What's in a Name? Let's Find Out!

Materials Needed:

- Paper (plain or construction)
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Computer or tablet with internet access (with adult supervision)
- Optional: A baby name book

Hi there, history explorer! Did you know that your name is like a special secret code? Almost every name has a meaning and a story, sometimes from long, long ago! Isn't that cool? Today, we're going on an adventure to uncover the secrets behind names.

Why Do Names Have Meanings?

A long time ago, people often chose names that meant something special. Maybe they hoped their child would be strong like a lion, so they chose a name meaning 'lion' (like Leo!). Or perhaps they named their child after a beautiful flower (like Lily or Rose) or something they wished for the child, like 'wisdom' (Sophia means wisdom in Greek!).

Names can come from all over the world – from different countries and languages. Your name might have roots in Hebrew, Latin, German, Irish, Swahili, or many other places!

Let's Investigate YOUR Name!

Now for the super fun part! Let's try to find out what YOUR first name means. With a grown-up's help, you can:

1. Look up your name in a baby name book.
2. Search online using a safe search engine for kids (like Kiddle) or a name meaning website (ask your grown-up to help find a good one!). Type in "[Your Name] name meaning".

What did you find? What language does your name come from? What does it mean? Does it tell a little story about you?

What About Last Names?

Last names, or surnames, have histories too! Sometimes, they came from the job a person's family did a long, long time ago. For example, if someone's last name is Baker, their ancestors might have been bakers! If their name is Smith, maybe their family worked with metal. Other last names came from the place where a family lived (like Hill or Woods) or from their father's name (like Johnson, meaning 'son of John'). Ask your family if they know anything about the history of your last name!

Activity: My Name Story

Now that you know more about your name, let's get creative!

1. Take a piece of paper.
2. Write your first name big and bold in the middle.
3. Around your name, draw pictures or write words that show what your name means or where it comes from.
4. You can decorate it however you like! Make a Name Meaning Poster or a special Name Badge.

Wow! You learned that names are more than just words – they connect us to history, culture, and our

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families. Every name has a story, including yours!