



## **Banff National Park – ESL**

### **Activity Thirteen: *Skimming and Scanning (Core Activity)***

**CLB:** 5-7

**Topic:** Bear Safety, National Parks and their History

**Goal:** Build knowledge about bear safety, National Parks and their History

**Language Focus:** Reading – skimming, scanning skills

**Material:** Mountain Guide; Bears and People – both pamphlets have a PDF on-line link

**Grouping:** Individual

**Activity Outline:** Students are given a copy of selected reading material face down and instructed to scan for particular information when the game begins. Teacher gives the questions, students flip over the material and students race to scan for the information as fast as possible. Once first person finds the answer, the material is turned face down again and the next question is asked. Reading and discussion of material as follow up.



## ***Bears and People – front side***

Link to brochure pdf and html versions:

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/mtn/ours-bears/sec7/og-bm7.aspx>

1. Do bears generally prefer to avoid people? (yes – under Safe Travel in Bear Country)
2. What are bears extremely sensitive to? (Stress – under Avoid and Encounter: the best approach)
3. You should carry bear spray while out hiking. What are some things that can influence its effectiveness? (wind, distance, rain, freezing temperatures, shelf-life – under Bear Spray)
4. The best way to stay safe is to avoid an encounter. How could you make noise to avoid a bear? (call out, clap, sing, talk loudly – under Make Noise)
5. What is the recommended group size when out hiking? (4 or more –under Larger Size Groups)
6. What are some signs that a bear has been in the area? (tracks, droppings, diggings, torn-up logs, over turned rocks – under Watch for Fresh Bear Sign)
7. What is recommended for dogs? (keep them on a leash at all times or leave them at home)
8. If you see a bear, what should you do first? (stop, remain calm, get ready to use bear spray, don't run away, observe – under If you See a Bear)
9. If a bear is aware of your presence, how should you speak to the bear? (calmly and firmly – under Speak to the Bear)
10. If the bear is aware of your presence, should you drop your backpack? (no)

***Parks Canada - Mountain Guide - page 24***

1. When was Canada's first national park established? (1885)
2. What does NHS stand for? (National Historic Site)
3. What did early explorers come in search of? (beaver pelts and trade routes)
4. What promise did the Canadian Pacific Railway deliver on in 1885? (to link British Columbia by rail to eastern Canada)
5. What year was the National Parks Act established? (1930) and this act moved the focus of national parks from recreation to what? (national treasures)
6. How many years have the aboriginal people been in the area of Banff National Park? (10,000)
7. Why were backcountry lodges built in Banff National Park? (to cater to hikers, trail riders, mountaineers, and skiers)
8. Where can you find the First Oil Well in Western Canada National Historic Site? (Waterton Lakes National Park)

Our historic places, people, and events tell stories of early travel and trade routes, exploration and adventure, nation-building, rustic architecture, ranching and tourism. The **National Historic Sites (NHS)** noted in bold, below, are described on the maps and attractions pages of this guide.

### These Mountains are Sacred Places to First Nations People

Aboriginal people have passed through and camped in these valleys for more than 10,000 years. What remains are countless archaeological sites and cultural artefacts, the narratives of early travellers, and the oral traditions of contemporary Aboriginal communities.

### Early Explorers Came in Search of Beaver Pelts and Trade Routes

Beginning in the late 1700s, fur traders David Thompson and Simon Fraser explored and mapped more than four million square kilometers of western Canada. Thompson explored **Howse Pass NHS** and **Athabasca Pass NHS**, established **Kootenae House NHS** and frequented the vicinity of the **Rocky Mountain House NHS**, now a vibrant place to experience live programs, including a summer Métis Camp. Fraser established many fur trading posts including **Fort St James NHS**, brought to life through special events and interactive programs. **Jasper House NHS**, strategically located on the Athabasca River, was a staging area for travellers and traders using **Athabasca Pass** and **Yellowhead Pass NHS**.

### The Arrival of the Iron Horse Put Canada on the Map

In 1885, the Canadian Pacific Railway delivered on its promise to link British Columbia by rail to Eastern Canada. **Kicking Horse Pass NHS** is located between Lake Louise and Field. Stop at Yoho National Park's Spiral Tunnels to wonder at the challenges of blasting a railway through these mountains. **Rogers Pass NHS** in Glacier National Park honours the legacy of CPR's engineering skills and mountain railroading achievements.

### Canada's First National Park was Born Here

When three railway workers stumbled upon hot springs near Banff, they set in motion a chain of events that led to the establishing of Canada's first national park in 1885. This story is told at the **Cave and Basin NHS** under construction until July 2012. The railways brought tourists to the Canadian Rockies. The **Banff Park Museum NHS** and the **Jasper Park Information Centre NHS** are two examples of the beautiful facilities built for them.

