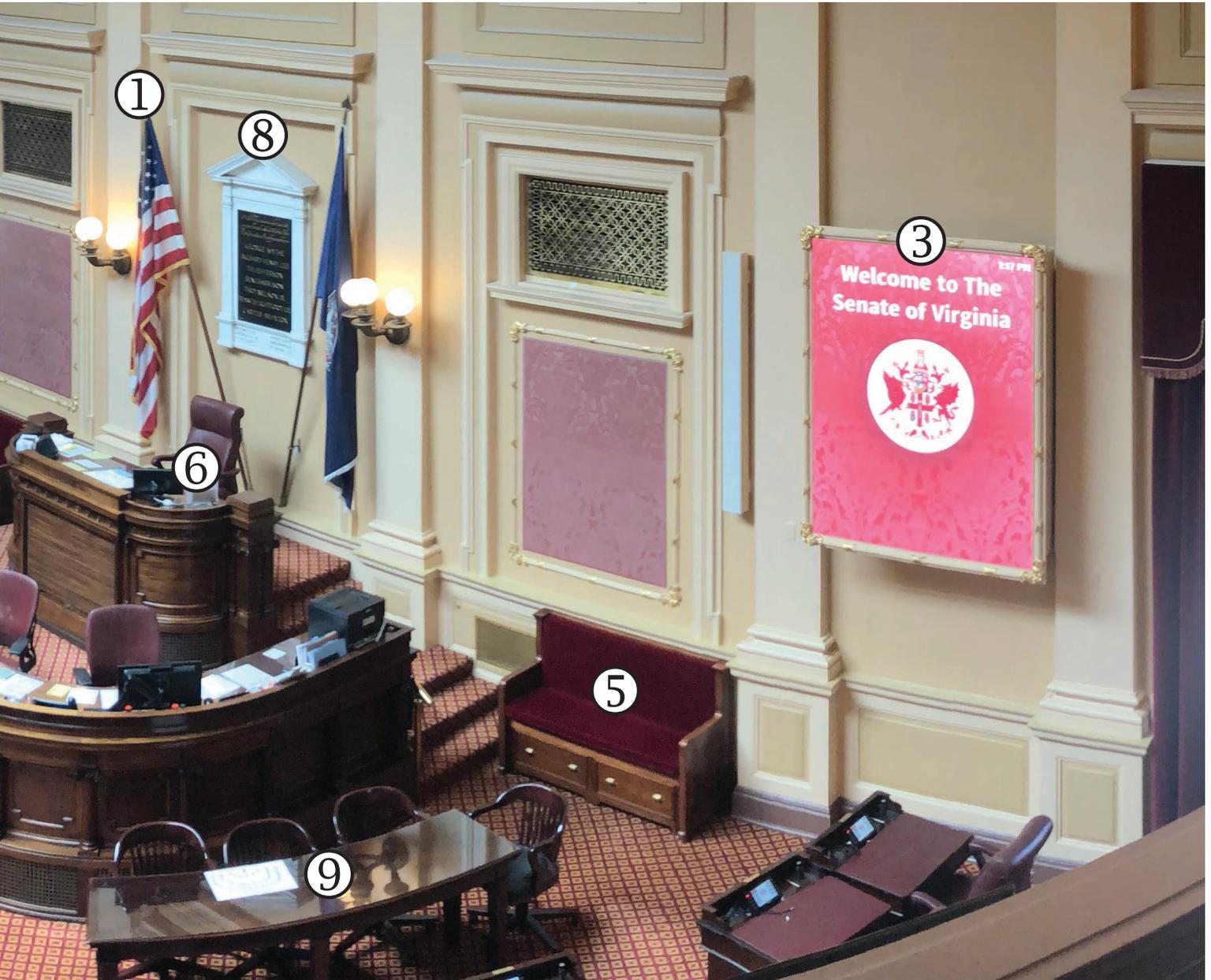
**1** The American and Virginia Flags are displayed in the Senate Chamber behind the upper podium. They are also displayed in the House of Delegates Chamber and on the roof of the Capitol.

Do you know the Pledge of Allegiance?

