

# Creating the National Parks, 1864–1950



*Zion National Park, 1920-1940 (Utah State Historical Society)*

# Creating the National Parks, 1864–1950

BY MELISSA PERKINS

*Melissa Perkins has been a high school history teacher since 2012. She was named the 2021 Hawaii History Teacher of the Year.*

## CONTENTS

Lesson 1 . . . . .	7	Lesson 1 Handouts . . . . .	16
Lesson 2 . . . . .	9	Lesson 2 Handouts . . . . .	21
Lesson 3 . . . . .	11	Lesson 3 Handouts . . . . .	29
Lesson 4 . . . . .	13	Lesson 4 Handouts . . . . .	37
Lesson 5 . . . . .	15	Lesson 5 Handouts . . . . .	40

## GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

**RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION:** Five 45-minute class periods

## UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on visual and textual primary and secondary source materials. These skills will enable students to understand, summarize, and evaluate documents of historical significance.

The five lessons in this unit explore the development of America's national parks from 1864 to 1950. Students will learn about early conservation efforts, the development of a National Park System, recreation in national parks, and the contributions of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the Great Depression. They will read an essay by a leading scholar, examine historical photographs, and read excerpts from speeches, magazine articles, and government documents to learn about the evolution of the national parks and America's commitment to conserving the wilderness. Teachers will assess students' understanding through a variety of summative assessments, including evidence-based writing, discussions, and presentations.

Students will be able to

- Analyze, summarize, and logically infer the essential message of a primary source using close-reading strategies
- Draw conclusions and demonstrate understanding of both literal and inferential aspects of primary sources through text-based evidence
- Understand the development of the National Park System and how Americans have enjoyed and contributed to protecting these public lands (e.g., through the Civilian Conservation Corps)

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How have Americans shown their appreciation for the wilderness?
- What endangered the wilderness?
- How did Americans protect the wilderness?

## COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

## MATERIALS

- Source 1: Historical Background: "Creating the National Park System," by Mary Stuckey, Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences, Penn State University
- Activity Sheet 1: Historical Background Analysis
- Source 2: "River View Down Valley, Cathedral Rock on Left," by Carleton E. Watkins, 1861, Gilman Collection, Museum Purchase, 2005, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, [metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/285861](http://metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/285861)
- Source 3: "The Vernal Fall, 300 ft., Yosemite" by Carleton E. Watkins, from the series *Watkins' Pacific Coast*, San Francisco, 1861, Purchased with funds provided by the Kunstadter Family Foundation, Art Institute Chicago, [artic.edu/artworks/145373/the-vernal-fall-300-ft-yosemite-from-the-series-watkins-pacific-coast](http://artic.edu/artworks/145373/the-vernal-fall-300-ft-yosemite-from-the-series-watkins-pacific-coast)
- Source 4: Excerpts from An Act of June 30, 1864, 38th Congress, 1st Session, Public Law 159, 13 Stat 325, Authorizing a Grant to the State of California of the "Yo-Semite Valley," and of the Land Embracing the "Mariposa Big Tree Grove," National Archives, [catalog.archives.gov/id/12007292](http://catalog.archives.gov/id/12007292)
- Activity Sheet 2: Yosemite Valley
- Source 5: "Yellowstone Hot Springs (Upper Basins)" by William Henry Jackson, 1871, SCBL-3070, Scotts Bluff National Monument, National Park Service, [nps.gov/museum/exhibits/whj/expeditions/Yellowstone\\_1871/Jackson\\_Moran/SCBL3070\\_Yellowstone\\_Hot\\_Springs.html](http://nps.gov/museum/exhibits/whj/expeditions/Yellowstone_1871/Jackson_Moran/SCBL3070_Yellowstone_Hot_Springs.html)
- Source 6: "Old Faithful in Eruption" by William Henry Jackson, 1872, SCBL-779, Scotts Bluff National Monument, National Park Service, [nps.gov/museum/exhibits/whj/expeditions/1872/SCBL779\\_Old\\_Faithful\\_Eruption\\_WHJ.html](http://nps.gov/museum/exhibits/whj/expeditions/1872/SCBL779_Old_Faithful_Eruption_WHJ.html)



- Source 7: “Survey Party, with pack train, en-route upon the trail between the Yellowstone River and East Fork, showing the manner in which all parties traverse these wilds,” by William Henry Jackson, 1871, SCBL-854, Scotts Bluff National Monument, National Park Service, [nps.gov/museum/exhibits/whj/expeditions/Yellowstone\\_1871/SCBL854\\_Earthquake\\_camp.html](https://nps.gov/museum/exhibits/whj/expeditions/Yellowstone_1871/SCBL854_Earthquake_camp.html)
- Source 8: Excerpts from [F. V. Hayden,] “The Wonders of the West—II. More About the Yellowstone,” *Scribner’s Monthly* 3, no. 4 (February 1872): 388–396. Available online at HathiTrust, [catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000544996](https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000544996).
- Activity Sheet 3: Yellowstone
- Source 9: Excerpt from John Muir, “The American Forests” in *Our National Parks* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1901), pp. 364–365. Available from the Library of Congress, [loc.gov/item/01026282/](https://loc.gov/item/01026282/).
- Source 10: Excerpts from Theodore Roosevelt, Conservation as a National Duty Speech, May 13, 1908, in *Proceedings of a Conference of Governors in the White House*, May 13–15, 1908 (Washington, DC: Washington Government Printing Office, 1909), pp. 3–12. Available online at HathiTrust, [catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/007686618](https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/007686618).
- Activity Sheet 4: National Parks and Conservation
- Source 11: Excerpts from John Muir, “Address on the Sierra Forest Reservation,” *Sierra Club Bulletin* 1, no. 7 (January 1896): 271–284. Available online at the Internet Archive, [archive.org/details/sierracclubbullet1196sier/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/sierracclubbullet1196sier/mode/2up).
- Source 12: Composite image of pages from *General Information Regarding Yellowstone National Park, Season of 1912*, National Park Service: Guide Books, Department of the Interior. Available online at the Internet Archive, [archive.org/details/generalinformati1894unit/page/n1/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/generalinformati1894unit/page/n1/mode/2up).
- Source 13: Excerpts from Superintendent John R. White, Sequoia National Park, “Atmosphere in the National Parks,” Address to Special Superintendents’ Meeting, Washington, DC, February 10, 1936, in “Chapter 3: The New Deal Years, 1933–1941,” in *America’s National Park System: The Critical Documents*, ed. Larry M. Dilsaver (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1994). Available online at the National Park Service, [nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/anps/index.htm](https://nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/anps/index.htm).
- Source 14: Capitol Reef National Park-Capitol Gorge, ca. 1940–1950, #11100, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection, [collections.lib.utah.edu/ark:/87278/s6dz1zg4](https://collections.lib.utah.edu/ark:/87278/s6dz1zg4)
- Source 15: Zion National Park-Great White Throne, ca. 1920–1940, #16532, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection, [collections.lib.utah.edu/ark:/87278/s63v17kz](https://collections.lib.utah.edu/ark:/87278/s63v17kz)
- Source 16: Parks and Forests, “General Rules and Regulations,” *Federal Register* 10, no. 240 (December 8, 1945), p. 14866, [govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-1945-12-08/pdf/FR-1945-12-08.pdf](https://govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-1945-12-08/pdf/FR-1945-12-08.pdf)
- Activity Sheet 5: Observations and Analyses on Recreation at National Parks
- Sources 17 and 18: Excerpt from “Park Service Rangers,” by Hugh M. Miller, Superintendent of Southwestern National Monuments, in *Region III Quarterly* 2, no. 4 (October 1940), [npshistory.com/newsletters/region\\_iii\\_quarterly/vol2-4g.htm](https://npshistory.com/newsletters/region_iii_quarterly/vol2-4g.htm)
- Activity Sheet 6: Park Service Rangers
- Activity Sheet 7 and Source 19: Excerpts from President Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Greeting to the CCC,” July 8, 1933, The American Presidency Project, Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, ed., UC Santa Barbara, [presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/greeting-the-ccc](https://presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/greeting-the-ccc)



