

Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center's
Wilderness Investigations
High School

Wilderness 101/Lesson 2 (OPTION 2B)
Introducing the Wilderness Act

Goal: Students will understand the difference between wild spaces and federally designated Wilderness as defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964.

Investigation Objectives

Audience: 9-12 grades.

- Students will use the Wilderness Act of 1964 to examine the rules and regulations of Wilderness areas. (Behavior)
- Students will be given a written prompt and a copy of the wilderness Act of 1964. (Condition)
- Students will be able explain the definition of a federally designated Wilderness area and students will present the four characteristics that define wilderness areas and the activities that can and cannot be done in Wilderness areas. (Degree)

Common Core Standard Connections

NOTE: See Common Core Standards sections to see listed objectives for this and other lessons/activities.

Time Requirement 50 minutes

Materials/Resources Needed and Pre-Investigation Tasks

- Wilderness Act of 1964 (copy for each student)
- Markers
- Poster board

Teacher Background

Before teaching this lesson you should familiarize yourself with the first page of the 1964 Wilderness Act, which was written by Howard Zahniser of the Wilderness Society and signed into law by President Lynden B. Johnson after sixty drafts and eight years of work. Here's the text of that first page:

WILDERNESS ACT

Public Law 88-577 (16 U.S. C. 1131-1136)

88th Congress, Second Session

September 3, 1964

AN ACT

To establish a National Wilderness Preservation System for the permanent good of the whole people, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.

WILDERNESS SYSTEM ESTABLISHED STATEMENT OF POLICY

Section 2.(a) In order to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition, it is hereby declared to be the policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness. For this purpose there is hereby established a National Wilderness Preservation System to be composed of federally owned areas designated by Congress as "wilderness areas", and these shall be administered for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness, and so as to provide for the protection of these areas, the preservation of their wilderness character, and for the gathering and dissemination of information regarding their use and enjoyment as wilderness; and no Federal lands shall be designated as "wilderness areas" except as provided for in this Act or by a subsequent Act.

DEFINITION OF WILDERNESS

(c) A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

PROHIBITION OF CERTAIN USES

(c) Except as specifically provided for in this Act, and subject to existing private rights, there shall be no commercial enterprise and no permanent road within any wilderness area designated by this Act and, except as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area for the purpose of this Act (including measures required in emergencies involving the health

and safety of persons within the area), there shall be no temporary road, no use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment or motorboats, no landing of aircraft, no other form of mechanical transport, and no structure or installation within any such area.

There are four Wilderness Characteristics that will be focused on during this lesson and that you will want to be prepared to discuss:

Wilderness character is composed of four distinct and equally important qualities that are inter-related. Every wilderness may have unique aspects of all four qualities of wilderness character.

1. **Natural:** "...is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions". Wilderness ecological systems are substantially free from the effects of modern civilization.
2. **Undeveloped:** "...an area of undeveloped Federal land...without permanent improvement or human habitation" and "...where man himself is a visitor who does not remain". Wilderness retains its primeval character and influence, and is essentially without permanent improvement or modern human occupation.
3. **Untrammeled:** "...an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man..." and "...generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature". Wilderness is essentially unhindered and free from modern human control or manipulation.
4. **Solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation:** Wilderness provides outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.

Source: www.wilderness.net/toolboxes/documents/WC/Presentation

There are some activities that are best suited to designated wilderness, such as finding a space for quiet contemplation; a place to test one's ability to live more simply or to experience a more primitive form of recreation; a place to view wildlife in their natural setting; etc. Some activities are prohibited in Wilderness areas—any activities requiring mechanized equipment, engines, or wheels: chainsaws, dirt-bikes, ATVs, mountain bikes, snow mobiles, etc. Here's the section of the Wilderness Act that address these prohibitions:

Prohibition of Certain Uses:

(c). Except as specifically provided for in this Act, and subject to existing private rights, there shall be no commercial enterprise and no permanent road within any wilderness area designated by this Act and, except as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area for the purpose of this Act (including measures required in emergencies involving the health and safety of

persons within the area), there shall be no temporary road, no use of motor vehicles, mechanical transport, and no structure or installation within any such area.

Be familiar with activities allowed in Wilderness areas: fishing, hiking, horse riding, packing, cross-country skiing, etc. But, remember to remind students that not all activities permissible in Wilderness areas are universally permissible in all Wilderness areas. For example, some trails in Wilderness areas may not allow horses for reasons such as: the trail is not maintained for horse use and down trees and cliffs could inhibit safe horse travel or the trail may only be open to foot traffic for the purpose of keeping a smaller less impacted trail for users who prefer such a Wilderness experience.

You may want to go to the webpage of each wilderness management agency to better understand their particular mission and to see how wilderness fits into that mission. The agencies are:

- National Forests
- National Park Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- Fish and Wildlife Services

Step-by-Step Presentation Instructions

Activity # 1: Wilderness Act investigation

- Students will find quotes from the Wilderness act that help to communicate the definition of federal designated Wilderness areas.
- Students will use the Wilderness Act of 1964 to define the four characteristics of Wilderness (see teacher background).
- Students will use the Wilderness Act of 1964 to brainstorm a list of activities that are and aren't allowed in Wilderness areas.

Activity #2: Assessment

- Students will use their selected quotes from the Wilderness Act, the definition of the four Wilderness characteristics, and the list of activities that are and aren't allowed in Wilderness areas to create a poster to advertise an actual or imaginary Wilderness area.
- Students will share their posters with the class.

Evaluation: Example Rubric

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Wilderness Character	Students have represented 4 Wilderness characteristics	Students have represented 3 Wilderness characteristics	Students have represented 2 Wilderness characteristics	Students have represented 1–0 Wilderness characteristics
Wilderness activities and non–Wilderness activities	Students have represented 8 or more activities that are inclusive & exclusive of wilderness areas	Students have represented 7–5 activities that are inclusive & exclusive of wilderness areas	Students have represented 4–3 activities that are inclusive & exclusive of wilderness areas	Students have represented 1–0 activities that are inclusive & exclusive of wilderness areas
Visuals	Students have put forth a tremendous effort and created outstanding visuals	Students have put forth a decent effort and created adequate visuals	Students have put forth limited effort and created inadequate visuals	Students have put forth no effort and have not created visuals
Presentations	Students were able to explain the wilderness characteristics and wilderness/non–wilderness activities without reading off the poster	Students were able to explain the wilderness characteristics and wilderness/non–wilderness activities, while using the poster as a guide	Students were able to explain the wilderness characteristic and wilderness/non–wilderness activities by reading off the poster.	Students were not able to explain the wilderness characteristics—even with the poster.
Other				

Grade Scale: 16 total points

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Character	4	3	2	1
Activities	4	3	2	1
Visuals	4	3	2	1

Presentation	4	3	2	1
Other				

Extension Ideas

Journal Entry:

How do you feel about having areas in the United States where certain activities are allowed and certain activities are prohibited? Can you benefit from this?

Can you think of a time when you were trying to enjoy an activity in your free time, such as: skateboarding, running, reading, playing video games, or listening to music, etc., but there was another individual or sibling in the same space who was doing an activity that prevented you from enjoying your activity?

Examples:

I wanted to relax by listening to a new rock album, but my brother came into the room and started playing his video games very loudly.

I was talking to a friend on the phone in my favorite chair in the backyard, but my next door neighbor started the lawn mower and I could no longer hear my friend.