**2** Each Senator has a desk in the Chamber. The desks have a microphone, computer power cord and voting buttons.

**3** Each vote shows up on the big voting boards.

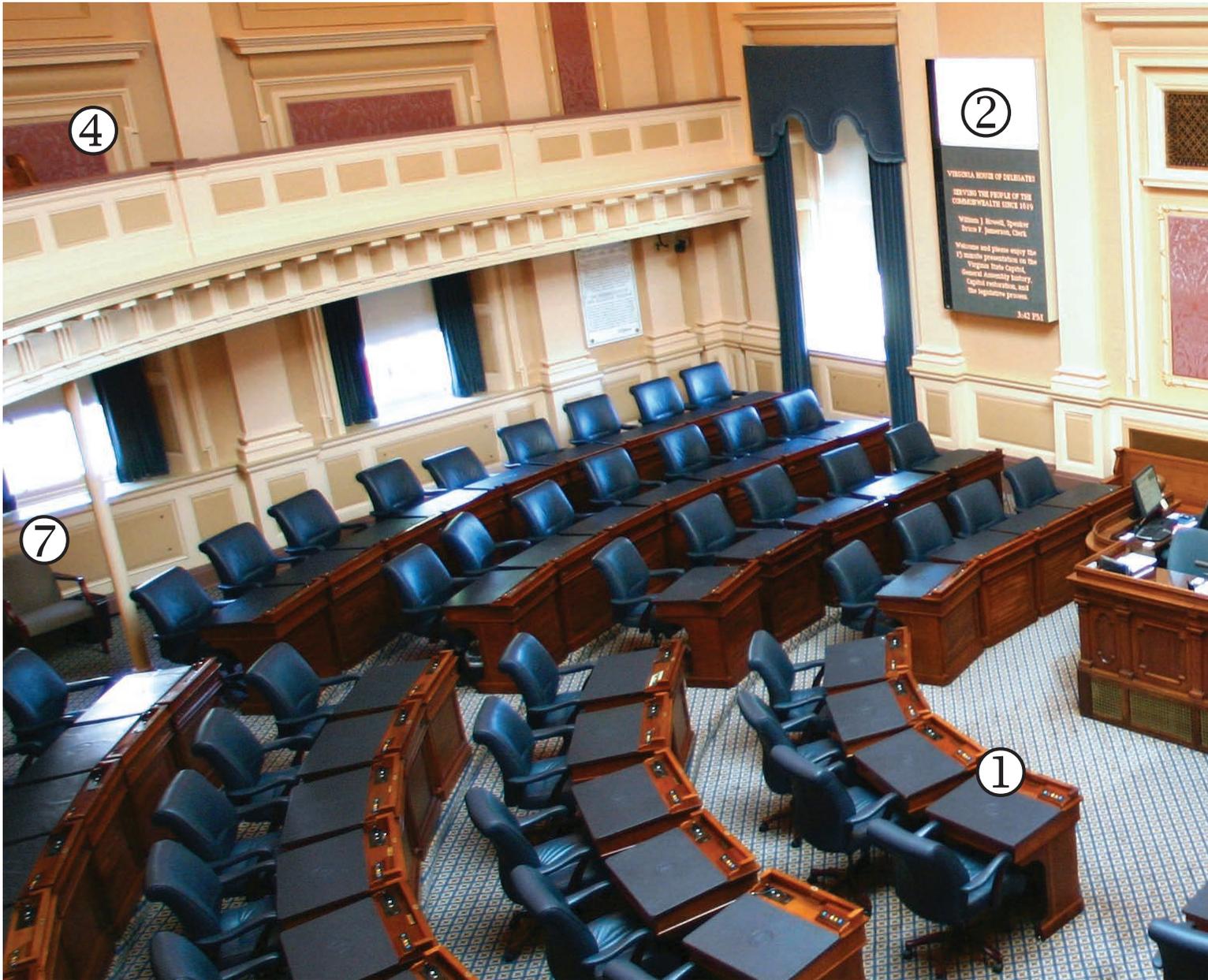
**4** The Clerk of the Senate stands at this podium.



- 5** Pages sit on the front benches. They run errands for Senators.
- 6** The Lieutenant Governor presides over the Senate from the upper podium. The Lieutenant Governor is one of three statewide elected officials.
- 7** The Gallery is where the public views session.

- 8** The Signers Tablet honors Virginians who signed the Declaration of Independence.
- 9** During the daily session of the Senate, the press is invited to sit in the Senate Chamber.

