

Faces™

The Rocky Mountains

The Rocky Mountains are the largest mountain range in North America. With varying vegetation, climates, and elevations, these scenic mountains draw hundreds and thousands of visitors from all over the world. This issue of FACES magazine explores the national parks, recreational opportunities, and spectacular festivals that are part of the Rocky Mountains.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

What makes the Rocky Mountains unique?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about various festivals that are unique to the Rocky Mountains.
- Students will learn about the national parks of the Rocky Mountains.
- Students will learn why the Rocky Mountains are the ideal place for outdoor adventures.
- Students will analyze culture and tradition.
- Students will examine the geographical features of a region.
- Students will examine the impact of location.
- Students will create a poster to advertise a specific Rocky Mountain festival.
- Students will plot locations on a map of North America.
- Students will research the environmental threats facing the Rocky Mountain range.



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core Social Studies skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

SELECTIONS

- **Rocky Mountain Festivals**
Expository Nonfiction, ~1050L
- **Rocky Mountain National Parks: Something for Everyone**
Expository Nonfiction, ~1250L
- **Hike, Ski, Climb: Sports in the Rocky Mountains**
Expository Nonfiction, ~1140L

Faces® Teacher Guide: April 2023

Rocky Mountain Festivals

pp. 20–23, Expository Nonfiction

Steeped in culture and tradition, Rocky Mountain festivals boast unique activities and events. This article introduces readers to exciting festivals stretching from Canada to central New Mexico.



RESOURCES

- Analyze Culture and Tradition: Mountains of Fun

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about various festivals that are unique to the Rocky Mountains.
- Students will analyze culture and tradition.
- Students will create a poster to advertise a specific Rocky Mountain festival.

KEY VOCABULARY

- cryonics** (p. 22) a procedure in which a person's body is frozen just after he or she has died so that the body can be restored if a cure for the cause of death is found
- black powder** (p. 22) gunpowder, or a dry explosive substance that is used in guns
- geocaching** (p. 22) an outdoor recreational activity in which players are given the geographical coordinates of hidden items that they search for using a GPS device

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes the Rocky Mountains unique?

Draw a word web on the board and write the word *festival* in the center. Have students meet in small groups to discuss their experiences attending or reading about different kinds of festivals. Add responses to the web and then introduce the article "Rocky Mountain Festivals." Revisit the word web after reading to allow students to add new words.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post the key words and discuss the definitions. Then display the following prompts and have students discuss responses with a partner.

- How do you feel about the practice of **cryonics**? Explain.
- What were some uses for **black powder** in early America?
- How could you create your own **geocaching** activity? What items would you hide?

READ & DISCUSS

Pose the following questions to prompt meaningful discussion.

- How was the "Frozen Dead Guy Days" festival born? Why do you think it was canceled?
- Where did Billy Barker go after failing to find gold in California?
- Why does a huckleberry festival take place high up on a mountain?
- Describe the Snowking Winter Festival.
- What is unique about the Alyeska Slush Cup?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Tradition

INSTRUCT: The article presents readers with detailed information regarding several Rocky Mountain festivals. These celebrations embrace climate, location, tradition, and excitement. Distribute the *Analyze Culture and Tradition: Mountains of Fun* graphic organizer. Tell students they will be recording the origins and details of each festival.

ASSESS: Review the chart. Have students explain which festival they would choose to attend and why.

EXTEND

Art: Students may work in groups to complete this promotional art project. After selecting one of the Rocky Mountain festivals from the article, students will create a poster advertising the event. Information from the SKILL FOCUS activity may be helpful. Posters must be colorful and easy to read from a distance. Remind students to include the following: festival title, date, place, contact/ticket information, corresponding font and imagery. Emphasize the importance of stunning visuals when creating an event poster.

Mountains of Fun

Analyze Culture and Tradition Review the article and highlight information about each of the Rocky Mountain festivals listed below. For each festival, include details about its origin and associated activities.

<p>Pie Festival</p>	<p>Orofino Lumberjack Days</p>
<p>Lewis and Clark Festival</p>	<p>Billy Barker Days</p>

**Festivals of the
Rocky Mountains**

Discuss with a Partner: Which festival would you choose to attend? Why?

Rocky Mountain National Parks: Something for Everyone

pp. 24–27, Expository Nonfiction

Every year, the Rocky Mountains attract hundreds of thousands of visitors. They come to ski, mountain bike, explore the trails, and appreciate the beauty of the mountains. This article offers a glimpse of the extraordinary sights and activities that the national parks of the Rocky Mountains have to offer.



RESOURCES

- Geographical Features: Rocky Mountain Majesty

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the national parks of the Rocky Mountains.
- Students will examine the geographical features of a region.
- Students will plot locations on a map of North America.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **geyser** (p. 25) a hot spring that sometimes erupts, forcing steam and hot water into the air
- **sand dune** (p. 26) a hill of sand that is formed by the wind
- **mesa** (p. 27) a hill that has a flat top and steep sides and that is found in the Southwestern U.S.