- Activity Sheet 8: Photo Study
- Source 20: “Franklin D. Roosevelt, Gen. Malone, Howe, Ickes, Fechner, Wallace, and Tugwell in the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia,” Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Public Domain Photographs, National Archives, [catalog.archives.gov/id/197051](https://catalog.archives.gov/id/197051)
- Source 21: “African American enrollees cave crew,” 1935, Mammoth Cave National Park CCC Archival Photograph Collection, [nps.gov/macal/learn/historyculture/civilian-conservation-corps.htm](https://nps.gov/macal/learn/historyculture/civilian-conservation-corps.htm)
- Source 22: “Creating Hiking Trail,” 1930s, Shenandoah National Park CCC Photo Gallery, [nps.gov/media/photo/gallery-item.htm?pg=3527954&id=1f2fd5ae-155d-451f-67fb-17e9bc4bd65a&gid=1F2FD4ED-155D-451F-67AD455D60265887](https://nps.gov/media/photo/gallery-item.htm?pg=3527954&id=1f2fd5ae-155d-451f-67fb-17e9bc4bd65a&gid=1F2FD4ED-155D-451F-67AD455D60265887)
- Activity Sheet 9: Timeline and Essay Questions

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### CREATING THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM

by Mary Stuckey, Penn State University

We have had national parks much longer than we have had a system for protecting and managing them. While land in both Arkansas and California had been protected before 1872, in that year, Yellowstone, in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho, was declared the world's first national park. National parks didn't really become important until President Theodore Roosevelt, an avid outdoorsman, protected over 230 million acres of land, including five national parks, four game reserves, some fifty bird refuges, and eighteen national monuments. He was able to do so because of the American Antiquities Act, passed in 1906, which allows presidents to protect endangered cultural and natural resources.



*Buffalo Soldiers of the 24th Infantry carried out mounted patrol duties in Yosemite. (Yosemite National Park Archives, US National Park Service)*

But no one really knew what it meant to protect land, wildlife, or cultural history, and the parks were poorly funded and poorly staffed. Visitors roamed about at will, often marring or destroying the very things they had come to see and experience. Because automobiles were increasingly available, and because people had more leisure time than ever before, more and more people visited the parks, causing more and more damage to them.

Stephen Mather, who worked in public relations, and who spent considerable time in the parks, was so upset by this situation that he wrote a letter to Secretary of Interior Franklin K. Lane complaining of the situation within the parks. Lane responded with an invitation to Mather to come manage them himself. Together with his assistant, Horace Albright, Mather and a team

of carefully selected lieutenants began to systematize the park system, adding new units, increasing access, and providing infrastructure. When in 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Organic Act formally creating the National Park Service (NPS), Mather became its first director.

In the early years, the NPS created access to the parks while also protecting them—they built roads, lodging, and other amenities. They understood that the only way to grow the park system and protect the parks was to build support for them among the mass public, so they encouraged visitation while also preserving spaces in the parks as wilderness. They developed interpretive programs too, headed by park rangers, to help explain the parks to the public; the NPS sees education as a big part of its job.

Programs created to help the nation weather the Great Depression were good for the parks—much of the iconic infrastructure in the parks today was built by young men as part of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Like his cousin Theodore, Franklin Roosevelt was a conservationist. As part of his broader initiatives reorganizing the federal government, he also moved a significant amount of public land from the Department of Agriculture to Interior, and transferred eleven national military parks, two national parks, nine battlefield sites, eleven national monuments, four “miscellaneous memorials,” and fifteen national monuments to the NPS, giving the agency the basic organization it continues to have today.

The park service is the nation's most popular federal agency. It has units dedicated to the nation's history, like Independence National Historical Park in Pennsylvania; its culture, like New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park in Louisiana; and its wildlife and natural wonders, as far north as Gates of the Arctic in Alaska and as distant from the continental US as the National Park of American Samoa. The system creates jobs, provides diverse places for recreation, interprets national history, and protects our wild places.

*Mary Stuckey is Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences at Penn State University. She is the author of For the Enjoyment of the People: The Creation of National Identity in American Public Lands.*

## LESSON 1

## THE EMERGING NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM (1864–1872)

BY MELISSA PERKINS

## OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will learn about early conservation efforts and the development of a National Park System. They will view historical images and read government documents and personal accounts to learn about the evolution of the national parks and America's commitment to conserving the wilderness. They will demonstrate their learning by analyzing primary and secondary sources and using evidence to support an argument about the development of early protections of America's wilderness.

*Melissa Perkins has been a high school history teacher since 2012. She was named the 2021 Hawaii History Teacher of the Year.*

GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: One 45-minute class period

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on visual and textual primary and secondary source materials. The five lessons in this unit explore the development of America's national parks from 1864 to 1950, including early conservation efforts, the development of a National Park System, recreation in national parks, and the contributions of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the Great Depression.

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How have Americans shown their appreciation for the wilderness?
- What endangered the wilderness?
- How did Americans protect the wilderness?

## MATERIALS

- Source 1: Historical Background: “Creating the National Park System,” by Mary Stuckey, Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences, Penn State University
- Activity Sheet 1: Historical Background Analysis
- Source 2: “River View Down Valley, Cathedral Rock on Left,” by Carleton E. Watkins, 1861, Gilman Collection, Museum Purchase, 2005, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, [metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/285861](https://metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/285861)
- Source 3: “The Vernal Fall, 300 ft., Yosemite” by Carleton E. Watkins, from the series *Watkins' Pacific Coast*, San Francisco, 1861, Purchased with funds provided by the Kunstadter Family Foundation, Art Institute Chicago, [artic.edu/artworks/145373/the-vernal-fall-300-ft-yosemite-from-the-series-watkins-pacific-coast](https://artic.edu/artworks/145373/the-vernal-fall-300-ft-yosemite-from-the-series-watkins-pacific-coast)
- Source 4: Excerpts from An Act of June 30, 1864, 38th Congress, 1st Session, Public Law 159, 13 Stat 325, Authorizing a Grant to the State of California of the “Yo-Semite Valley,” and of the Land Embracing the “Mariposa Big Tree Grove,” National Archives, [catalog.archives.gov/id/12007292](https://catalog.archives.gov/id/12007292)
- Activity Sheet 2: Yosemite Valley



## PROCEDURE

1. Distribute Source 1: “Creating the National Park System.” This is the Historical Background essay. Use the “share read” method to read the essay with the class. This is done by having the students follow along silently while you begin to read aloud, modeling prosody, inflection, and punctuation. Then ask the class to join in with the reading after a few sentences while you continue to read aloud, still serving as the model for the class. This technique will support struggling readers as well as English language learners (ELL).
2. Distribute copies of Activity Sheet 1: Historical Background Analysis and have students complete the Important Phrases activity to promote comprehension of the historical context information.
3. You may choose to have the students share their important phrases and their reasons for choosing them with partners or in small groups before reconvening the class for a discussion of their responses and the history of the National Park System in the United States.
4. Distribute copies of Sources 2–4 and Activity Sheet 2: Yosemite Valley. You may choose to share the following information with the students:

In 1861, Carleton E. Watkins’s photographs captured the beauty and natural wonders of California’s Yosemite Valley. After the images circulated throughout the country, many Americans petitioned Congress and President Abraham Lincoln to protect the land from development and hazardous tourism. This led to the Yosemite Act of 1864, which was one of America’s early efforts to preserve the wilderness. The Yosemite Act served as a precursor to the National Park System.

5. Discuss the unit’s Essential Questions before moving on to Carleton E. Watkins’s images and the Yosemite Act. Have students spend at least one full minute looking at the two photographs. Encourage them to observe all the natural features, as well as note any emotions the images evoke.
6. After carefully studying Carleton E. Watkins’s photographs, each student should complete Activity Sheet 2, where they are prompted to write a detailed description of what they see in each image. Instruct students to write as though their audience has never seen and does not have access to the photographs.

Note: The image of Vernal Fall is a stereographic print that presents two slightly different images side by side. When viewed through a stereoscope, the two images combine to create an illusion of depth. This style of photography was popular from the 1850s through the 1930s.