# 🔑 Key Items in the House Chamber



**1** Each Delegate has a desk in the House Chamber. The desks have power cords and voting buttons.

**2** Each vote shows up on the big voting boards.

**3** The Speaker presides over the House of Delegates from the upper podium. The Speaker is one of the 100 Delegates.

**4** The Gallery is where the public views session.



**5** A 20-pound, 24-karat gold coated mace is placed in front of the Clerk's desk each day during session.

**7** During the daily session of the House, the press is invited to sit in the rear of the House Chamber.

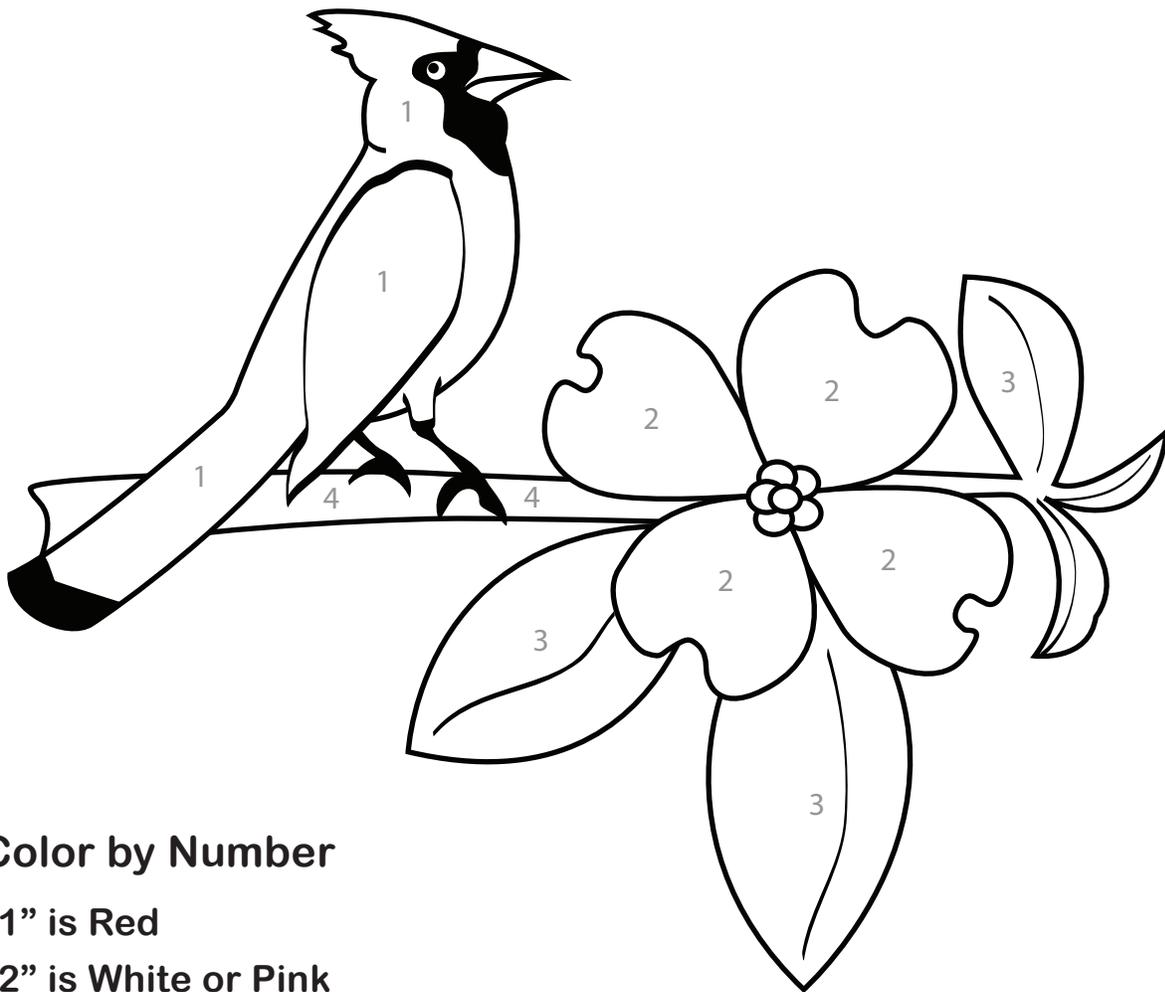
**6** Pages sit on the front benches. They run errands for Delegates.

**8** A plaque commemorating Nathaniel Bacon, who believed in governing by the consent of the people, is displayed behind the upper podium.

# Your Key to Virginia State Symbols

## The State Bird is the Cardinal

The Cardinal is easy to spot because it is bright red!  
You might see one in a dogwood tree.



