

What Makes Devils Tower Special?



After watching the video "Devils Tower: America's 1st National Monument," answer as many of the questions below as you can.

Answer Key

1.) What is the material that formed the rock of the Tower?

Magma

2.) Which type of rock forms the Tower? (circle one)

Sedimentary

Metamorphic

Igneous

3.) What powerful force of nature and geology exposed the Tower?

Erosion

4.) Can you name any American Indian tribes who have connections with the Tower?

Lakota, Cheyenne, Crow, Kiowa, Arapahoe (there are more)

5.) What does the Indian name "*Mato Tipila*" mean?

Bear Lodge

6.) What are the colorful cloths and bundles on the trees around the Tower? Why are they important?

Prayer cloths - they are placed by American Indians and represent a spiritual

connection that modern individuals have with the Tower site

7.) Name some of the habitats at Devils Tower National Monument:

Forest; understory; prairie/grassland; river/riparian; rocks/cliffs (the Tower)

8.) Name some of the animals found at Devils Tower National Monument:

Eagles; porcupines; bobcats; foxes; squirrels; mice; owls; turkey; bluebirds; coyotes;

deer; mountain lions; hawks; prairie dogs; snakes; pine siskins

9.) What president designated the Tower as the first national monument?

Theodore Roosevelt

10.) List at least one more cool fact you learned which makes the Tower special:

Answers vary; it could be about climbing, prairie dogs, American Indians, George Hopkins (the parachutist), or anything else discussed in the video.

Critical Thinking and Discussion Questions

For use after watching "Devils Tower: America's 1st National Monument"

- 1.) What industry first drove early European explorers west? What kinds of impacts do you think this had on the ecosystem? How could this have influenced American Indian cultures?

Fur trade; many animals, especially the beaver, became over-trapped/hunted and started to disappear from the ecosystem; American Indians received firearms, metal trade goods and many other things from early Europeans (diseases, language, horses, etc.)

- 2.) What inspired white settlers to move into the Black Hills? Who lived in the Black Hills prior to this? How did this immigration affect the previous residents?

Gold was discovered; the Black Hills had been established as Indian land in prior treaties; gold prospectors violated the treaties and many Indians defended their lands, which led to increased tension/conflicts with the US, and ultimately the seizure of the Black Hills by the US government and the placement of Indians onto reservations

- 3.) What 1906 Act was used to make the Tower a national monument? To create a national *park* takes an act of Congress; who has authority to create a national *monument*? Is it fair for one person to have the ability to protect federal (public) land? Why or why not?

The Antiquities Act allows the president (executive branch) to create monuments. Some feel that presidents have abused this power to create protected areas and restrict the uses of the land; however, without this power many important places might have been exploited or destroyed (Devils Tower, Jewel Cave, Grand Canyon).

- 4.) How did the Great Depression benefit the National Park Service and places like Devils Tower?

Work programs like the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) were started to improve public lands and provide young men with jobs. Many improvements made in the 1930s by the CCC are still visible today in parks around the country (including Devils Tower National Monument).

- 5.) What were some events that increased visitation to Devils Tower National Monument? Are more visitors good or bad? What changes would the park need to accommodate more visitors? What are some reasons people visit Devils Tower National Monument?

NPS/CCC improvements; George Hopkins incident; Steven Spielberg film; NPS centennial. More visitors are great, but many parks do not have the staff or infrastructure (roads, parking, buildings) to accommodate more visitors. They need more money and support to offer more services. People visit the park for spiritual reasons, for education, for hiking/exercise, and for climbing (among other reasons).

- 6.) Why does the park ask visitors not to climb during June? Is this fair? Why or why not?

In deference to American Indian cultures who view the Tower as sacred. Some people think it is unfair, while others feel it does not do enough to protect the Tower. This is an opinion question that is still debated today (June closure started in 1995).