DISCOVER AMERICA

Teacher Guide



Safeguarding Our Planet: Conservation and Stewardship



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Key Themes

- Conservation
- Stewardship

Core Values

- Community
- Liberty

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to

- Define conservation.
- Define stewardship.
- Describe the role John Muir played in conservation.
- Explain the relationship between President Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir.
- Analyze the relationship between Yosemite National Park, John Muir's legacy, and the broader concept of conservation.
- Identify environmental issues within the school or community and develop actionable solutions.

Key Terms

- 0 1 avalanche: a large amount of snow that quickly moves down a slope.
- 0 2 **conservation:** protecting our environment and the wildlife that lives in it.
- 0 3 **environment:** everything that is around us, which includes both living and nonliving things such as soil, water, animals, and plants.
- 0 4 **preserve:** to keep safe from harm or to protect.
- 0 5 **stewardship:** how we take care of everything God has given to us.

Introduction

TELL Students

Let's go on an adventure! [Gather the class and take them outside, weather permitting, to explore. Reserve the playground or an area on your school property where students can freely look around and use their five senses to explore. If possible, give students magnifying glasses to use.] Please use your five senses to explore.

ASK Students

What five senses are you using? What do you see? What do you smell? What do you hear? How do you feel?

TELL Students

I see big, fluffy clouds. I hear birds chirping. I smell flowers. I see colorful plants. Our world is filled with so many beautiful sights! And guess what? We have a very important job.

ASK Students

What important job do you think I am talking about?

TELL Students

God made this wonderful world, and He wants us to look after it and all its treasures. Today we are going to learn ways to take care of God's creation, the Earth you live on. We are also going to learn about a man named John Muir who loved nature a lot. [Reference John Muir Image.] People call him "The Father of Our National Parks" because he worked really hard to protect beautiful places for everyone to enjoy. He showed us that even if you are not a president or a mayor, you can still do important things to help the Earth.

ASK Students

Who is "The Father of Our National Parks?"

TELL Students

Yes, John Muir! John Muir loved nature all his life and worked hard to protect it. He believed that every living thing, big or small, is special because God created it.

Introduction

TELL Students (continued)

John Muir's big love for wild places helped make important changes in America, showing us that when you care about something, you can make a difference.

ASK Students

What are some ways that you can make a difference in our classroom?

TELL Students

That is right! By taking care of your things, respecting others, and helping your friends, you make a difference every day. Today, we are going to learn about the important changes John Muir helped make in America. Let's watch another episode of Star Spangled Adventures to learn more!

WATCHO

Star Spangled Adventures Cartoon Ep. 34: National Parks





TELL Students @ P

John Muir was born a long time ago, in 1838, in a place called Dunbar in Scotland. Even when he was a little boy, he loved being outdoors. [Reference Young John Muir Image.] He used to go on exciting walks in the countryside with his grandpa. In 1849, John's family moved to Wisconsin. When John was not helping on the farm, he and his younger brother would go on adventures, exploring the fields and forests around their home. He enjoyed learning about the environment. The **environment** is everything that is around us, which includes both living and nonliving things such as soil, water, animals, and plants.

ASK Students

Do you like to explore? What are some things you like to do outside?

TELL Students

John Muir loved to explore the outdoors but he also loved reading. He was pretty good at making things too. [Reference John Muir Image.] Once, he made a special bed that would make sure you got up early by tipping you out of it! In 1860, he went to the University of Wisconsin because he wanted to learn more about plants, animals, and rocks. But John felt that nature was the best place to learn, so he left school in 1863 to learn through exploration.

ASK Students

How did reading help John Muir improve his exploring skills?

TELL Students

That is right! Reading helps everyone learn more and become better at what they do. John went on a big adventure, walking through different states and even Canada. He worked many different jobs to earn money. [Reference John Muir's Journey Image.] One day, while working in a shop, John got hurt and could not see for a whole month. When he got his eyesight back, he wanted to see every beautiful place he could. And that is just what he did!

ASK Students

How do you think John felt when he lost his eyesight? How do you think he felt when he regained his eyesight?