### Color by Number

“1” is Red

“2” is White or Pink

“3” is Green

“4” is Brown

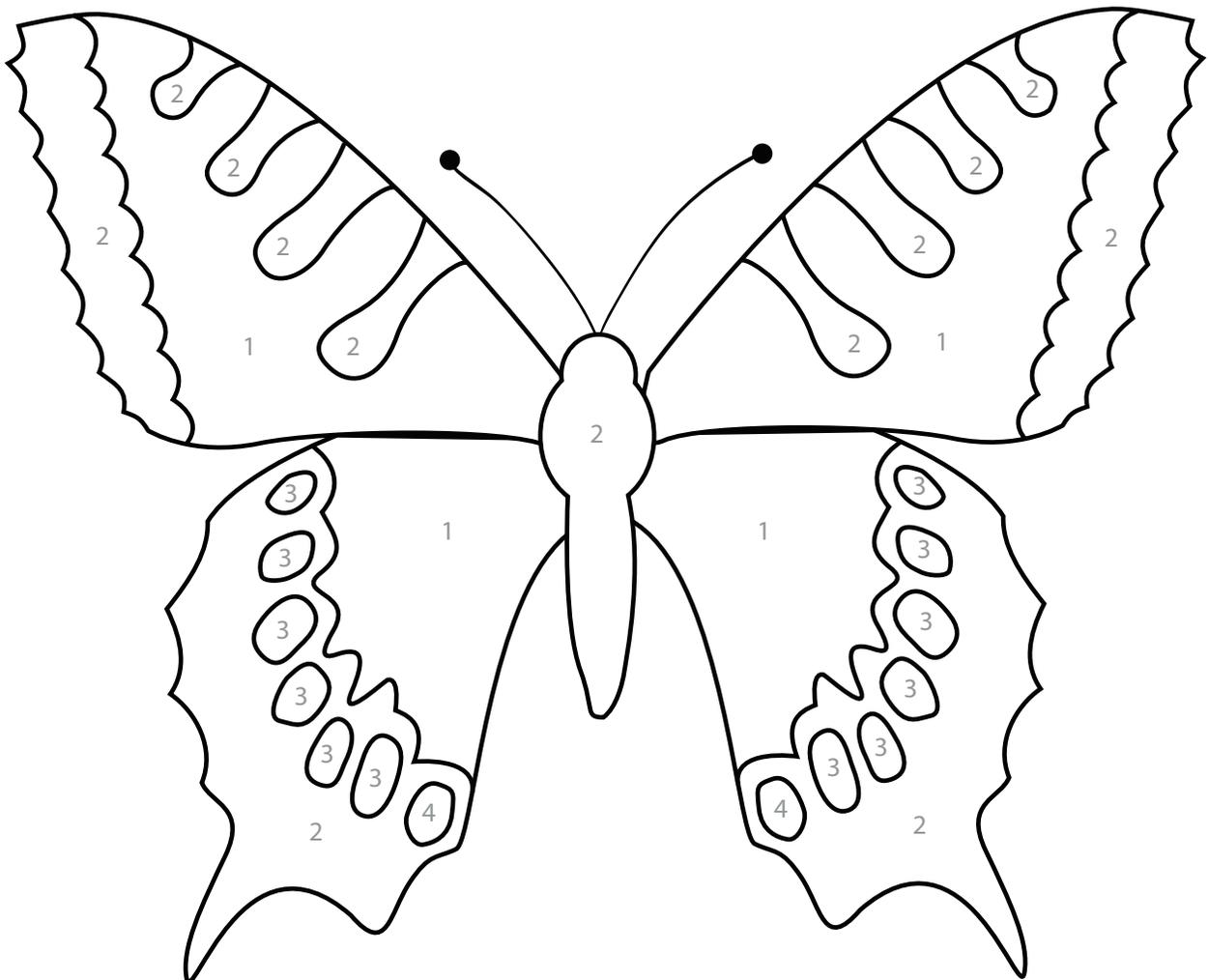
## The State Flower is the American Dogwood

The American Dogwood is unique because it is a tree and a flower.  
The blooms are white or pink.

# Your Key to Virginia State Symbols

## The State Insect is the Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly

The Tiger Swallowtail has distinct stripes like a tiger  
and can be found across Virginia!



