

The Geography of Canada's National Parks

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Overview: This introductory lesson to Canada challenges students to develop an understanding of Canada's 38 national parks and reserves and to analyze geographic factors that impact the level of tourism. After examining information, pictures, and maps found on a Canadian National Parks website, www.national-parks-canada.com/, students will create and present a tourist pamphlet of an assigned national park highlighting those key geographic factors.

Geographic Question: How does the physical and human geography of national parks and reserves, impact the volume of visitors to the places?

Connection to the curriculum:

Meets Oregon benchmarks, including:

1. Social Sciences CCG. Use maps and other geographic tools and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a special perspective. CIM (Interpret and evaluate information using complex geographic representations.)

National Geographic Standards: *The geographically informed person knows and understands:*

- #1. How to use maps and other geologic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.
- #4. The physical and human characteristics of places.
- #5. That people create regions to interpret the Earth's complexity.
- #14. How human actions modify the physical environment.

Grade levels: Planned for grades 7-12, although this lesson can work at lower grades with adaptations.

Objectives: While working independently, students will:

- research geographic characteristics of an assigned Canadian national park or reserve including size, location, physical characteristics, human activities, and annual tourist volume.
- sketch at least one key landform feature from a picture
- create a map of the park including park or reserve boundaries, province or territory in which the national park or reserve is located. Locate, list, and label on the map, key cities within a hundred mile radius of the park.
- give directions to the national park or reserve from the location of the student
- describe and analyze positive and negative geographic factors influencing the number of visitors
- use research information to create a tourist brochure for the assigned national park or reserve

Materials:

- pen/paper
- map pencils
- website: www.national-parks-canada.com
- map of Canada showing the locations of its national parks and reserves
http://atlas.gc.ca/site/english/maps/reference/national/natpks_e
- pictures of prominent geologic/heritage sites found in Canadian national parks and reserves

Presentation Steps:**Introduction**

- a. Present a slide show of the national parks and reserves of Canada.
- b. As students view pictures of the prominent geologic features and heritage sites found in the many national parks and reserves of Canada, begin to introduce the importance of these places by asking questions about their importance and reasons for being.
- c. Discuss the fact that Canada has national parks and reserves for the same reasons the U.S. has national parks: to preserve natural landmarks, the beauty of the wilderness, and national heritage sites.
- d. Discuss the issue of location in relation to population centers and ask student how those factors might influence the volume of visitors.
- e. Project a map of Canada that shows the locations of the national parks and reserves as a visual for students to better chose a national park or reserve.
- f. Assign national parks or reserves to the students.
- g. Hand out the scoring guide and read the directions of the assignment to the students. In brief, their assignment is to conduct research on one of the national parks or reserves according to the guidelines set by the scoring guide. After their research is complete, the students are to create a tourist brochure according to the guidelines set by the scoring guide.

Activities

Set up the activity by reading over the scoring guide. Focus on the following with the group or individuals as they work through the activity.

1. Activity 1. Students work independently or in pairs to research the geographic characteristics of a given Canadian national park or reserve. Students should use the website www.national-parks-canada.com to conduct their research.
2. Activity 2. Students will work independently or in pairs to interpret and analyze the data and pictures found on the website.
3. Activity 3. Students will work independently or in pairs to complete a tourist brochure according to the guidelines of the scoring guide. (refer to scoring guide for details).

Extension: Students can individually, or in pairs, present their tourist brochures to the class. For fun, students may want to role play the part of a Canadian park ranger. During each presentation, students in the audience will participate by listing the name of the national park or reserve, its province, and *several* geographic characteristic of the national

park or reserve that is being presented. Additionally, they may ask questions about the national park or reserve to the presenter(s).

Assessment: Assess the students according to the following scoring guide.

Name _____ Date _____

Scoring Guide for the Tourist Brochure of Canadian National Parks and Reserves A Holistic Scoring Guide

5 points. Excellent:

- The student clearly creates a well developed tourist brochure that is highly organized and neatly illustrated.
- The brochure includes detailed information on the following points: name of the national park or reserve, size, number of visitor per year, brief geologic/human history, importance to wildlife and humans, human activities, visual location on a map, distance and directions from the nearest major Canadian city, heritage sites or geologic features as applicable, and a bibliography.
- Three pictures are included in addition to at least one illustration that is neatly drawn and colored with high attention to detail.
- Spelling and grammar have a minimum of errors.

4 points. Very Good:

- The student creates a well developed tourist brochure that is adequately organized and neatly illustrated.
- The brochure includes detailed information on the following points: name of the national park or reserve, size, number of visitor per year, brief geologic/human history, importance to wildlife and humans, human activities, visual location on a map, distance and directions from the nearest major Canadian city, heritage sites or geologic features as applicable, and a bibliography.
- Three pictures are included in addition to at least one illustration that is neatly drawn and colored.
- Spelling and grammar have a minimum of errors.

3 points. Good:

- The student creates a tourist brochure that is organized and illustrated.
- The brochure includes general information on the following points: name of the national park or reserve, size, number of visitor per year, brief geologic/human history, importance to wildlife and humans, human activities, visual location on a map, distance and directions from the nearest major Canadian city, heritage sites or geologic features as applicable, and a bibliography.
- Three pictures are included in addition to at least one illustration that is drawn and colored.
- Spelling and grammar is generally correct.

2 points. Limited:

- The student creates a basic tourist brochure that is organized and illustrated.
- The brochure includes information, but lacks details, on the following points: name of the national park or reserve, size, number of visitor per year, brief geologic/human history, importance to wildlife and humans, human activities, visual location on a map, distance and directions from the nearest major Canadian city, heritage sites or geologic features as applicable, and a bibliography.
- Three pictures and one illustration are included, but the illustration lacks detail or color.
- Evidence of correcting spelling and grammar is lacking.

0 points. No attempt.

Bibliography

http://atlas.gc.ca/site/english/maps/reference/national/natpks_e (2003).

www.national-parks-canada.com (2003).

