

# Cultural History along the Natchez Trace Parkway



Classroom Lesson:

## Who, What and Why is a National Park? (code MS WWa)

▶ **Grade Level:**

3<sup>rd</sup>- 5<sup>th</sup>

▶ **Subject Areas:**

Social Studies

▶ **Setting:**

Classroom

▶ **Duration:**

Two 45 minute classes (or more)

▶ **Skills:** research, creative thinking, analysis, computer skills

▶ **AL Objectives:**

3<sup>rd</sup> grade:

3,4,6,7,8,11,12,13

4<sup>th</sup> grade:

1,4,6

Option: 3,10,13,14

5<sup>th</sup> grade:

1,2,4,5,10

▶ **Vocabulary:**

National Park

Service , preserve, heritage

**Summary:** Students will research a National Park online or from printed materials and answer relevant questions on a worksheet. They will develop an advertisement for the park they researched. The Natchez Trace Parkway and the Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail should both be assigned. Option: Include all five of Alabama's National Park units. (see teacher information)



**Materials Needed:**

Access to a computer and the website [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov). (Alternative 1: Teacher-download and print out information on various national parks. Alternative 2: Student-write a letter to assigned National Park and request information.) For each Student: Copy of Advertisement worksheet, copy of Arrowhead Knowledge (for closure)

### Instructional Information

**Alabama Objectives (2010):**

**3<sup>rd</sup> grade:**

3) Describe ways the environment is affected by humans in Alabama and the world. 4) Relate population dispersion to geographic, economic, and historic changes in Alabama and the world. 6) Identify conflicts within and between geographic areas involving use of land, economic competition for scarce resources, opposing political views, boundary disputes, and cultural differences. 7) Describe the relationship between locations of resources and patterns of population distribution. 8) Identify geographic links of land regions, river systems, and interstate highways between Alabama and other states. 11) Interpret various primary sources for reconstructing the past, including documents, letters, diaries, maps, and photographs. 12) Explain the significance of representations of American values and beliefs, including the Statue of Liberty, the statue of Lady Justice, the United States flag, and the national anthem. 13) Describe prehistoric and historic American Indian cultures, governments, and economics in Alabama.

**4<sup>th</sup> grade:**

1) Compare historical and current economic, political, and geographic information about Alabama on thematic maps, including weather and climate, physical-relief, waterway, transportation, political, economic development, land-use, and population maps. 4) Relate the relationship of the five geographic regions of Alabama to the movement of Alabama

settlers during the early nineteenth century. 6) Describe cultural, economic, and political aspects of the lifestyles of early nineteenth-century farmers, plantation owners, slaves, and townspeople.

- If whole state option is used:

3) Explain the social, political, and economic impact of the War of 1812, including battles and significant leaders of the Creek War, on Alabama. 10) Analyze social and educational changes during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century for their impact on Alabama. 13) Describe the economic and social impact of World War II on Alabamians, including the entry of women into the workforce, increase in job opportunities, rationing, utilization of Alabama's military installations, military recruitment, the draft, and a rise in racial consciousness . 14) Analyze the modern Civil Rights Movement to determine the social, political, and economic impact on Alabama.

5<sup>th</sup> grade: 1) Locate on a map physical features that impacted the exploration and settlement of the Americas, including ocean currents, prevailing winds, large forests, major rivers, and significant mountain ranges. 2) Identify causes and effects of early migration and settlement of North America. 4) Determine the economic and cultural impact of European exploration during the Age of Discovery upon European society and American Indians. 5) Explain the early colonization of North America and reasons for settlement in the Northern, Middle, and Southern colonies, including geographic features, landforms, and differences in climate among the colonies. 10) Describe political, social, and economic events between 1803 and 1860 that led to the expansion of the territory of the United States, including the War of 1812, the Indian Removal Act, the Texas-Mexican War, the Mexican-American War, and the Gold Rush of 1849

**Lesson Objectives:** The student will: 1) learn about the concept of National Parks 2) learn why we have National Parks 3) learn the value of National Parks, 4) learn the concept of preservation 5) learn that the Natchez Trace Parkway and the National Scenic Trails within the Natchez Trace are part of the National Park Service system.

**Teacher Set:** The students will research information about a National Park and share it with the rest of the class. The students will obtain information from [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov) or from information the teacher downloaded or from a brochure they obtained from previously from writing a request letter or email. The students will use the information to develop an advertisement for the National Park unit that they researched. The advertisement may be in the form of a poster, a song, a skit (a commercial or some other creative form). This research and report may be done in small groups. Student groups will present their advertisements to the rest of the class.

**Option:** Review how the Natchez Trace Parkway and the Natchez Trace Scenic Trails fit into the United States government (see Teacher Information section)

**Option:** Depending on skill levels the students could write 2-3 page reports on the National Park unit that they selected.

**Teacher Overview:** The Natchez Trace Parkway is part of the National Park Service, "which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." In "kid language" that means, "National Parks protect special places in our country so that people can enjoy them now and in the future."

Legislation to enable the Natchez Trace Parkway passed congress on May 18, 1938. Being part of the federal government, the Natchez Trace Parkway is "owned" by the people of the United States of America. The purpose of the Natchez Trace Parkway is to preserve and protect for the people of the United States of America, areas associated with an ancient Native American pathway which evolved to be a significant roadway in our country's early development.

See Teacher Information sheet for more information.

**Student Task:** The students will choose and research a specific unit of the National Park Service. Each group will develop an advertisement for the park unit they were assigned. At least one student or group should be assigned the Natchez Trace Parkway and the Natchez Trace National Scenic Trails. When finished, they will present their ad to the class.

**Student Instruction:**

Engage the students in a class discussion about the purpose of National Parks.

## Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever been to a National Park?  
Answers will vary but be sure to explain that National Parks, state parks and local parks are all managed by separate governments. The Natchez Trace Parkway is a National Park Service unit.
2. Why do we have National Parks?  
Answers should include: Recreation, learn about history, preserve what is important to our country.
3. What do they protect?  
Answers should include: Historic and Natural areas that are important to the people of our country.
4. Can you tell me what is meant by the word preserve? (can assign student to look up word)  
Answer: to keep something protected from anything that would cause its condition or quality to get worse.  
TEACH: Our National Parks preserve natural and historic areas that are special.
5. Can you tell me what is meant by the word heritage? (can assign student to look up word)  
Answer: something that is passed down from one generation to the next.  
TEACH: Our National Parks preserve our country's heritage.
6. Whose treasure is it that the parks protect?  
Answers should include: The people of the United States (or the world)
7. How would you define "national park"?  
Answers should include: A place our government protects for everyone to enjoy.

Option: Show the students the National Park Service arrowhead and explain what each element represents (see Teacher Information Sheet)

Option: Show the students how the Natchez Trace Parkway fits into the structure of the federal government. (see Teacher Information Sheet)

Divide the students into small groups. Each small group will choose or be assigned one of 392 national park units to research. The teacher will hand out the information about each National Park (or the students will have previously written letters requesting information). The students will fill out the advertisement worksheet with information about their park. The students will develop an advertisement that applauds the special attributes of "their park".

Advertisements could be in the form of:

Poster, brochure, song, skit (like a commercial) or any other media type presentation.

Teacher Closure: Have the student groups share their advertisement with the remainder of the class. Have the entire class take the Arrowhead Knowledge quiz.

Student Assessment: Participation in the activity, completeness of their report.

Suggestions for re-teaching: Have the students make a virtual visit to <http://www.nps.gov/akso/ParkWise/Students/StudentResources.htm> .

Show portions of PBS series; Ken Burns's "The National Parks: America's Best Idea".

Extension: Have students think about a special place they may treasure. Have students create a national park out of their special place. Why is it special to them? What are they protecting? They may want to draw a map or picture, or create a collage of their Special Place National Park and give a tour of their park.

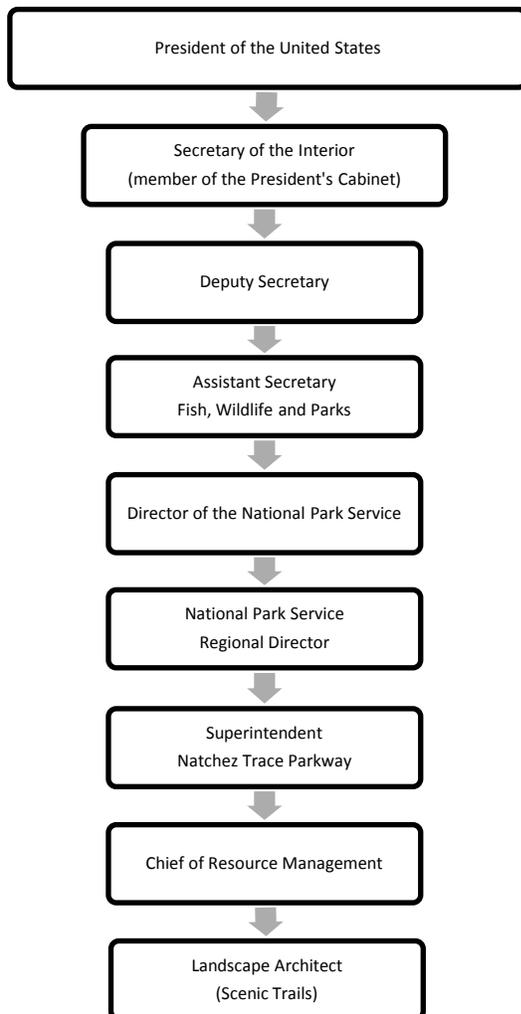
**Teacher information:**

**National Park units in Alabama:** Natchez Trace Parkway, Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site, Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site, Horseshoe Bend National Military Park, Little River Canyon National Preserve, Russell Cave National Historic Monument, Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail.

The arrowhead is the official symbol of the National Park Service.

- The elements of the emblem symbolize the major facets of the national park system. The Sequoia tree and bison represent vegetation and wildlife, the mountains and water represent scenic and recreational values, and the arrowhead represents historical and archeological values.
- The arrowhead was probably first used on an informational folder for Oregon Caves National Monument published in April 1952.
- It soon gained recognition as the Service symbol and became widely used on signs and publications.
- To forestall unseemly commercial uses of the arrowhead design, an official notice, approved March 7, 1962, was published in the Federal register of March 15, 1962 (27 CFR 2486), designating it as the official symbol of the National Park Service.

Organizational tree showing how the Natchez Trace and Scenic Trails fit in with the US Government



Your Name:

## Advertisement information for your National Park

1. What is the name of your National Park?
2. Where is it located?
3. Why was your park created? Was it to protect something? If so, what is being protected?
4. When was your park established as a park?
5. What kinds of activities can you do at this park?



## Arrowhead Knowledge

Color in the arrowheads marking the sentences that are true about the Natchez Trace Parkway.



The Natchez Trace Parkway is a national scenic road.



The US government believes the Natchez Trace Parkway is part of our country's heritage.



Hunting is allowed on the Natchez Trace Parkway.



The Natchez Trace Parkway preserves American Indian Mounds.



There are National Scenic Trails along the Natchez Trace Parkway.



Trucks can haul freight on the Natchez Trace Parkway.



There are waterfalls on trails along the Natchez Trace Parkway.



People can pick flowers along the Natchez Trace Parkway.



The Natchez Trace Parkway is part of the National Park system.



The Natchez Trace Parkway is a state road.



The Natchez Trace Parkway headquarters is in Tupelo, MS.

ANSWER SHEET  
Arrowhead Knowledge

-  The Natchez Trace Parkway is a national scenic road.
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-  There are National Scenic Trails along the Natchez Trace Parkway.
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-  There are waterfalls on trails along the Natchez Trace Parkway.
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-  The Natchez Trace Parkway is part of the National Park system.
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-  The Natchez Trace Parkway headquarters is in Tupelo, MS.