TELL Students

John decided to travel to Cuba, Panama, and then all the way to San Francisco in California. When he got there, he asked someone how to get away from the busy city. [Reference Busy City Image.] He wanted to find somewhere wild to explore. That person asked him, "Where do you want to go?" And John said, "Anywhere that is wild." So, he walked through valleys until he found a beautiful place called Yosemite in the mountains of California. [Reference Yosemite Image.] He thought it was the most beautiful place with bright, shining mountains. John Muir loved it so much he called it his home and said it was like a place full of light.

ASK Students

How would you describe our town? Do we live in a busy city, in the mountains, by the desert, or by the beach?

TELL Students 🙉

In November 1869, John Muir made a special house for himself next to Yosemite Creek. He helped a hotel owner by making a sawmill, leading guests on nature walks, and chopping down trees for the hotel to use. His cozy house was made of pine and cedar woods. Imagine a house where a little creek flows right under the floor and plants grow inside! John even had a special writing desk with ferns growing around it, and slept on soft cedar branches with sheepskin blankets. [Reference Muir Home Image.]

ASK Students

Do you have plants in your home? Do we have plants in our classroom?

TELL Students @ P

Please read the following passage to learn some interesting things about John Muir. John also built a special study spot high up in the sawmill that he could only get to by climbing a ladder. He called it his "hang-nest." In Yosemite, John felt very happy and peaceful. He wrote to his friend that it was like feasting in a beautiful mountain house made by God. John did not just enjoy the beauty of Yosemite; he learned a lot from it too. He collected plants, wrote about them in his journals, and studied the rocks, plants, and animals he found.

TELL Students (continued)

John had some exciting adventures in Yosemite, like getting wet from waterfalls, exploring glaciers with a rope, and even sliding down a canyon with an avalanche! An **avalanche** is a large amount of snow that guickly moves down a slope.

ASK Students

What did John do to learn about nature?

TELL Students

John Muir wrote a lot of stories and books—more than 300 stories and 10 books! He wrote about all the wonderful things he saw and did in nature. He wanted everyone, from presidents to kids who love adventures, to know how peaceful and happy nature can make us feel.

ASK Students

How do you feel when you are outside playing?

TELL Students @ P

Please read the following passage to learn more about John Muir.

John Muir said that many people who were very busy and tired were starting to see how important it was to go to the mountains because it felt like going home. He thought that wild places were not just useful for things like wood or water but were important for making us feel alive and happy. In our Star Spangled Adventures episode, you learned about President Theodore Roosevelt. He read John Muir's book and thought it was really important. Even though some people told him that America's wild places were too big to ever run out, Roosevelt started to worry about conserving America's natural resources. What would happen if all the trees were cut down and if we used up all our oil and coal? So, in 1903, he wrote a letter to John Muir saying he wanted to go camping with him in Yosemite to learn more about nature.

ASK Students

How would you feel if the President of the United States wanted to go camping with you? Have you ever been camping?

TELL Students

John Muir was excited to show the president the beauty and importance of nature. They went on a special camping trip where they slept under giant trees and experienced a lot of snow. John told President Roosevelt about the big trees, animals, and why we need to preserve places like Yosemite. Preserve means to keep safe from harm or to protect. [Reference Muir and Roosevelt Camping Image.] After their talks, President Roosevelt worked hard to protect a lot of nature in America. He helped save Yosemite Valley and the big trees there by making a new law. He said, "Yosemite and the giant trees are some of the most beautiful things in the world, and we need to make sure they are kept safe forever." Today, we call this conservation. Conservation means protecting our environment and the wildlife that lives in it.

ASK Students

What did President Roosevelt do to preserve Yosemite?

TELL Students

Because of this camping trip and their talks, President Roosevelt helped protect a lot of land for parks and forests so that everyone, even kids and grandkids in the future, could enjoy them. He made new parks, saved land, and made sure there were places for birds and animals to live safely. So, next time you visit a park or see a big tree, remember to think of John Muir and President Roosevelt. They worked very hard so we could all enjoy the beautiful nature around us. Let's watch a Learn More with Liberty video to learn more!

