

Wilderness Investigations for Grades 3 and 4

A Wilderness Education Curriculum

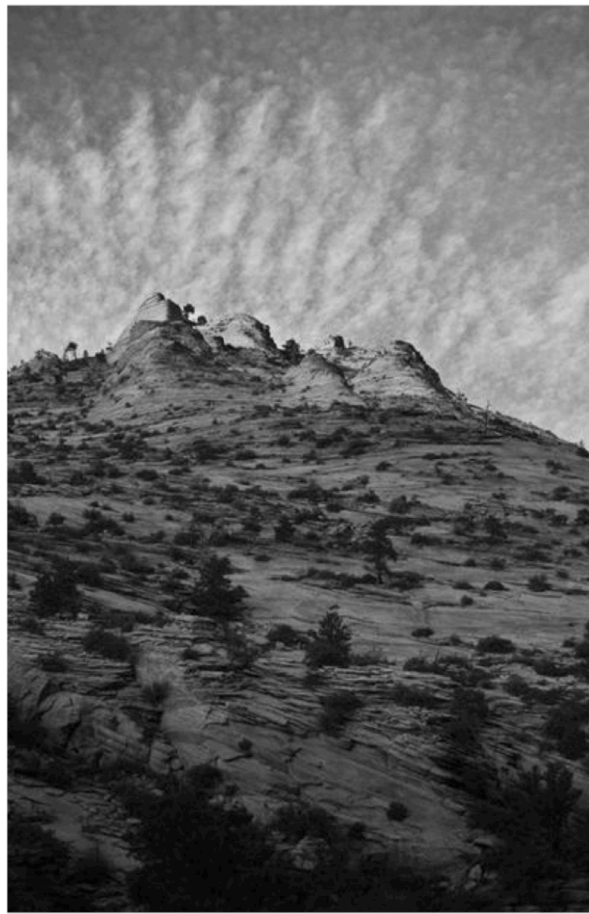


Image of the Zion Wilderness

Wilderness Investigations: A Teacher Toolkit

An Introduction

Wilderness Investigations provides educators with the information and tools necessary to get students outside, to learn about wild places in their communities, and to learn about our country's designated wilderness. This curriculum was created for students in third and fourth grade.

While students are spending increasing amounts time on computers and interacting with technology, they are spending less time in nature experiencing the outdoors. Spending time in nature can help children develop critical thinking and problem solving skills, as well as the ability to make keen observations about their surroundings. Wilderness Investigations combines nature exploration and wilderness education.

Wilderness Investigations is a subject-integrated curriculum that addresses academic standards. The investigations are designed to be taught sequentially. Teachers can choose to modify and adapt lessons, activities, and discussion as needed. The My Wild Places Journal accompanies each Wilderness Investigation. Students may use the journal to record their ideas, findings, and personal reflections as they learn about wilderness.

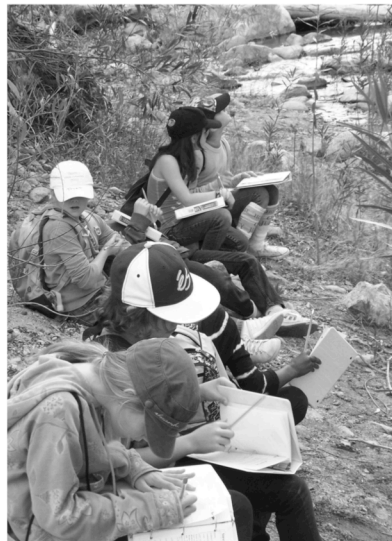


Image of students investigating a wild place

Wilderness Investigations Overview

Wilderness Investigations Third and Four Grade Edition includes five separate investigations designed to build on the previous wilderness lessons, observations, discussions, and experiences.

