

What's the Problem?



## Ways to Highlight the Importance of National Parks



We recently celebrated the 100th anniversary of our National Park System. Here are some ideas for your classroom or school to talk about the role of our national parks.

1. **Share “Fun Facts” and “You Should Know...” Items.** This is a fun and easy way to help students appreciate key details of our National Park System. You can make it fun by listing your fun facts through a song parody, such as by changing the words to *“Wheels on the Bus”*, or perhaps a new version of *“Yankee Doodle.”*
2. **Find the “Core” of our national parks.** All of the core subject areas — math, language arts, science, social studies — can be involved when talking about nature and our national parks. Make a graph of animal populations (math), or write a story involving a historical site (language arts). You can also focus on the plant and animal habitats (science), or how the park system is important to our nation and local communities (social studies).
3. **Host a “National Park” Game Show.** Arrange to use the school auditorium or lunchroom for a couple of hours in a nature trivia contest, or a “Guess That Animal” game, or even a “Name that Historical Site” competition. Award nature-themed prizes to the winners.
4. **“Our National Parks are important because....”** Encourage the students in your school to think big picture. Hold an essay contest where you challenge students to explain why national parks are important to us as individuals. Select one winner from each grade. If your school holds morning announcements, work with your school principal to feature one winner per day reading their essay over the public address system.
5. **Put together a Skit Show.** Invite students to share their directing and acting talents by putting on skits that promote nature and our national parks. This can become a full school event, or a competition, or simply a small performance where each class has a few minutes on the stage. Whatever you do, have fun with it.

**Need more ideas? Here are some school-wide activities that you can use to honor music**

- Have a **bulletin board** contest
- Create a **mural** or **art display**
- Conduct **mock interviews**
- Ask classes to create and perform **musical skits**
- Organize a **school parade** to honor nature and our parks
- Invite a local park ranger as a **guest speaker or performer**
- Have each room create a **timeline** for the National Park System
- Read **inspirational quotes about nature** over the loud speaker each day