7. Next, share read Source 4, the Yosemite Act of 1864, as described above.
8. At the conclusion of the reading, have students return to their activity sheets and answer the synthesis question: Using evidence from Carleton E. Watkins’s photographs and the Yosemite Act of 1864, explain what type of wilderness the Yosemite Act aimed to protect. Then explain the purpose of this preservation, and how the preservation would be ensured.
9. Put the students with partners or in small groups to share their responses to the synthesis question. Encourage students to discuss any differences in responses and make any desired revisions to the answers they recorded on their activity sheets.
10. Reconvene the class and lead a discussion of student responses. Ensure that everyone has demonstrated an understanding of some of the reasons why national parks were created.
11. You may choose to have the students respond orally or in writing to one of the Essential Questions as an assessment activity.

## LESSON 2

### DEVELOPING A NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM (1872–1916)

BY MELISSA PERKINS

#### OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will learn about the development of the National Park System, and they will read and analyze historical sources related to early conservation efforts. They will demonstrate their learning by analyzing primary sources and using evidence to support an argument about environmental threats and the development of a national park system.

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How have Americans shown their appreciation for the wilderness?
- What endangered the wilderness?
- How did Americans protect the wilderness?

#### MATERIALS

- Source 5: “Yellowstone Hot Springs (Upper Basins)” by William Henry Jackson, 1871, SCBL-3070, Scotts Bluff National Monument, National Park Service, [nps.gov/museum/exhibits/whj/expeditions/Yellowstone\\_1871/Jackson\\_Moran/SCBL3070\\_Yellowstone\\_Hot\\_Springs.html](https://nps.gov/museum/exhibits/whj/expeditions/Yellowstone_1871/Jackson_Moran/SCBL3070_Yellowstone_Hot_Springs.html)
- Source 6: “Old Faithful in Eruption” by William Henry Jackson, 1872, SCBL-779, Scotts Bluff National Monument, National Park Service, [nps.gov/museum/exhibits/whj/expeditions/1872/SCBL779\\_Old\\_Faithful\\_Eruption\\_WHJ.html](https://nps.gov/museum/exhibits/whj/expeditions/1872/SCBL779_Old_Faithful_Eruption_WHJ.html)
- Source 7: “Survey Party, with pack train, en-route upon the trail between the Yellowstone River and East Fork, showing the manner in which all parties traverse these wilds,” by William Henry Jackson, 1871, SCBL-854, Scotts Bluff National Monument, National Park Service, [nps.gov/museum/exhibits/whj/expeditions/Yellowstone\\_1871/SCBL854\\_Earthquake\\_camp.html](https://nps.gov/museum/exhibits/whj/expeditions/Yellowstone_1871/SCBL854_Earthquake_camp.html)
- Source 8: Excerpts from [F. V. Hayden,] “The Wonders of the West—II. More About the Yellowstone,” *Scribner’s Monthly* 3, no. 4 (February 1872): 388–396. Available online at [HathiTrust](https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000544996), [catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000544996](https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000544996).
- Activity Sheet 3: Yellowstone
- Source 9: Excerpt from John Muir, “The American Forests” in *Our National Parks* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1901), pp. 364–365. Available from the Library of Congress, [loc.gov/item/01026282/](https://loc.gov/item/01026282/).

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GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: One 45-minute class period

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute’s Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on visual and textual primary and secondary source materials. The five lessons in this unit explore the development of America’s national parks from 1864 to 1950, including early conservation efforts, the development of a National Park System, recreation in national parks, and the contributions of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the Great Depression.

- Source 10: Excerpts from Theodore Roosevelt, Conservation as a National Duty Speech, May 13, 1908, in *Proceedings of a Conference of Governors in the White House, May 13–15, 1908* (Washington, DC: Washington Government Printing Office, 1909), pp. 3–12. Available online at HathiTrust, [catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/007686618](https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/007686618).
- Activity Sheet 4: National Parks and Conservation

## PROCEDURE

1. You may choose to share the following information with the class to start the lesson:

From 1870 to 1914, the United States experienced a second Industrial Revolution. For many, life moved from rural to urban areas as the nation transformed from a predominantly agrarian society to a manufacturing powerhouse. Energy sources like coal and oil powered railroads, steamships, and industrial factories. Major industries of the era dealt in oil, steel, and railroads. As the American economy experienced a revolution, outdoorsmen like John Muir and President Theodore Roosevelt became increasingly concerned about the impact of industrialization on the environment. They called upon their fellow citizens and the federal government to protect the wilderness and preserve rapidly depleting natural resources. In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Organic Act and established the National Park Service (NPS) dedicated to preserving land and wildlife for conservation, leisure, and educational purposes.

2. You may choose to discuss the unit's Essential Questions

3. Distribute Sources 5–8, the photographs of Yellowstone by William Henry Jackson and the excerpt from “The Wonders of the West,” and Activity Sheet 3 on Yellowstone. Have students spend at least one full minute looking at the three photographs. Encourage them to observe all the details and natural features as well as note any emotions the images evoke.
4. After carefully studying William Henry Jackson's photos, each student should complete Activity Sheet 3, where they are prompted to write a detailed description of what they see in each image. Instruct students to write as though their audience has never seen and does not have access to the photos.

Note: Jackson's image “Old Faithful (Geyser) in Eruption” is a stereographic print that presents two slightly different images side by side. When viewed through a stereoscope, the two images combined to create an illusion of depth. This style of photography was popular from the 1850s through the 1930s.

5. Next, share read the excerpt from “The Wonders of the West” as described in Lesson 1.

Note: Throughout the lesson and depending on your students' needs, pre-teaching vocabulary and utilizing annotation tools can be useful scaffolding techniques for substantially sub-separate classrooms and English language learners.

6. Have students return to Activity Sheet 3 to answer the reflection question: Why did travelers to Yellowstone call it a “wonder of the West”?
7. Next, share read the John Muir (1901) and Theodore Roosevelt (1908) excerpts, Sources 9 and 10.
8. At the conclusion of the readings, distribute Activity Sheet 4 and have students complete the Important Phrases activity. They will be asked to choose two phrases that they believe are most informative or important for understanding each text. They must also give reasons for each choice.
9. To conclude, have students complete the synthesis questions either individually or in pairs. Remind them to use specific textual evidence to support their responses.
10. Time permitting, students can read aloud and share their synthesis responses with the class or in small groups. Encourage students to discuss any differences in responses and make any desired revisions to the answers they



## LESSON 3

### RECREATION IN THE NATIONAL PARKS, 1872–1950

BY MELISSA PERKINS

#### OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will learn about recreation in the national parks. They will view historical images and read government documents and personal accounts to understand how national parks provided recreational opportunities for Americans from 1872 to 1950. They will demonstrate their learning by analyzing primary sources and using evidence to support an argument about recreational.

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GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: One 45-minute class period

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on visual and textual primary and secondary source materials. The five lessons in this unit explore the development of America's national parks from 1864 to 1950, including early conservation efforts, the development of a National Park System, recreation in national parks, and the contributions of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the Great Depression.

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How have Americans shown their appreciation for the wilderness?
- What endangered the wilderness?
- How did Americans protect the wilderness?

