DISCOVER AMERICA

Teacher Guide



Safeguarding Our Planet: Conservation and Stewardship



WWW.LITTLEPATRIOTSLEARNING.COM

Table of Contents

| 3 | Themes & Values |
|----|---|
| | Learning Objectives |
| 4 | Key Terms |
| 5 | Introduction |
| 7 | Lesson |
| 11 | Activity: John Muir's Treasure Hunt |
| 13 | Assessment: Conservation Write and Draw |
| 14 | Resources |
| 15 | Images |
| 20 | Notes |



Key Themes

- Conservation
- Stewardship

Core Values

- Community
- Liberty

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to

- Define conservation.
- List three ways to protect Earth.
- Describe the role John Muir played in conservation.
- Explain the relationship between President Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir.

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.

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.] Today, we are going to use our five senses to explore.

ASK Students

Which of the five senses are you using? 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. [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 and worked hard to protect it. He believed that every living thing, big or small, is special because God created it. John Muir's love for wild places helped make important changes in America, showing us that when you care about something, you can make a difference.

Introduction

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!

WATCH O

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 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 a desert, 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 wood. 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

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." [Reference Hang-Nest Image.] 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!

TELL Students (continued)

An avalanche is a large amount of snow that quickly 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 🚳

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. [Reference People Enjoying the Outdoors Image.] In our Star-Spangled Adventures episode, you saw 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. He wondered 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.

TELL Students (continued)

They went on a special camping trip where they slept under giant trees and saw 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.

ASK Students

What are some ways that you can take care of the beautiful Earth we live on?

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.



Objective

To engage second-graders in learning about environmental protection and the impactful legacy of John Muir through a fun, interactive scavenger hunt. This activity aims to cultivate a sense of environmental stewardship and inspire actionable conservation efforts among young students.

Teacher Overview

This is a dynamic, interactive scavenger hunt that introduces second-graders to the concepts of conservation through the adventurous life of John Muir. This activity, blending storytelling with hands-on exploration, encourages kids to discover the importance of protecting our planet while learning about Muir's impact on environmental conservation.

Materials Needed

- "Treasure Map" templates with clues leading to different "natural treasures" (e.g., a plant, a water source, recycled materials).
- Small treasure chests or boxes (can be made from recycled materials) containing facts about John Muir, conservation tips, and small rewards (stickers, seeds for planting, etc.).
- Printable John Muir explorer badges.
- Conservation challenge cards with simple, age-appropriate actions kids can take to help protect the environment.
- Costumes or explorer hats for kids to wear during their adventure.
- A "Conservation Journal" for each child to record their findings and thoughts.

Setup

- 1. Prepare the Environment: Set up various stations in the classroom or outdoor area, each representing a different aspect of nature conservation (water conservation, plants and trees, recycling, wildlife protection).
- 2. Hide the Treasures: Place the treasure chests at each station, ensuring they are well-hidden but safely accessible for second-graders.
- 3. Distribute Materials: Give each child a treasure map, a Conservation Journal, and an explorer badge to start their journey.





How to Play

- 1. Review: Begin by reviewing John Muir's love for nature and his efforts to preserve the environment. Emphasize his belief in the importance of young explorers (like the kids) in keeping the planet healthy.
- 2. *Treasure Hunt Begins:* Children use the treasure maps to locate the hidden chests. Each chest contains a fact about conservation, a small reward, and a challenge card.
- 3. Complete the Challenges: As students find each treasure, they complete the conservation challenge noted on the card (e.g., planting a seed, pledging to save water, making a bird feeder from recycled materials).
- 4. Conservation Journal: Students document their adventure, findings, and completed challenges in their Conservation Journals, drawing or writing about their experiences.
- 5. Group Reflection: Once all treasures are found and challenges completed, gather the students for a discussion. Let them share what they have learned and how they feel about becoming young conservationists.

Conclusion

- Explorer Recognition: Recognize each student's efforts by awarding them a "Certified Young Explorer" certificate for participating in John Muir's Treasure Hunt.
- Display Conservation Journals: Set up a display area where kids can share their Conservation Journals with classmates and family, spreading the message of conservation further.
- Plant a Classroom Plant: As a group, plant a seedling in a pot to keep in the classroom, symbolizing their commitment to conservation. Students can take turns watering it, watching it grow as a reminder of their adventure and responsibilities as young conservationists.

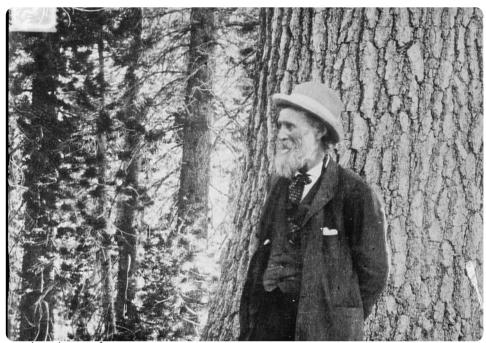
Conservation Write and Draw

| NAME: | DATE: | |
|--|----------------|--|
| What is your favorite place outside? \ | Why? | |
| Draw a picture of you in your favorite | place outside. | |
| | | |
| | | |

Resources

- https://vault.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/about/default.aspx
- 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
- https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/john-muirs-yosemite-10737/
- 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/
- https://www.nps.gov/thro/learn/historyculture/theodore-roosevelt-and-conservation.htm
- 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: JMT 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.

Notes

| |
|------|
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |