

Park Ranger: Respect and Responsibility

Adventure Description:

In this adventure, you will think like a park ranger and design a new bear-proof trash can for a national park.

Activity

Step 1: Background on Park Rangers, Respect, and Responsibility (5+ minutes)

- Show [Video: Responsibility](#).
- As a class, discuss how park rangers work at parks. Discuss how park rangers have a lot of responsibilities! A responsibility is a job or task that someone is in charge of. For example, a park ranger is in charge of making sure visitors follow rules when they visit the park. A park ranger is also responsible for training other staff on what to do if there is an emergency, like a fire, in the park.
- Explain that responsibility is an important value in the United States. A value is something that many people believe in. In our country, people value responsibility. For example, leaders in our country are responsible for making sure we have a safe place to live.
- Next, explain to students that respect is another important value in our country. Ask students how they think park rangers would show respect during their job (e.g., Respect visitors who are touring a park by answering their questions politely, respect plants and animals by not destroying their homes, respect other people they work with).
- Ask students what would happen if a park ranger wasn't respectful or responsible at work. Explain that a park could be ruined because the park rangers were not taking care of it. Visitors might also not want to come to the park because the park rangers weren't respectful.

Step 2: Activity Set Up (5 minutes)

- Explain to students they will imagine they are park rangers who are responsible for a new project at a national park! As a class, read [Handout: Important Job To Be Completed](#). Explain to students that they will be responsible for building a new, special type of trash can that can go in a national park. Animals, like bears, should not be able to open the trash can. That way, bears won't be able to get into food in a trash can that can make them sick.
- Ask students what would happen if a park ranger did not do his or her job. Discuss how there could be a consequence. For example, the boss could get upset. Another consequence is that animals could get sick from eating garbage from regular trash cans. Discuss how when people have responsibilities, there are usually consequences in place if a job isn't completed.
- Divide students into pairs. Provide each pair with the following materials:
 - Assortment of art supplies (e.g., construction paper, scissors, tape, popsicle sticks, pom pom balls)
 - Assortment of building materials (e.g., cardboard pieces, egg cartons, cereal boxes)

Step 3: Building a Special Trash Can (15–20 minutes)

- Explain to students that they will now build their trash can. Their trash can must be extremely strong so a bear could not open it and eat trash out of it. Have students use the art supplies and building materials provided to build their trash can.

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Step 3: Teaching Visitors (5-10 minutes)

- Explain to students that they will now complete a second important job. They will make a sign that will go into the national park to explain to visitors that they cannot throw garbage on the ground. That way, visitors will know that the garbage can make animals sick if they eat it. The sign should talk about how it is important to show respect to the park and animals. The sign should also say that it is important for people to be responsible in the park and follow the rules. It is a park rangers responsibility to teach visitors the importance of respect. One way that visitors can show respect is by not throwing trash on the ground while they are walking around.
- Tips:
 - Write the words "respect" and "responsibility" on the board so students know how to spell them
 - If students are not fluent writers, have them just draw pictures on their signs. They can also dictate words.
- Provide students with large sheets of paper to create their signs.

Step 4: Class Discussion and Reflection (5-10 minutes)

- Have students volunteer to show their bear-proof garbage can and signs to the class.
- Discuss how respect and responsibility can be important values that can be found in national parks, on the playground, or in the classroom! All over the country, people are being respectful and responsible.

Materials List

Provided online:

- Video: Responsibility
- Handout: Important Job to Be Completed

Not Provided online:

- Assortment of art supplies (e.g., tape, construction paper, tissue paper, pipe cleaners, pom pom balls)
- Assortment of building materials (e.g., cardboard pieces, recycled boxes or jars)
- Large sheets of paper
- Markers, colored pencils, crayons

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