### Color by Number

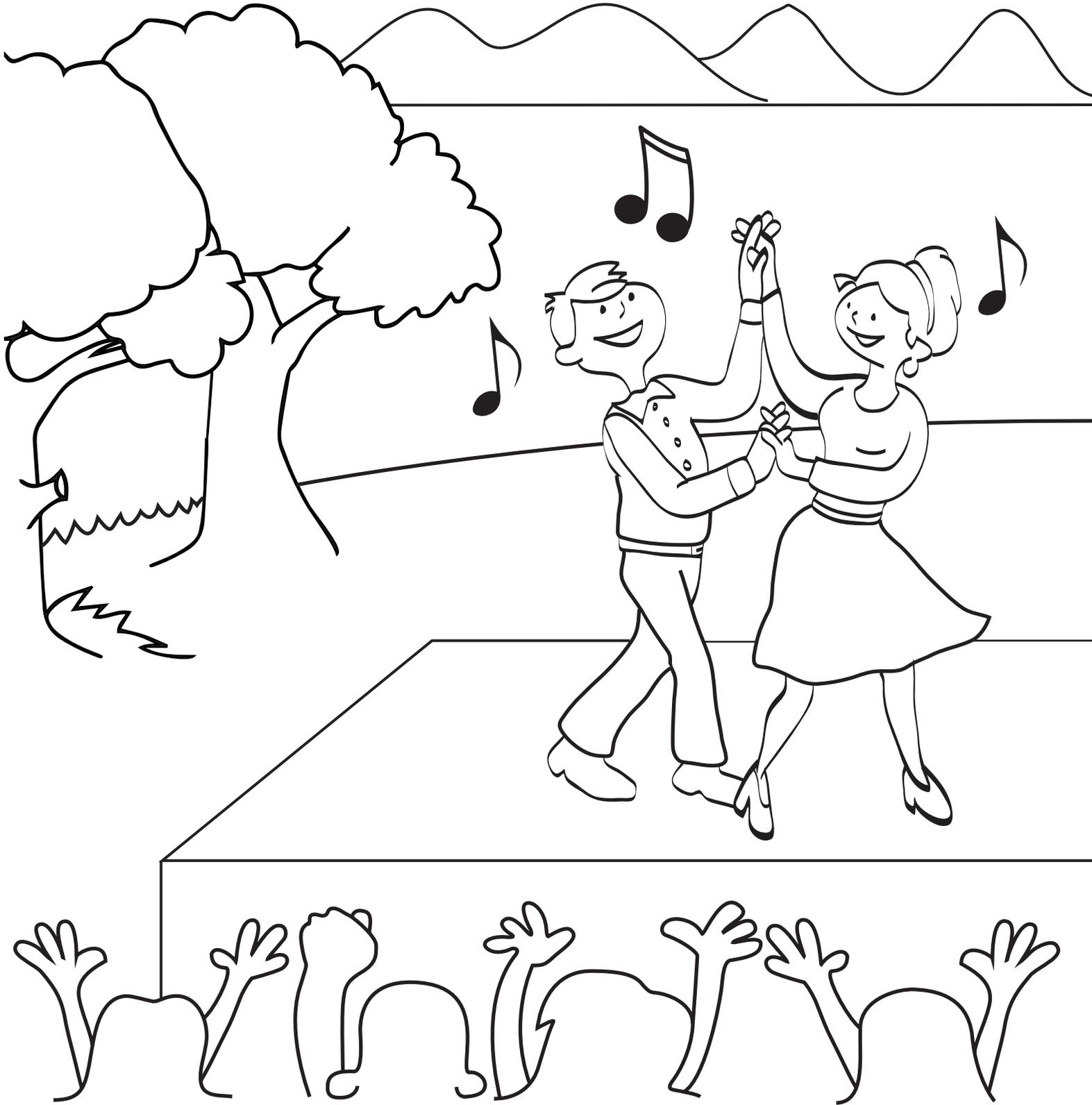
“1” is Yellow

“2” is Black

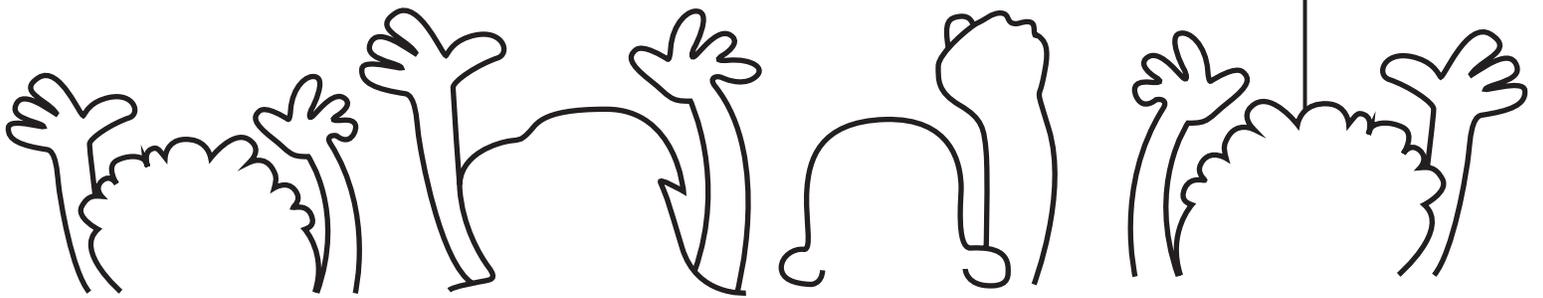
“3” is Blue

“4” is Red

# 🔑 Your Key to Virginia State Symbols

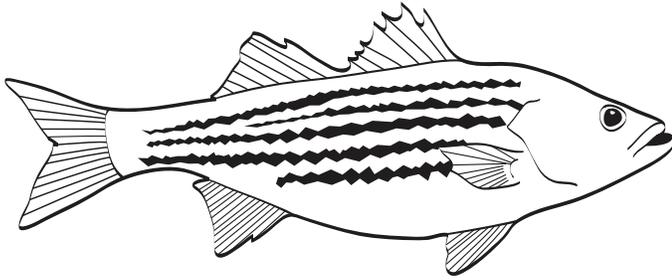


The official state folk dance is the  
**Square Dance**



The official state songs are  
**“Sweet Virginia Breeze”** and **“Our Great Virginia”**

# Your Key to Virginia State Symbols

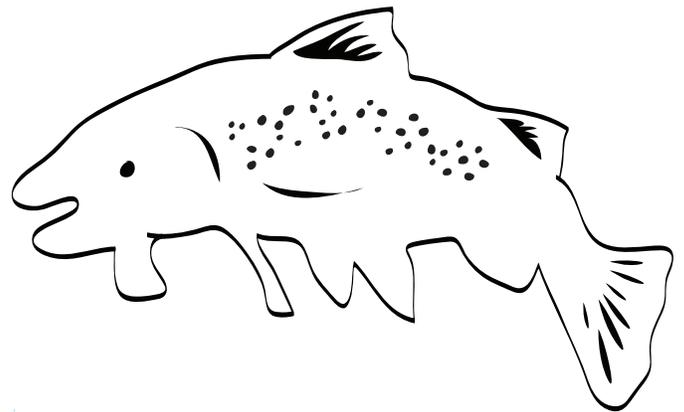


## The State Saltwater Fish is the Striped Bass

The striped bass lives in the waters off Virginia's coast.