#### MATERIALS

- Source 11: Excerpts from John Muir, "Address on the Sierra Forest Reservation," *Sierra Club Bulletin* 1, no. 7 (January 1896): 271–284. Available online at the Internet Archive, [archive.org/details/sierraclubbullet1196sier/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/sierraclubbullet1196sier/mode/2up).
- Source 12: Composite image of pages from *General Information Regarding Yellowstone National Park, Season of 1912*, National Park Service: Guide Books, Department of the Interior. Available online at the Internet Archive, [archive.org/details/generalinformati1894unit/page/n1/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/generalinformati1894unit/page/n1/mode/2up).
- Source 13: Excerpts from Superintendent John R. White, Sequoia National Park, "Atmosphere in the National Parks," Address to Special Superintendents' Meeting, Washington, DC, February 10, 1936, in "Chapter 3: The New Deal Years, 1933–1941," in *America's National Park System: The Critical Documents*, ed. Larry M. Dilsaver (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1994). Available online at the National Park Service, [nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/anps/index.htm](https://nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/anps/index.htm).
- Source 14: Capitol Reef National Park-Capitol Gorge, ca. 1940–1950, #11100, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection, [collections.lib.utah.edu/ark:/87278/s6dz1zg4](https://collections.lib.utah.edu/ark:/87278/s6dz1zg4)
- Source 15: Zion National Park-Great White Throne, ca. 1920–1940, #16532, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection, [collections.lib.utah.edu/ark:/87278/s63v17kz](https://collections.lib.utah.edu/ark:/87278/s63v17kz)
- Source 16: Parks and Forests, "General Rules and Regulations," *Federal Register* 10, no. 240 (December 8, 1945), p. 14866, [govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-1945-12-08/pdf/FR-1945-12-08.pdf](https://govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-1945-12-08/pdf/FR-1945-12-08.pdf)

- Activity Sheet 5: Observations and Analyses on Recreation at National Parks
- Sources 17 and 18: Excerpt from “Park Service Rangers,” by Hugh M. Miller, Superintendent of Southwestern National Monuments, and a Photograph of Park Rangers in *Region III Quarterly* 2, no. 4 (October 1940), [npshistory.com/newsletters/region\\_iii\\_quarterly/vol2-4g.htm](http://npshistory.com/newsletters/region_iii_quarterly/vol2-4g.htm)
- Activity Sheet 6: Park Service Rangers

## PROCEDURE

1. You may choose discuss the following information with the class before starting the lesson:

The US government established national parks for the enjoyment of all people. Early park officials installed roads, lodging, and amenities to attract visitors with the hope that popularity and high use would lead to an expansion of the new national park system. However, national parks were often overrun by visitors whose activities threatened the natural spaces and wildlife that they had come to enjoy. The first park rangers were hired in 1905, and they serve key roles in the protection of the parks and in service to the public, who continue to seek recreation in these spaces today.

2. Distribute copies of Sources 11–16 and Activity Sheet 5.

Note: Throughout the lesson and depending on your students’ needs, pre-teaching vocabulary and utilizing annotation tools can be useful scaffolding techniques for substantially sub-separate classrooms and English language learners.

3. This activity can be done using a jigsaw approach. Divide the class into small groups and assign each group one or two sources to analyze. Students should examine only their assigned source(s) and use them to answer the question: How did national parks provide recreational opportunities for Americans from 1872 through 1950?
4. When all groups have completed their task, have them report back to the whole class.
5. If possible, display the primary sources on a screen for the class to reference during each group’s report. If this is not possible, encourage students to refer to their handouts for close analysis of each group’s source.
6. If time does not allow presenters to read each source in its entirety, encourage presenters to identify the important quotes and keywords and phrases of each textual source. Those presenting visual sources should take care to describe the images and draw classmates’ attention to important details.
7. Presenters should explain how their source provides evidence to help answer the question: How did national parks provide recreational opportunities for Americans from 1872 through 1950?
8. As groups present their sources, classmates should individually record the information in their own activity sheets.
9. To conclude, each individual student should generate their own response to the synthesis question on the activity sheet. Emphasize that they should use quotations, keywords, and phrases from the sources to support their answers.
10. Distribute Sources 17 and 18 and Activity Sheet 6. This material introduces students to the role of the park ranger.
11. Share read the “Park Service Rangers” text.
12. At the conclusion of the reading, have students answer the summary and synthesis questions on the activity sheet. Depending on time, this activity may be done as the closing activity or saved for homework/follow-up work.
13. Students may work in pairs or small groups to share their responses to the questions. Encourage students to discuss any differences in responses and make any desired revisions to the answers they recorded on their activity sheets.

## LESSON 4

### THE CCC AND CONSERVATION, 1933–1947

BY MELISSA PERKINS

#### OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will learn about the contributions of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) to the development of the National Park System. They will demonstrate their learning by analyzing primary sources and using evidence to support arguments about the CCC's contributions and the importance of national parks to the public today.

*Melissa Perkins has been a high school history teacher since 2012. She was named the 2021 Hawaii History Teacher of the Year.*

GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: One 45-minute class period

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on visual and textual primary and secondary source materials. The five lessons in this unit explore the development of America's national parks from 1864 to 1950, including early conservation efforts, the development of a National Park System, recreation in national parks, and the contributions of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the Great Depression.

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How have Americans shown their appreciation for the wilderness?
- What endangered the wilderness?
- How did Americans protect the wilderness?

#### MATERIALS

- Activity Sheet 7 and Source 19: Excerpts from President Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Greeting to the CCC," July 8, 1933, The American Presidency Project, Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, ed., UC Santa Barbara, presidency. [ucsb.edu/documents/greeting-the-ccc](https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/greeting-the-ccc)
- Activity Sheet 8: Photo Study
  - o Source 20: "Franklin D. Roosevelt, Gen. Malone, Howe, Ickes, Fechner, Wallace, and Tugwell in the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia," Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Public Domain Photographs, National Archives, [catalog.archives.gov/id/197051](https://catalog.archives.gov/id/197051)
  - o Source 21: "African American enrollees cave crew," 1935, Mammoth Cave National Park CCC Archival Photograph Collection, [nps.gov/macal/learn/historyculture/civilian-conservation-corps.htm](https://nps.gov/macal/learn/historyculture/civilian-conservation-corps.htm)
  - o Source 22: "Creating Hiking Trail," 1930s, Shenandoah National Park CCC Photo Gallery, [nps.gov/media/photo/gallery-item.htm?pg=3527954&id=1f2fd5ae-155d-451f-67fb-17e9bc4bd65a&gid=1F2FD4ED-155D-451F-67AD455D60265887](https://nps.gov/media/photo/gallery-item.htm?pg=3527954&id=1f2fd5ae-155d-451f-67fb-17e9bc4bd65a&gid=1F2FD4ED-155D-451F-67AD455D60265887)



## PROCEDURE

1. You may choose to discuss the following information with the class before starting the lesson:

During the Great Depression (1929–1939), President Franklin D. Roosevelt continued President Theodore Roosevelt's commitment to conservation. Under his administration, Congress expanded the National Park System and invested federal funds in the development of park infrastructure. In 1933, Congress created the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), which put three million young men aged 18–25, including 200,000 African Americans, to work improving public lands, forests, and parks by planting trees and constructing trails and buildings. Workers were provided with meals and lodging. The majority of their salaries was sent home to help support their families. Although CCC units were supposed to be integrated, segregation by race often occurred. The CCC helped many Americans survive the hardships of the Great Depression and left lasting contributions in the parks, which visitors continue to enjoy today.

2. Distribute Sources 19–22 and Activity Sheets 7 and 8.
3. Introduce the first source, President Roosevelt's newspaper column from 1933. Read the instructions in the top left column of the activity sheet. Then read and discuss the question for the source in the top right column. When all students are clear on the instructions, share read President Roosevelt's newspaper column. Instruct students to circle or underline 3–4 keywords and phrases in each excerpt that will help them answer the question. When the reading is complete, allow students time to write their explanation for how their textual evidence helps answer the question.

Note: Throughout the lesson and depending on your students' needs, pre-teaching vocabulary and utilizing annotation tools can be useful scaffolding techniques for substantially sub-separate classrooms and English language learners.

4. Distribute Activity Sheet 8 with Sources 20–22, the photographs from the CCC. Instruct students to study the images and complete the question in the right column for each image.
5. Once complete, in small groups or in pairs, students may share their responses. This can spark a lively classroom discussion and debate about the role of national parks and the rights and responsibilities Americans have to them.

## LESSON 5

## SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

BY MELISSA PERKINS

## OVERVIEW

In this summative lesson, students will synthesize the work of the prior four lessons, create a timeline of key events in the development of the National Park System, and write an argumentative essay based on evidence in the texts presented throughout the unit.