### Tourists Heed the Call of the Wild

In 1899, the CPR began employing Swiss Guides to safely guide visitors to mountain summits. The **Abbott Pass Refuge Cabin NHS** was completed by the guides in 1922. Backcountry lodges like the **Twin Falls Tea House NHS** and the **Skoki Ski Lodge NHS** were built throughout the Rockies to cater to the needs of hikers, trail riders, mountaineers, and skiers. These three wilderness jewels still serve today's visitors.

### Settlement and Industry also Followed the Rails Here

The **Bar U Ranch NHS**, located in foothills near Longview, Alberta, commemorates the history and culture of ranching in Alberta. Enjoy bannock and cowboy coffee at Roundup Camp or take a horse drawn wagon ride through the historic site. Located in Waterton Lakes National Park, the **First Oil Well in Western Canada NHS** marks the beginning of Alberta's oil production story.

### ... And a Growing Understanding of Ecosystems

The 1930 *National Parks Act* was a milestone in the evolution of our national parks from recreational pleasure grounds to national treasures that are managed for ecological health – and healthy, meaningful and sustainable experiences within those healthy landscapes – for all time.

Mountain landscapes are not only stunningly beautiful, they're ecologically fascinating too. Our mountains are big enough to influence weather and living conditions on both large and small scales. They are also bumpy enough to create a variety of habitats depending on each location's particular blend of aspect (what direction it faces), slope (how steep it is) and elevation (how high it is).

For more about how park wildlife live in these life zones, and what you can do to help keep park habitats healthy, see *Wildlife and Park Regulations*, pages 26, 27 & 29.

### Life's Toughest at the Top, in the ALPINE Zone (above ~ 2200 m)

This is the land above the trees, a landscape of bare rock, snow and ice, and alpine meadows dotted with lovely turquoise lakes. Growing seasons are short, temperatures are low, winds and UV radiation are high. Mountain goats, pikas, ptarmigan, and a surprising variety of ground-hugging wildflowers are adapted to life here. Just over 40% of the mountain national park lands are in the alpine zone.

### The Forested Rocky Mountain Slopes are in the SUBALPINE Zone (~1500-2200 m elevation)

The middle elevation slopes are clothed in a dark, dense forest of tall subalpine fir and Engelmann spruce, interrupted only by the swaths of lighter-coloured avalanche paths. Also known as the "snow forest", the subalpine is a cool and relatively moist place – though overall the Canadian Rockies are almost as dry as the prairies to the east, and much drier than mountains to the west. Clark's nutcrackers, porcupines and pine marten are typical residents of the subalpine zone.

### Lots of Life Flows Through & Stays in the MONTANE Zone (~1000-1500 m elevation)

The montane zone is the land of valley bottoms, up to the maximum elevation at which trembling aspen will grow. Other common trees include lodgepole pine, white spruce, and Douglas fir. The montane zone is rich in food sources and has a relatively thin snow-cover in winter, making it essential winter habitat for elk, deer, bighorn sheep, wolves, coyotes and cougars. It is also the place most park visitors travel through and stay in. Only about 5% of mountain park lands are in the montane zone.

### In the Columbia Mountains You'll Find the INTERIOR RAINFOREST (~1000-1500 m elevation)

West of the Rockies, in the Columbia Mountains and Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks, the much wetter interior rainforest life zone replaces the montane life zone. This region is home to the world's only temperate inland rainforest and includes the giant western red cedar and western hemlock. Unusual plants such as devil's club and skunk cabbage share the rainforest with endangered mountain caribou, migratory birds and Cœur d'Alene salamanders.

## FIRE Is an Essential Part of Life Here

When the first new national parks were established more than a century ago, Fire and Game Guardians were hired to protect the parks from fire. By the 1950s Parks Canada had all but eliminated the menace of fire from these mountains. While the immediate risks to people and infrastructure were minimized, this success would have ironic longer-term consequences.

By the 1970s fire researchers were beginning to document how fire suppression was affecting a landscape that had been shaped by flames for the past 10,000 years. The results were startling: decreases in suitable wildlife habitat, ever more uniform forests, and large fuel accumulations with the potential to stoke catastrophic wildfires.

Fortunately, Parks Canada had a few pioneering spirits at the helm who began safely bringing fire back to the landscape. Through carefully planned and implemented "prescribed fires" we are gradually restoring fire's traditional role in the mountain parks, thereby creating vital habitat for wildlife, a healthier mix of old and young forests, and a reduced risk of unplanned and uncontrolled wildfires. Look for evidence of fire during your travels, and celebrate the regrowth!