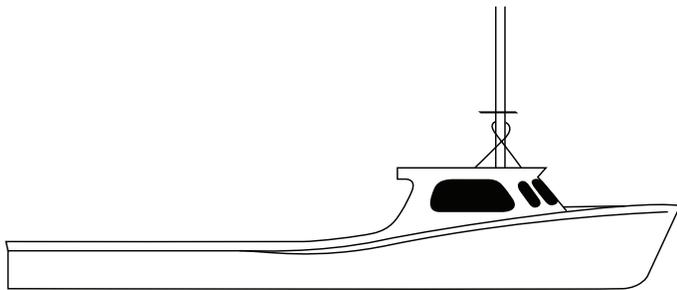
## The State Freshwater Fish is the Brook Trout

This fish lives in the clear, cold waters of Virginia's mountain rivers and streams.



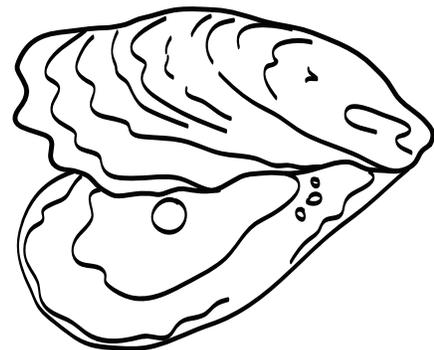
## The State Boat is the Chesapeake Bay Deadrise

The boat is often used by harvesters to collect oysters in the Chesapeake Bay.



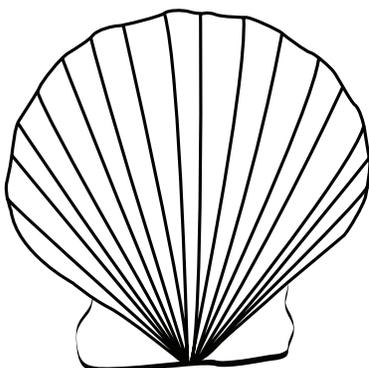
## The State Shell is the Oyster

Oysters live underwater in the Chesapeake Bay. They grow into different shapes and sizes.