## MATERIALS

- Activity Sheet 1: Historical Background Analysis
- Activity Sheet 2: Yosemite
- Activity Sheet 3: Yellowstone
- Activity Sheet 4: National Parks and Conservation
- Activity Sheet 5: Observations and Analyses on Recreation at National Parks
- Activity Sheet 6: Park Service Rangers
- Activity Sheet 7: Analyzing the *Happy Days* column
- Activity Sheet 8: Photo Study
- Activity Sheet 9: Timeline and Essay Questions

*Melissa Perkins has been a high school history teacher since 2012. She was named the 2021 Hawaii History Teacher of the Year.*

GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: One 45-minute class period

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on visual and textual primary and secondary source materials. The five lessons in this unit explore the development of America's national parks from 1864 to 1950, including early conservation efforts, the development of a National Park System, recreation in national parks, and the contributions of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the Great Depression.

## PROCEDURE

1. The students should have the activity sheets they completed in the previous lessons.
2. Review the work from the previous lessons by asking the students to provide a summary in their own words of each of the four lessons. This is done as a class discussion. Write these short negotiated sentences on the overhead or similar device so the whole class can see them. These summaries should reinforce students' understanding of the development of the National Park System and the ways that people used the parks and protected public lands.
3. Distribute copies of Activity Sheet 9. Individually or in small groups, have the students complete the timeline activity. Information for the timeline can be found in Lessons 1–4.
4. Next, introduce the final essay assessment, which should be completed individually. If the students do not have experience writing an argumentative essay, proceed with a short lesson on essay writing. Otherwise, have them write a short essay in response to one of the prompts in class or as an out-of-class assignment. Remind the students that they must support any arguments they make with evidence taken directly from the texts provided in the lessons. The first essay prompt is designed to be the easiest. Assign prompts to students as appropriate.

## Source 1: Historical Background Creating the National Park System

by Mary Stuckey, Penn State University

We have had national parks much longer than we have had a system for protecting and managing them. While land in both Arkansas and California had been protected before 1872, in that year, Yellowstone, in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho, was declared the world's first national park. National parks didn't really become important until President Theodore Roosevelt, an avid outdoorsman, protected over 230 million acres of land, including five national parks, four game reserves, some fifty bird refuges, and eighteen national monuments. He was able to do so because of the American Antiquities Act, passed in 1906, which allows presidents to protect endangered cultural and natural resources.



*Buffalo Soldiers of the 24th Infantry carried out mounted patrol duties in Yosemite. (Yosemite National Park Archives, US National Park Service)*

But no one really knew what it meant to protect land, wildlife, or cultural history, and the parks were poorly funded and poorly staffed. Visitors roamed about at will, often marring or destroying the very things they had come to see and experience. Because automobiles were increasingly available, and because people had more leisure time than ever before, more and more people visited the parks, causing more and more damage to them.

Stephen Mather, who worked in public relations, and who spent considerable time in the parks, was so upset by this situation that he wrote a letter to Secretary of Interior Franklin K. Lane complaining of the situation within the parks. Lane responded with an invitation to Mather to come manage them himself. Together with his assistant, Horace Albright, Mather and a team of carefully selected lieutenants began to systematize the park system, adding

new units, increasing access, and providing infrastructure. When in 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Organic Act formally creating the National Park Service (NPS), Mather became its first director.

In the early years, the NPS created access to the parks while also protecting them—they built roads, lodging, and other amenities. They understood that the only way to grow the park system and protect the parks was to build support for them among the mass public, so they encouraged visitation while also preserving spaces in the parks as wilderness. They developed interpretive programs too, headed by park rangers, to help explain the parks to the public; the NPS sees education as a big part of its job.

Programs created to help the nation weather the Great Depression were good for the parks—much of the iconic infrastructure in the parks today was built by young men as part of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Like his cousin Theodore, Franklin Roosevelt was a conservationist. As part of his broader initiatives reorganizing the federal government, he also moved a significant amount of public land from the Department of Agriculture to Interior, and transferred eleven national military parks, two national parks, nine battlefield sites, eleven national monuments, four “miscellaneous memorials,” and fifteen national monuments to the NPS, giving the agency the basic organization it continues to have today.

The park service is the nation's most popular federal agency. It has units dedicated to the nation's history, like Independence National Historical Park in Pennsylvania; its culture, like New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park in Louisiana; and its wildlife and natural wonders, as far north as Gates of the Arctic in Alaska and as distant from the continental US as the National Park of American Samoa. The system creates jobs, provides diverse places for recreation, interprets national history, and protects our wild places.

*Mary Stuckey is Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences at Penn State University. She is the author of For the Enjoyment of the People: The Creation of National Identity in American Public Lands.*

NAME

PERIOD

DATE

**Activity Sheet 1: Historical Background Analysis***Important Phrases:*

Which phrases or sentences in this essay about the creation of the National Park System are the most informative or important? Choose three and explain your reason for each choice.

Phrase 1:

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Why is this phrase informative or important?

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Phrase 2:

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Why is this phrase informative or important?

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Phrase 3:

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Why is this phrase informative or important?

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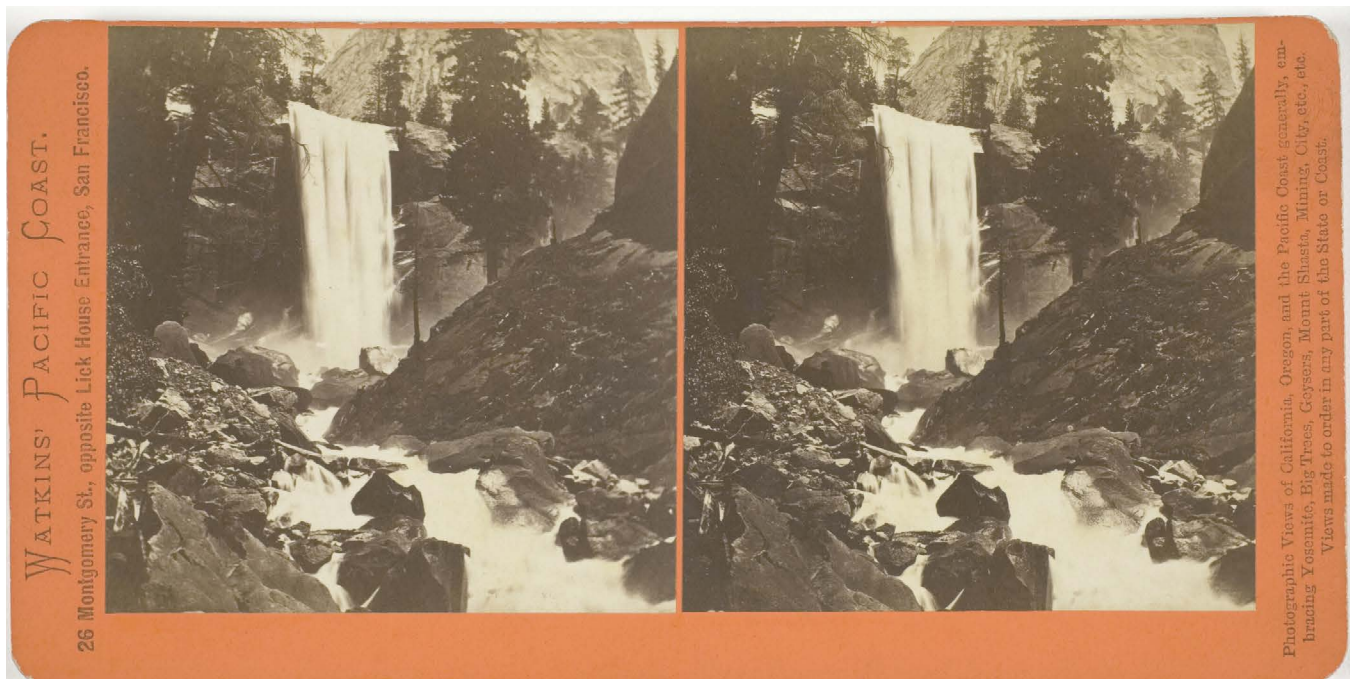
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### Source 2 and 3: Yosemite Valley



*"River View Down Valley, Cathedral Rock on Left," by Carleton E. Watkins, 1861 (Gilman Collection, The Metropolitan Museum of Art)*



*"The Vernal Fall, 300 ft., Yosemite" by Carleton E. Watkins, 1861 (Art Institute Chicago)*

#### Source 4: Yosemite Act of 1864

Excerpts from An Act Authorizing a Grant to the State of California of the “Yo-Semite Valley,” and of the Land Embracing the “Mariposa Big Tree Grove,” Approved June 30, 1864

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there shall be, and is hereby, granted to the State of California, the “Cleft” or “Gorge,” in the Granite Peak of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, situated in the county of Mariposa, in the State aforesaid, and the head-waters of the Merced River, and known as the Yo-Semite Valley . . . with the stipulation nevertheless, that the said State shall accept this grant upon the express conditions, that the premises shall be held for public use, resort, and recreation; shall be inalienable for all time, but leases, not exceeding ten years may be granted for portions of said premises; all incomes derived from leases of privileges to be expended in the preservation and improvement of the property, or the roads leading thereto . . .