Wilderness Investigations Summary:

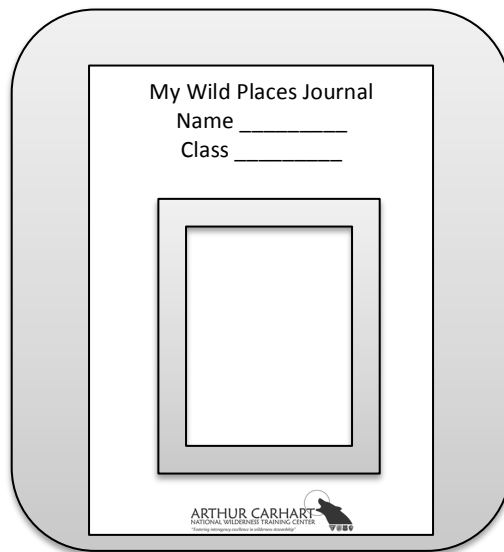
Wilderness Investigation	Summary
<p>Wilderness Investigation #1: The Idea of Wilderness</p>	<p>Wilderness Investigation #1 introduces the concepts of <i>wilderness</i> and <i>wildness</i>. Students learn about the Wilderness Act and how to look for evidence of wildness in an outdoor location. The investigation introduces the concept of a hero and heroic actions.</p>
<p>Wilderness Investigation #2: Wilderness for the American People of Present and Future Generations</p>	<p>Wilderness Investigation #2 explores the idea of common land for the American public. Students will learn about the values and responsibilities related to public lands. The class will participate in a service learning project at a wild place and reflect upon their experience.</p>
<p>Wilderness Investigation #3: Outstanding Opportunities</p>	<p>Wilderness Investigation #3 looks at the potential for recreation and solitude in wilderness. Students will watch and reflect upon the film <i>American Values American Wilderness</i>. They will also visit a wild place and participate in outdoor activities.</p>
<p>Wilderness Investigation #4: Preserving Wilderness Character</p>	<p>Wilderness Investigation #4 explores the word <i>characteristic</i>. They will also explore a wild place in small groups to identify wild characteristics and represent their findings in the form of a concept map or geographic map.</p>
<p>Wilderness Investigation #5: Our Wilderness Heritage</p>	<p>Wilderness Investigation #5 introduces the story of America’s history of wilderness and the importance of protecting and preserving wild places. The class will conduct an interview with a local land manager to learn about different professions and the decisions made about wild places.</p>

Wilderness Investigation Format:

Investigation Component	Description
Investigation Summary	Synthesis of the investigation components.
Note to Parents with suggested activities and discussion questions	A brief two-page letter for families with information about each investigation and ideas for at-home discussions and activities.
Wilderness in the Classroom	The classroom component includes teacher background information, student activities, discussion questions, and extension ideas.
Wilderness Hero Study with discussion and extension ideas	Each investigation focuses on a different person who had an impact on the protection and preservation of wilderness in America and includes activities and discussion questions about the idea of a hero and heroic actions. Students can record their reflections about the wilderness heroes in their My Wild Places Journals.
Wilderness Outside of the Classroom	The outside component is designed to take place in a natural setting and to get students engaged in exploring the different aspects of wild places.
Wilderness Profile Study with discussion and extension ideas	Wilderness Profiles study a different designated wilderness area in the United States and incorporate activities and extension ideas. Students write down information about the Wilderness Profiles in their My Wild Places Journals.
Wilderness Show and Tell	Provides a format for teachers and students to share their findings about wilderness with other members of their learning community.

My Wild Places Journal:

The **My Wild Places Journal** is designed to accompany each component of the five Wilderness Investigations. Activities and pages may also be adapted to fit individual teacher’s needs. The journal can be used as a space for students to record and reflect upon their thoughts and findings during the Wilderness Investigations. At the end of the journal are pages in which students can write or draw about what they know after studying each Wilderness Hero and Wilderness Profile. The My Wild Places Journal is located at the back of the Wilderness Investigations Appendix.



Wilderness Investigations Table of Contents

Page Numbers	Wilderness Investigations Component
I-VI	Wilderness Investigation Introduction
1-22	Wilderness Investigation #1
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98-134	Wilderness Investigation Appendix
Journal Pages 1-24	My Wild Places Journal (Appendix)