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes the Rocky Mountains unique?

Inform students that a national park is land that is owned and protected by the national government because of its beauty or its historical or scientific importance. Ask students to share experiences visiting national parks. Ask students how the geography of the national parks they visited influenced their activities and sightings there. (Students may also answer these questions based on experiences at state parks.)

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post and discuss the vocabulary terms. Be sure students understand what each natural feature looks like by having them preview photos in the article. Then have students fold a piece of paper into quarters, label three of the boxes with the key words, and make a visual representation of each. After reading the article, they will use the remaining box to illustrate an additional theme-related word.

READ & DISCUSS

Reinforce comprehension of the concepts presented in the article by using the following questions to direct discussion.

1. Why does the Rocky Mountain range include many different ecosystems?
2. What are national parks dedicated to preserving and presenting?
3. What activities can people enjoy at Grand Teton National Park?
4. Why is Glacier National Park called “the crown jewel of the continent”?
5. Explain why Mesa Verde is not only a national park, but also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

SKILL FOCUS: Explore Geographical Features

INSTRUCT: The article presents the reader with detailed information regarding the geographical characteristics of national parks in the Rocky Mountains. Remind students that when studying new lands, it is important to consider all aspects of the region. Distribute the *Geographical Features: Rocky Mountain Majesty* worksheet. Tell students that they will be using information from the article to describe the visual and physical aspects of each park.

ASSESS: Have the class peer-review worksheets in small groups.

EXTEND

Geography: Due to the huge variety of animals, plants, and geographical features, the Rocky Mountains host many national parks. There are eight different parks included in this article. Provide students with a map of North America and have them locate the parks on the map. Challenge students to investigate and plot other Rocky Mountain National Parks on the map (13 in total: 9 U.S./4 Canada). Ask: *Which states do the Rocky Mountains run through?*

Rocky Mountain Majesty

Geographical Features Use information from the article to explain the features and activities unique to each park.

National Park	Features: What can you see?	Activities: What can you do?
Yellowstone National Park		
Great Sand Dunes National Park		
Banff National Park		
Glacier National Park		

Hike, Ski, Climb: Sports in the Rocky Mountains

pp. 28–31, Expository Nonfiction

Climb up the mountains, or ski down a slope...the Rocky Mountains offer visitors a variety of activities. Readers will learn how the mountain range literally offers “something for everyone,” from peaceful hikes to thrilling sports.



RESOURCES

- Impact of Location: Adventure Awaits

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn why the Rocky Mountains are the ideal place for outdoor adventures.
- Students will examine the impact of location.
- Students will research the environmental threats facing the Rocky Mountain range.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **elevation** (p. 29) height above a given level, such as sea level
- **embarking** (p. 31) beginning a journey
- **endurance** (p. 31) the ability to do something difficult for a long time

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes the Rocky Mountains unique?

Have students share the outdoor activities they enjoy in their community. Next, have them consider how their activities might change if they lived in a region with a different climate or terrain. Ask: *How are our recreational experiences shaped by our location?*

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display the following statements and underline the key vocabulary words. Review how to infer the meanings of new words by using context clues and background knowledge. Then have students work in pairs to determine the meaning of each term. Reveal definitions.

1. The higher elevations on the mountains received more snow.
2. Tomorrow, we are embarking on a hike up Mount Willard.
3. Runners need endurance to complete a marathon.

Emphasize the key vocabulary words when reading the article.

READ & DISCUSS

Read the article aloud with the class. Have students reread the text in small groups to answer the questions below. Discuss responses.

1. Describe activities that visitors to the national parks in the Rocky Mountains can choose to experience.
2. What four items do people need when they go on a hike?
3. How are the difficulty levels of the trails marked?
4. Why do athletes climb the Rocky Mountains?
5. How do sport options vary by location?

SKILL FOCUS: Impact of Location

INSTRUCT: Review the text and guide students to express that the article was written to teach readers how the location, terrain, and climate of the Rocky Mountains impact the sports and activities that can be enjoyed there. Have students use the *Impact of Location: Adventure Awaits* graphic organizer to identify the different adventures that visitors to this magnificent mountain range can experience.

ASSESS: Have students discuss which activity is most appealing to them. Review worksheet.

EXTEND

Environmental Science: Explain that scientists are concerned about climate change and environmental threats to the Rocky Mountain range. Global warming, deforestation, wildfires, pollution, and natural disasters are among the hazards affecting this region. Human activities also have a marked impact. Have students use books, journals, and the internet to research environmental threats to the Rocky Mountains and the solutions scientists are developing to protect the mountains.

Adventure Awaits

Impact of Location Consult the article to identify five sports that are enjoyed in the Rocky Mountains. Then use details and examples to answer the question in the THINK TANK.

Rocky Mountain sports:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

THINK TANK: Page 31 of the article states, “No matter the season, no matter the skill, the Rocky Mountains are the perfect place to experience outdoor adventure.” Explain.