WATCH O

Learn More with Liberty: <u>The Creation of Yosemite</u> <u>National Park: A Battle to Protect Nature</u>

ASK Students >

What are some ways that you can take care of the beautiful Earth we live on? [Have students do a turn and talk to discuss with a neighbor.]

TELL Students

That is right! By taking care of your things, putting your trash in trash cans, recycling, and planting flowers, you can help take care of the Earth that God created. Taking care of the things God has given to you is called **stewardship**. It means taking care of Earth and everything on it—like the trees, animals, oceans, and even the air we breathe. **[Reference People Caring for Earth Image.]** We have the job of protecting our world so it stays beautiful and healthy. Being a good steward means recycling, saving water by turning off the tap, and being kind to all living things. When we act as stewards, we help make sure our planet is a wonderful place to live, not just for us, but for all creatures and for kids in the future too!



Objective

This project aims to engage fifth-graders in identifying environmental issues within their school or community and developing actionable solutions. By becoming "Eco-Detectives," students will not only learn about stewardship but also take on leadership roles in promoting conservation.

Materials Needed

- Notebooks and pencils for observation and note-taking
- Digital camera or smartphone for documenting (optional, with supervision)
- Recyclable materials for creating project prototypes or informational displays
- Access to a computer and printer for research and presentation materials
- A large map of the school or community area

Preparation Steps

- 1. Introduction to Conservation: Begin with a discussion about what conservation means and why it is important for the community and the planet.
- 2. Role Assignment: Divide the class into small groups, assigning each the role of "Eco-Detectives." Each group is responsible for investigating a specific area of the school or community (e.g., the cafeteria, playground, local park).

Activity Steps

- 1. Observation and Investigation:
- Equip each group with a notebook. If possible, provide a digital camera or smartphone for taking pictures as evidence of their findings.
- The Eco-Detectives will observe their assigned areas, noting any environmental issues such as litter, water wastage, lack of recycling bins, or energy inefficiency.
- 2. Research and Solution Development:
- Back in the classroom, groups will research the environmental issues they have identified. This research should include why the issue is harmful to the environment and potential solutions.





Activity Steps

- 2. Research and Solution Development (continued)
- Each group will then develop a plan to address one or more of the issues. This might involve starting a recycling program, a campaign to save energy, or a clean-up day.
- 3. Action Plan Presentation:
- Groups will prepare a presentation of their findings and proposed action plans, including any prototypes or displays they have created using recyclable materials.
- Present these plans to the class, school administrators, or even the local community council, depending on the project's scope.

4. Implementation:

- With approval from teachers and administrators, implement the action plans. This could involve organizing a clean-up day, setting up recycling stations, or starting a water conservation campaign.
- 5. Reflection and Reporting:
- After the implementation, each group will reflect on the impact of their project and present a report on the outcomes to the class, including any challenges faced and how they were overcome.

Conclusion

This activity empowers fifth-graders to take meaningful action on environmental issues within their school or community. By identifying problems, researching solutions, and implementing real-world conservation projects, students develop a deeper understanding of conservation and stewardship.

NAME:		DATE:	
designed to help y Muir and Theodor environmental stev	you explore the imp e Roosevelt, and un wardship.	-	stions that follow. This worksheet is arn about significant figures like John al parks like Yosemite in
Part 1: Fill in the	Blanks		
Fill in the blanks w	vith the correct word	I from the word bank below	<i>1</i> .
Yosemite	conservation	Theodore Roosevelt	John Muir stewardship
1	is known as	the "Father of the National	Parks" and played a crucial role in
the establishment	of	National Park.	
2	was the U.S	. President who went on a c	camping trip with
	to discuss the	importance of	and protecting natural
lands.			
3. The concept of		involves managing and	caring for the environment and
natural resources i	responsibly.		



Part 2: True or False Write "True" if the statement is correct and "False" if it is incorrect. 1. John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt worked together to create the first national park. 2. Conservation means using resources in such a way that they will never run out. 3. Yosemite National Park is located in Nevada. 4. Stewardship is only the government's responsibility. Part 3: Short Answer Answer the following questions based on what you have learned. 1. Why was John Muir important to the conservation movement? 2. What role did Theodore Roosevelt play in the conservation of America's natural landscapes?