*From An Act of June 30, 1864, 38th Congress, 1st Session, Public Law 159, 13 State 325, Authorizing a Grant to the State of California of the “Yo-Semite Valley,” and of the Land Embracing the “Mariposa Big Tree Grove,” National Archives.*

NAME

PERIOD

DATE

Activity Sheet 2: Yosemite Valley

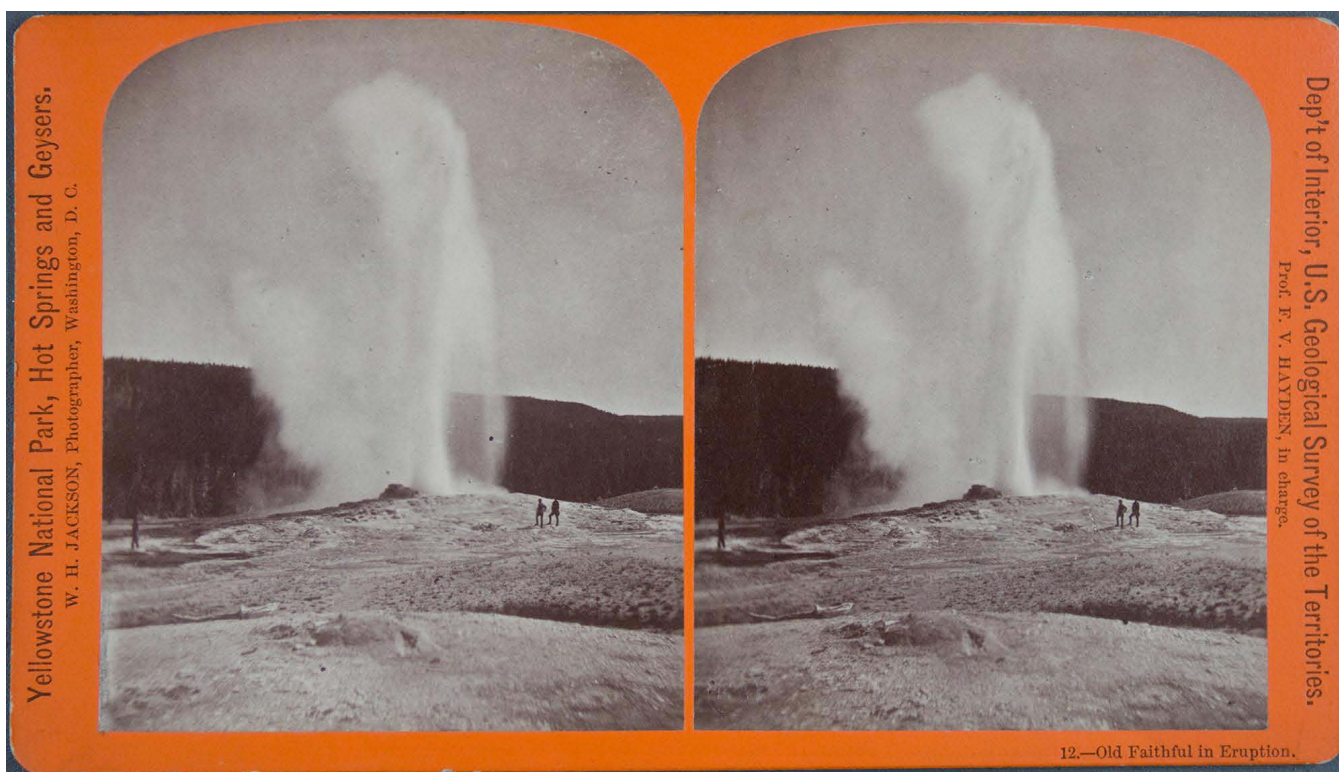
Source	After carefully studying Carleton E. Watkins's photographs, write a detailed description of what you see. Your audience has never seen and does not have access to the photographs.
"River View Down Valley, Cathedral Rock on Left" (1861)	
"The Vernal Fall, 300 ft., Yosemite" (1861)	
Using evidence from Carleton E. Watkins's photographs and the Yosemite Act of 1864, explain what type of wilderness the Yosemite Act aimed to protect. Then explain the purpose of this preservation, and how the preservation would be ensured.	



### Sources 5–6: Yellowstone



*“Yellowstone Hot Springs” by William Henry Jackson, 1871: “Jackson’s photographs of Mammoth Hot Springs were the first to reach a large audience. The man examining the springs is [landscape painter] Thomas Moran.” (Scotts Bluff National Monument, National Park Service)*



*“Old Faithful in Eruption” by William Henry Jackson, 1872 (Scotts Bluff National Monument, National Park Service)*

## Source 7: Yellowstone



*"Survey Party, with pack train, en-route upon the trail between the Yellowstone River and East Fork, showing the manner in which all parties traverse these wilds" by William Henry Jackson, 1871 (Scotts Bluff National Monument, National Park Service)*



**Source 8: Excerpts from “The Wonders of the West – II. More About the Yellowstone,” 1872**

... On the 15th of July last we commenced our winding way over the grassy hills that form the divide between the waters of the Missouri and Yellowstone. Our course was nearly due east for about thirty miles, when we came to the valley of the Yellowstone. ... From this point we changed our mode of travel to pack-animals. Here began the more difficult part of our journey. The whole party were filled with enthusiasm to catch a glimpse of the wonderful visions of which we had already heard so much. Opposite our camp were the Yellowstone mountains, with peaks rising 12,000 feet above the sea-level and 6,000 feet above the valley. ...

In some respects [the Grand Cañon of the Yellowstone River] is the greatest wonder of all. ... But the striking feature of this remarkable view is the effect of colors derived from the hot spring deposits. ... The well-known landscape painter, Thomas Moran, who is justly celebrated for his exquisite taste as a colorist, exclaimed, with a sort of regretful enthusiasm, that these beautiful tints were beyond the reach of human art. ...

But perhaps the most striking exhibition of Nature's forces in this wonderful region is that of the “Grand Geyser” ... As we stood near the crater or basin, it threw up, with scarcely any preliminary warning, a column of hot water eight feet in diameter to the height of two hundred feet. ... Another geyser in the same group, and named by the Langford party “Old Faithful” ... played at intervals of only an hour, throwing up a column of water at least six feet in diameter and one hundred and fifty feet high, for a period of about fifteen minutes. ...

We pass with rapid transition from one remarkable vision to another, each unique of its kind and surpassing all others in the known world. ... Why will not Congress at once pass a law setting it apart as a great public park for all time to come, as has been done with that not more remarkable wonder, the Yosemite Valley?

*From [F. V. Hayden,] “The Wonders of the West—II. More About the Yellowstone,” Scribner’s Monthly 3, no. 4 (February 1872): 388–396.*

NAME

PERIOD

DATE

Activity Sheet 3: Yellowstone

Source	After carefully studying William Henry Jackson's photographs, write a detailed description of what you see. Your audience has never seen and does not have access to the images.
Yellowstone Hot Springs, 1871	
Old Faithful (Geyser) in Eruption, 1872	
Survey Party, 1871	
Why did travelers to Yellowstone call it a "wonder of the West"?	

