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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1990 Volume III: The U.S. National Parks Movement

Introducing Children to National Parks

Guide for Curriculum Unit 90.03.06
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This unit introduces students to the United States National Park System. It is an historical and chronological view of the creation of national parks, which, with the use of videos and National Park Handbooks, will stimulate children to understand and appreciate the history, beauty, and wonders of the national parks. It can be used along with the New Haven Social Studies curriculum of fifth grade which is to learn the beginnings of settlements in the United States and its westward expansion.

Children love parks, and this unit expands that love to the country's national parks and historical sites. The lessons will increase their geographical, historical, and political knowledge of how national parks were created. The students will be made aware of just how a national park or historical site comes into being. Another important aspect of this unit will be to introduce children to some of the famous people involved in National Parks discoveries and explorations, such as Jim Bridger, Judge Cornelius Hedges, and John Muir. The reading of "The Yosemite," by John Muir, should help stimulate concern in pupils for the continuing preservation of these natural areas.

(Recommended for Social Studies, grade 5)

Key Words

U.S. National Parks

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