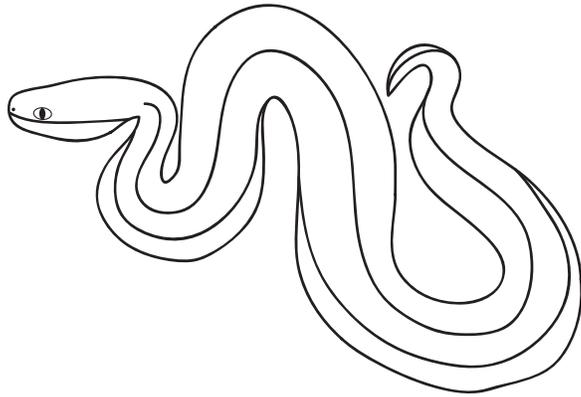
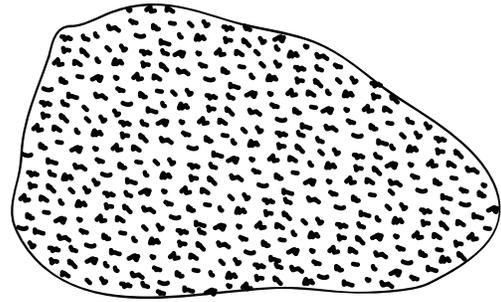
## The State Fossil is the Chesapecten Jeffersonius Fossil

This is a fossilized form of an extinct scallop. It was named for Thomas Jefferson because of his interest in natural history.



## The State Rock is the Nelsonite

This tan and dark speckled, titanium-laced rock is named after Nelson County, Virginia where it was discovered.

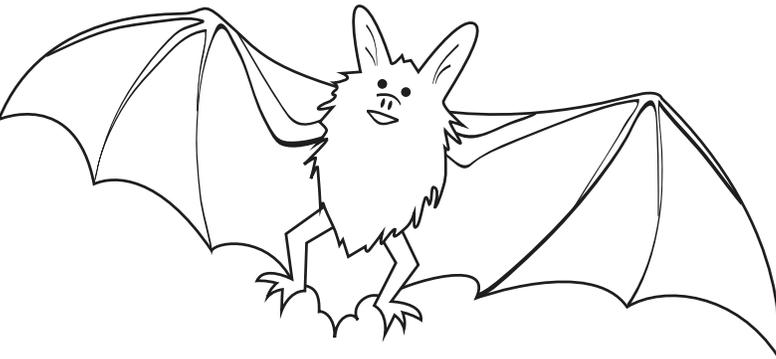
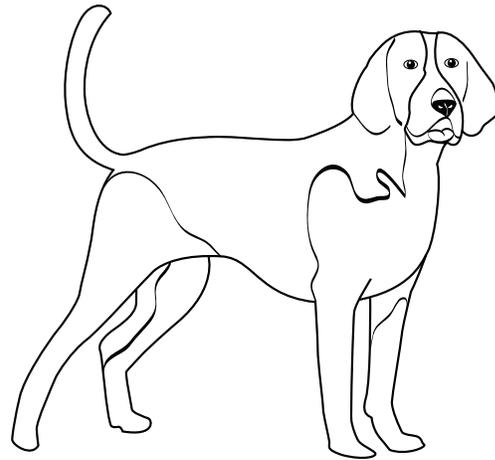


## The State Snake is the Eastern Garter Snake

This snake is either a greenish, brown or black color and has a distinct yellow or white stripe.

## The State Dog is the American Foxhound

America's first President, George Washington, had foxhounds. They have white fur with black and tan spots.

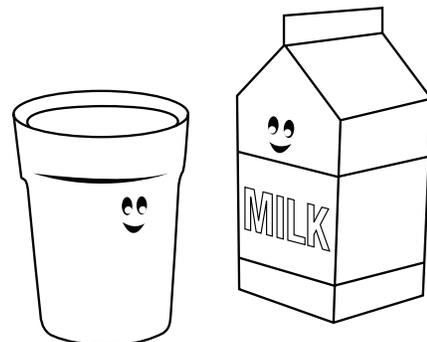


## The State Bat is the Big-Eared Bat

Bats have dark brown fur. You might see one flying outside at night!

## The State Beverage is Milk

Milk comes from dairy farms and is often found in your school cafeteria.