**Source 9: Excerpt from John Muir, “The American Forest,” 1901**

Any fool can destroy trees. They cannot run away; and if they could, they would still be destroyed,—chased and hunted down as long as fun or a dollar could be got out of their bark hides, branching horns, or magnificent bole backbones. Few that fell trees plant them; nor would planting avail much towards getting back anything like the noble primeval forests. During a man's life only saplings can be grown, in the place of the old trees—tens of centuries old—that have been destroyed. It took more than three thousand years to make some of the trees in these Western woods,—trees that are still standing in perfect strength and beauty, waving and singing in the mighty forests of the Sierra. Through all the wonderful, eventful centuries since Christ's time—and long before that—God has cared for these trees, saved them from drought, disease, avalanches, and a thousand straining, leveling tempests and floods; but he cannot save them from fools,—only Uncle Sam can do that.

*From John Muir, “The American Forests” in Our National Parks (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1901), pp. 364–365.*

**Source 10: Excerpts from Theodore Roosevelt, Conservation as a National Duty Speech, 1908**

*Governors of the several States; and Gentlemen:*

I welcome you to this Conference at the White House. . . . This Conference on the conservation of natural resources is in effect a meeting of the representatives of all the people of the United States called to consider the weightiest problem now before the Nation; and the occasion for the meeting lies in the fact that the natural resources of our country are in danger of exhaustion if we permit the old wasteful methods of exploiting them longer to continue. . . .

Every step of the progress of mankind is marked by the discovery and use of natural resources previously unused. . . . But of late the rapidity of the process has increased. . . .

We have become great in a material sense because of the lavish use of our resources, and we have just reason to be proud of our growth. But the time has come to inquire seriously what will happen when our forests are gone, when the coal, the iron, the oil, and the gas are exhausted, when the soils shall have been still further impoverished and washed into the streams, polluting the rivers, denuding the fields, and obstructing navigation. These questions do not relate only to the next century or to the next generation. One distinguishing characteristic of really civilized men is foresight; we have to, as a nation, exercise foresight for this nation in the future; and if we do not exercise that foresight, dark will be the future!

*From Theodore Roosevelt, Conservation as a National Duty Speech, May 13, 1908 in Proceedings of a Conference of Governors in the White House, May 13–15, 1908 (Washington, DC: Washington Government Printing Office, 1909), pp. 3–12.*

NAME

PERIOD

DATE

### Activity Sheet 4: National Parks and Conservation

#### *Important Phrases:*

Which phrases or sentences in these excerpts are the most informative or important? Choose two from each and give your reasons for each choice.

One important phrase from John Muir's "The American Forests" is:

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Why is this informative or important?

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Another important phrase from John Muir's "The American Forests" is:

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Why is this informative or important?

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One important phrase from President Theodore Roosevelt's Conservation as a National Duty Speech is:

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Why is this informative or important?

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NAME

PERIOD

DATE

Another important phrase from President Theodore Roosevelt's Conservation as a National Duty Speech is:

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Why is this informative or important?

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### *Synthesis*

According to John Muir and President Theodore Roosevelt, what environmental threats did America face in the early 1900s? Cite textual evidence from the sources to support your answer.

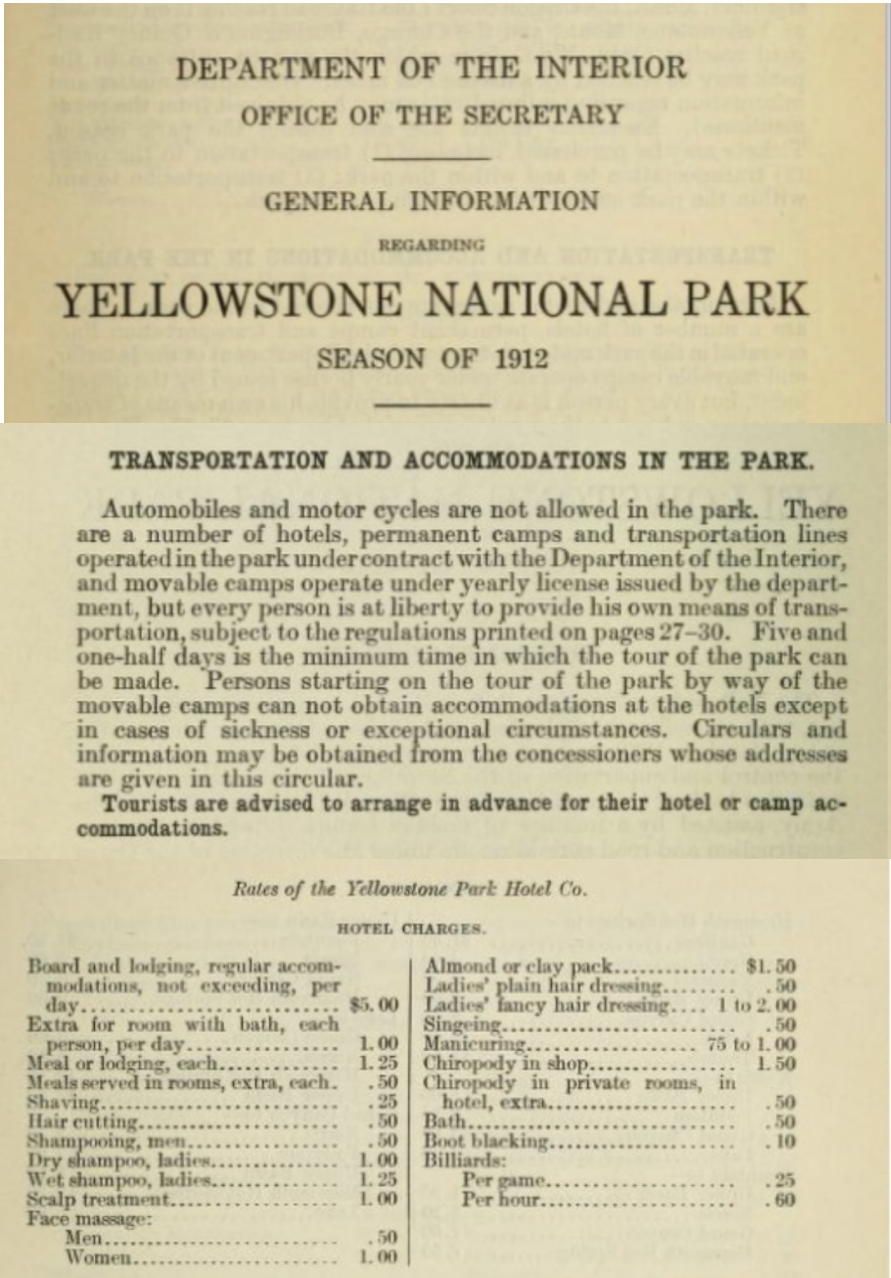
How might these sources have been used to support the creation of the National Park Service (NPS) to protect the wilderness in 1916? Cite textual evidence from the sources to support your answer.

**Source 11: Excerpts from John Muir, “Address on the Sierra Forest Reservation,” 1896**

When I first saw Yosemite, and read the notices posted by the State Commissioners, forbidding the cutting or marring the beauty in any way of the trees and shrubs, etc., I said, “How fine it is that this grand valley has been made a park, for the enjoyment of all the world! . . . “But instead of enjoying special protection, on account of its marvelous grandeur, it has suffered special destruction. . . . Now, instead of being most preciousely cared for as the finest of all the park-gardens, it looks like a frowzy, neglected backwoods pasture. The best meadows are enclosed for hay-fields by unsightly fences, and all the rest of the floor of the valley is given up to the destructive pasturage of horses belonging to campers and those kept for the use of tourists. Each year the number of campers increases, and, of course, destructive trampling and hacking becomes heavier from season to season.

*From John Muir, “Address on the Sierra Forest Reservation,” Sierra Club Bulletin 1, no. 7 (January 1896): 278.*

Source 12: General Information Regarding Yellowstone National Park: Season of 1912



Composite image of pages from General Information Regarding Yellowstone National Park, Season of 1912, National Park Service: Guide Books, Department of the Interior (Internet Archive)

**Source 13: Excerpts from Superintendent John R. White, “Atmosphere in the National Parks,” 1936**Park Entrance Hours and Quiet Camps:

We admit travel up to 9 p.m. weekdays, 11 p.m. on Saturdays and days preceding a holiday. We open at 5 a.m. the year round. . . .