3. How can practicing stewardship affect your local community and the environment?					
Part 4: Creative Thinking					
	ration project for your school or community inspired by John Muir efly describe your project and how it would help the environment.				
Project Name:					
Project Description:					
How it Helps the Environment:					



Reflection

Write a sentence or two about what you for Roosevelt, Yosemite, and the principles o	our joint man, meeder

Remember, every action counts when it comes to protecting our planet!



Student Text

Please read the following paragraphs to learn more.

John also built a special study spot high up in the sawmill that he could only get to by climbing a ladder. He called it his "hang-nest." In Yosemite, John felt very happy and peaceful. He wrote to his friend that it was like feasting in a beautiful mountain house made by God. John did not just enjoy the beauty of Yosemite; he learned a lot from it too. He collected plants, wrote about them in his journals, and studied the rocks, plants, and animals he found. John had some exciting adventures in Yosemite, like getting wet from waterfalls, exploring glaciers with a rope, and even sliding down a canyon with an avalanche! An avalanche is a large amount of snow that quickly moves down a slope.

John Muir said that many people who were very busy and tired were starting to see how important it was to go to the mountains because it felt like going home. He thought that wild places were not just useful for things like wood or water but were important for making us feel alive and happy. In our Star-Spangled Adventures episode, you learned about President Theodore Roosevelt. He read John Muir's book and thought it was really important. Even though some people told him that America's wild places were too big to ever run out, Roosevelt started to worry about what would happen if all the trees were cut down and if we used up all our oil and coal. So, in 1903, he wrote a letter to John Muir saying he wanted to go camping with him in Yosemite to learn more about nature.



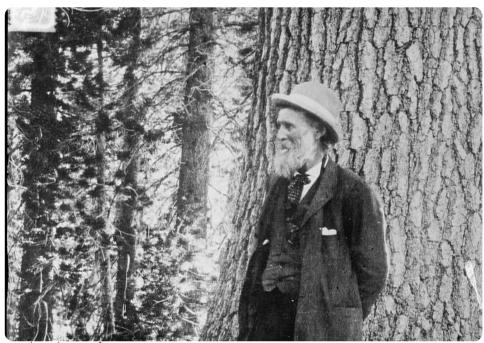




Resources

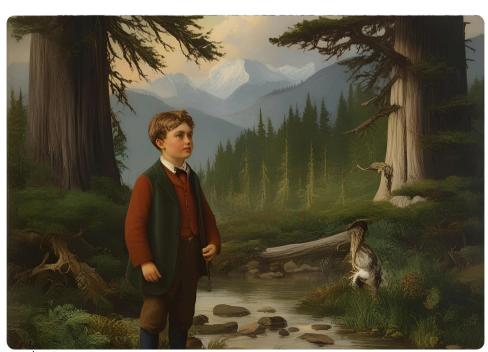
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- https://vault.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/writings/mans_place_in_the_universe.aspx
- https://www.nps.gov/jomu/learn/historyculture/people.htm
- https://vault.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/life/muir_biography.aspx
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- Ibid.
- https://www.nps.gov/yose/learn/historyculture/muir.htm
- https://vault.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/writings/favorite_quotations.aspx
- https://blogs.loc.gov/inside_adams/2016/08/roosevelt-muir-and-the-camping-trip/
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- https://blogs.loc.gov/inside_adams/2016/08/roosevelt-muir-and-the-camping-trip/
- https://www.nps.gov/jomu/learn/historyculture/people.htm

John Muir



Credit: Library of Congress.

Young John Muir



Credit: Canva Pro.

John Muir's Journey



Credit: IMT Wilderness Conservatory.

Busy City



Credit: Canva Pro.

Yosemite



Credit: Canva Pro

Muir Home



Credit: National Park Service

Hang-Nest



Credit: Canva Pro.

People Enjoying the Outdoors



Credit: Canva Pro

Muir and Roosevelt Camping



Credit: National Park Service.

People Caring for Earth



Credit: Canva Pro

Notes