# Use the key to decode the State Motto

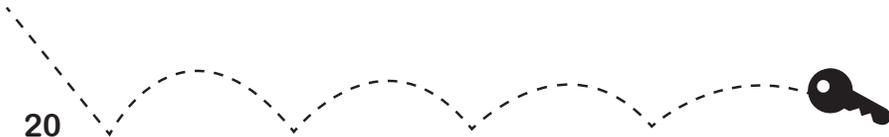
⌘	☒	☀	✂	🚩	Ⅱ	😊	♏	⌚	♊	☎	🔔	📧
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
🎵	+	♦	(	≈	♠	♣	✈	∞	≡	▲	?	▼
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

♣      ♏      ✈      ♠

⌘      🔔      ≡      ⌘      ?      ♠

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# The State Seal



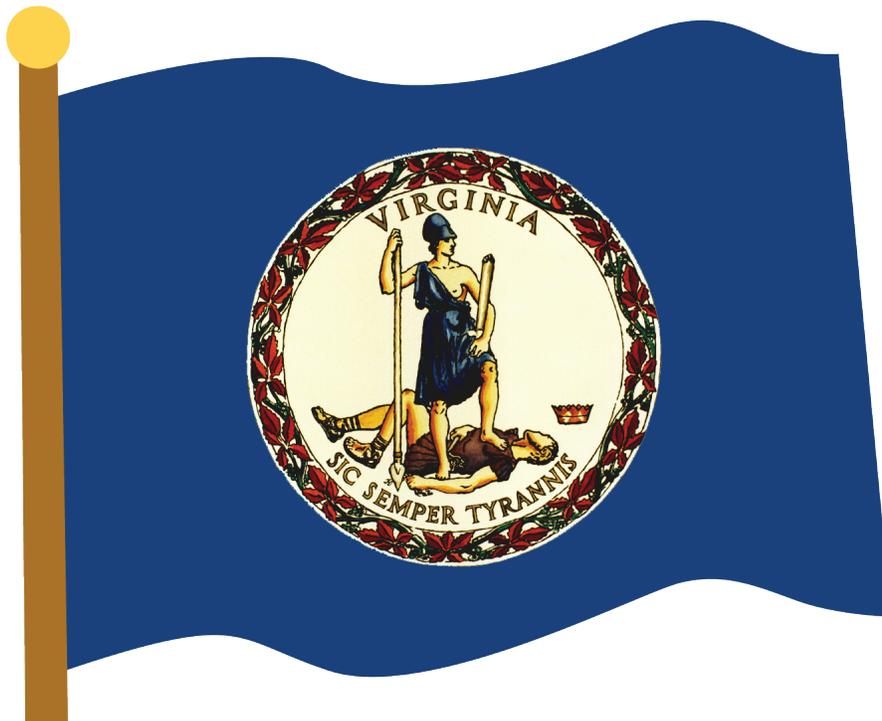
Thus Always to Tyrants



Preserving

# The State Flag

The flag is deep blue. The State Seal is in the middle.



# Key Letters



Virginia was founded in 1607. To find the name of the first town in Virginia, answer the questions below. Use the boxed letters to fill in the blanks at the bottom of the page.

Thomas  \_\_\_\_\_  
designed the Capitol in Richmond.

The Senate and House are called the  
General  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_ .

There are 100  \_\_\_\_\_  
and 40  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_ .

Senators and Delegates \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_ on a bill.

The General Assembly creates and changes \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_ .

If you like a bill you vote YEA. If you do not like a  
bill you vote  \_\_\_\_\_ .

# Crossword

					1		7		5
		6		3					
	4								
2									

1. The Capitol in Richmond was designed by Thomas \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The Capital of Virginia is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ and House of Delegates make up the General Assembly.
4. Bills are read \_\_\_\_\_ times before a vote is taken.
5. Senators vote Nay if they don't like a bill and \_\_\_\_\_ if they like a bill.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Presidents were born in Virginia.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ and messengers sit on the benches in the Senate Chamber and run errands.

# Answer Key

## Page 20 Key

THUS

ALWAISS

TO

TYRANTS

## Page 22 Key

JEFFERSON

ASSEMBLE

DELEGATES

SENATORS

VOTE

LAWS

NAY

JAMESTOWN

## Page 23 Crossword Key

					J		P		Y
		E		S	E	N	A	T	E
		I			F		G		A
		G			F		E		
	T	H	R	E	E	S			
		T			R				
					S				
R	I	C	H	M	O	N	D		
					N				



## Get Keyed into Virginia Government on the Internet!

### Virginia General Assembly

Capitol Classroom, Bill Status, Virtual Capitol Tour, "Who's My Legislator" and more!

<http://viriniageneralassembly.gov>

### Commonwealth of Virginia

<http://www.virginia.gov>

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