We discourage rather forcibly unnecessary noise in public camps and all public areas at all times; and we impose a virtual curfew after 11 p.m. No automobiles are permitted to roam around after that hour except by special permit. . . .

Dances:

Dances are one of the most difficult things to regulate. We dance only from 9 to 11 p.m. None on Sundays. I wish we could abolish them, but don't think it possible until we build up more of the right kind of entertainment. . . .

Swimming Pools:

We have no artificial or commercial pool and don't want one. . . .

Bands and Music:

Years ago we used to have bands for the Fourth of July and other occasions, but we are gradually getting away from them.

The violin and flute with perhaps the cornet are the best instruments for campfire use, with, of course, the piano. . . .

Winter Sports:

Emphasis should be placed on opportunities for everyone to take part in free sports rather than on featured performances and competitions.

Skating rink, toboggan slide, and ski-runs should be as natural as possible and with little or no artificial construction. No charge should be made for their use. No attempt should be made to rival professional winter sport areas. . . .

*From Superintendent John R. White, Sequoia National Park, “Atmosphere in the National Parks,” Address to Special Superintendents’ Meeting, Washington, DC, February 10, 1936, in America’s National Park System: The Critical Documents, ed. Larry M. Dilsaver (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1994).*



## Sources 14–15



*Capitol Reef National Park-Capitol Gorge, ca. 1940–1950 (#11100, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection)*



*Zion National Park-Great White Throne, ca. 1920–1940 (#16532, Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection)*



## Source 16: Parks and Forests, "General Rules and Regulations," 1945

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**TITLE 36—PARKS AND FORESTS****Chapter I—National Park Service****PART 2—GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS****PRIVATE LANDS; DISCRIMINATION IN FURNISHING PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

Title 36, Chapter I, Part 2, Code of Federal Regulations is amended as follows:

Section 2.32 *Private lands* is amended by eliminating the words "and 2.28" and inserting in lieu thereof the words "2.28, and 2.61" in paragraph (e).

A new § 2.61 is added, providing as follows:

§ 2.61 *Discrimination in furnishing public accommodations.* The proprietor, owner, or operator and the employees of any hotel, inn, lodge, or other public accommodation within areas administered by the National Park Service are prohibited from (a) publicizing such facilities in any manner that would directly or inferentially reflect upon or question the acceptability of the patronage of any person or persons because of race, creed, color, or national origin; and (b) discriminating against any person or persons because of race, creed, color, or national origin by refusing to furnish such person or persons any accommodations, facilities, or privileges offered to or enjoyed by the general public.

(39 Stat. 535; 16 U.S.C. sec 3)

Issued this 4th day of December 1945.

[SEAL]

HAROLD L. ICKES,  
*Secretary of the Interior.*

[F. R. Doc. 45-21964; Filed, Dec. 7, 1945;  
9:31 a. m.]

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From Federal Register 10, no. 240 (December 8, 1945), p. 14866

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### Activity Sheet 5: Observations and Analyses on Recreation at National Parks

How did national parks provide recreational opportunities for Americans from 1872 through 1950?		
Source and Date	Observations and Textual Evidence	What does this reveal about recreation in national parks?
Speech by John Muir, 1896		
General Information Regarding Yellowstone National Park: Season of 1912		
Superintendent John R. White, "Atmosphere in the National Parks," 1936		
Image of Capitol Reef National Park, ca. 1940–1950		
Image of Zion National Park, ca. 1920–1940		
National Park Service General Rules and Regulations, 1946		

**Sources 17 and 18: Excerpt from Hugh M. Miller, Superintendent, Southwestern National Monuments, “Park Service Rangers,” 1940 and a Photograph of Park Rangers**

... On the job the park ranger is a man of many trades. In many, perhaps most, park areas he is a practical forester who fights fires, packs animals, builds and maintains trails and telephone lines, plants fish, protects wildlife, enforces the law, and fixes anything that needs fixing, from a broken ski harness to a dirty carburetor. He may often be isolated, but if he doesn't like people he shouldn't be a park ranger, because park visitors perennially bloom in his door-yard and they are his chief reason to be. If he cannot welcome them with an honest glad-to-see-you smile, he isn't in the tradition of his Service. He is the diplomat, the guide, and friend. He must answer the same question a thousand times, each time with courtesy and interest in the person who asks it. At the checking station, on the trail, at the campground, wherever you find him, his name might be Sam because he is the wise uncle to everybody. He's the backbone of the Service, whether he's called a ranger or a custodian. “And the rangers,” most park or monument visitors will tell you, “are so nice to you!”



*“Ask a Ranger,” 1940*

NAME

PERIOD

DATE

### Activity Sheet 6: Park Service Rangers

#### *Summary*

What were the responsibilities of park rangers? Cite textual evidence to support your answer.

#### *Synthesis*

Reflecting on all the sources in this lesson, why do you think park rangers are important to the National Park System?

NAME

PERIOD

DATE

**Activity Sheet 7 and Source 19: Analyzing President Franklin D. Roosevelt's *Happy Days* Column,  
July 8, 1933 (Excerpts)**

Review the question in the right-hand column. Then read the passages below, and circle and/or underline keywords and phrases that help you answer the question.	How does this evidence explain FDR's reasons for establishing the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)?
I welcome the opportunity to extend, through the medium of the columns of <i>Happy Days</i> ,* a greeting to the men who constitute the Civilian Conservation Corps. . . .	
It is my belief that what is being accomplished will conserve our natural resources, create future national wealth and prove of moral and spiritual value not only to those of you who are taking part, but to the rest of the country as well.	
<p>You young men who are enrolled in this work are to be congratulated as well. . . . Physically fit, as demonstrated by the examinations you took before entering the camps, the clean life and hard work in which you are engaged cannot fail to help your physical condition and you should emerge from this experience strong and rugged and ready for a reentrance into the ranks of industry, better equipped than before. . . .</p> <p>I want to congratulate you on the opportunity you have and to express to you my appreciation for the hearty cooperation which you have given this movement which is so vital a step in the Nation's fight against the depression and to wish you all a pleasant, wholesome and constructively helpful stay in the woods.</p>	

\* *Happy Days* was the authorized weekly newspaper of the CCC.

*From President Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Greeting to the CCC," July 8, 1933, The American Presidency Project, Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, ed.*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity Sheet 8: Photo Study**

Study each photograph below.

What does each image reveal about the people who worked for the CCC and the contributions they made?



Source 20: President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Other Officials at CCC site, Shenandoah Valley, Virginia, 1933 (FDR Library, National Archives)



Source 21: African American members of the CCC, Mammoth Cave, Kentucky, 1935 (Mammoth Cave National Park CCC Archival Photograph Collection)



NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_



Source 22: CCC members are creating hiking trail, Shenandoah National Park, Virginia, 1930s (Shenandoah National Park CCC Photo Gallery)

In 2–3 sentences, answer the following question using evidence from the images above: Who worked for the CCC and how did they contribute to the National Park System?

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## Activity Sheet 9: Timeline and Essay Questions

### Part 1: Timeline

Complete the following timeline of the development of the National Park System

\_\_\_\_: President Lincoln signed the Yosemite Act into law.

1870–1914: America industrialized.

1872: Yellowstone became America's \_\_\_\_\_ .

\_\_\_\_: First park rangers were hired.

1908: President \_\_\_\_\_ told Americans that conservation was a \_\_\_\_\_ .

1916: President Woodrow Wilson signed the \_\_\_\_\_, which led to the creation of the National Park Service (NPS).

1930s: During the Great Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the \_\_\_\_\_ .

2025: The National Park System includes more than \_\_\_\_\_ parks and hosts more than \_\_\_\_\_ million visitors each year.

### Part 2: Essay Prompts

Compose a short essay in response to one of the following questions. Support your argument with evidence taken directly from the sources provided in Lessons 1–4.

1. How did Americans learn about the value of the wilderness, and how did the creation of the National Park System help to protect it?
2. Describe the creation of the National Park System, and explain how Americans enjoyed the parks and contributed to the protection of these public lands.
3. What led to the expansion of the National Park System, and how has it both protected the wilderness and provided the public with opportunities for fun and recreation in nature?