



## Banff National Park – ESL

### Activity Ten: *Run and Write (Core Activity)*

**CLB:** 3-7 (Different stories for different levels)

**Topic:** Wildlife of the Park, Start of Canada’s National Parks, Animal Safety

**Goal:** Build knowledge about key themes of National Parks, Banff National Park, and wildlife awareness

**Language Focus:** Reading, Writing, Pronunciation, Communication Skills

**Material:** 8 – 10 sentence stories relevant to Banff National Park divided into 2 paragraphs; follow up discussion activity for each story

**Level:** 5 different stories ranging in difficulty from CLB 3 to CLB 7

Bears: CLB 5-7

The Park in its Early Days: CLB 6-7

Viewing Wildlife: CLB 4-6

First National Park: CLB 4-6

Keeping Safe: CLB 3-4

**Grouping:** Pairs

**Activity Outline:** The “story” is posted at 3 locations in the building. One of the partners will be the writer of the story while the other will be the reporter. The reporter runs to the story, memorizes as much of it as possible and reports it back to the writer who writes down the story. The reporter continues to run back to the story as many times as necessary to report the whole contents of the story exactly as written. The partners switch roles half way through the story.





[parks canada.gc.ca](http://parks canada.gc.ca) [parcs canada.gc.ca](http://parcs canada.gc.ca)

Once each pair is finished recording, they read the story as written and check it together to ensure it makes sense. Next, give the pair the completed story to read.

If there are groups still finishing up, have the groups that are finished turn over the story and retell it to each other in their own words. Give discussion sheet to those groups that are finished.

It is not necessary for all the groups to complete the Run and Write portion. A good time to finish up the activity is when the first group has finished retelling it in their own words.

De-brief with the whole group about the story and hand out discussion questions.

**\*NOTE FOR INSTRUCTOR:** If you would like to read more about bears to help you answer student questions, please see our website.

Bears & People: Safety Tips & Ecology

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/docs/v-g/oursgest-bearmanag/sec7/og-bm7.aspx>



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## **Bears**

For many years, people in the Bow Valley left out food for bears. There was also a dump where bears went to get easy food. It was also an easy way for people to see bears. But after time, people became worried about the safety of both the bears and the community. The dump was closed and people were asked to contain their garbage. The community was not very good at it and there were still many “garbage bears” around.

Unfortunately, one person was killed and another attacked by a large grizzly bear. Eventually, that bear had to be trapped and shot. After this, people followed the garbage laws and bear-proof garbage cans were born. We are now extremely careful not to leave garbage or other things out that might attract bears into our community. Our attitudes have changed about wildlife over time. Bears are not for our entertainment but they are wild animals that need respect.

**Discussion Questions**  
***Run and Write: "Bears"***

1. Have you ever seen a bear? If so, how did it come about and what was that encounter like?
2. Why is it important not to feed bears or leave food out that they might get?
3. Are you surprised to learn that there are an estimated 60 grizzly bears in the Banff National Park?
4. How have attitudes changed from years ago to now in our treatment of animals?
5. Do you have areas in your country that are protected or certain animals that are protected?

## **The Park in its Early Days**

In an attempt to make the park as friendly as possible for visitors, early park managers tried to eliminate the animals that they considered to be nasty and menacing. Wolves, bears and cougars were killed so that the “happy and care-free” animals that they wanted more of could grow in numbers. Hunting was also legal in the park at this time.

Park managers didn't realize that predators played a very important part in the natural environment by maintaining balanced numbers of those friendly animals like the deer and elk. This predator elimination program was in Banff up until 1959 but Parks Canada no longer collects or hunts animals. Today, National Parks play a significant role in protecting the animals and natural landscapes of Canada.

## **Discussion Questions**

### ***Run and Write “The Park in its Early Days”***

1. How have attitudes changed from years ago to now in our treatment of animals?
2. Do you have National Parks in your country? If yes, describe them: what is the purpose, how many are there, have you been to them etc.
3. Are there any animals in your country that are protected?
4. Do you know the names of any other National Parks in Canada?
5. Have you ever been to a National Park in Canada? If yes, where did you visit and what did you do? If no, where would you like to go?

## **Wildlife Viewing**

One of the amazing things about Banff National Park is the chance to see wild animals living in their natural world. With millions of visitors each year, it takes an effort not to harm the animals that make this park special. To keep wildlife (and people) healthy and safe, here are a few things you can do.

Watch bears from a safe distance of 100 meters and elk from 30 meters. Elk can be especially dangerous when they are mating in the fall and having calves in the spring. Remember never to feed animals either accidentally or on purpose so be careful with food and garbage. Always drive the speed limit.

**Discussion Questions**  
***Run and Write “Wildlife Viewing”***

1. Have you ever been to Banff National Park or another national park in Canada? If yes, where did you visit and what did you do? If no, where would you like to go?
2. Do you have national parks in your country? If yes, describe them: what is the purpose, how many are there, have you been to them etc.
3. What was some new information that you learned from this Run and Write?
4. What are some other animals that you expect to see in Banff National Park?
5. What are some other ways to keep animals safe while you enjoy national parks?



## **First National Park**

Banff National Park holds a special place in Canadian history because this is Canada's first national park. The beginning of Banff National Park was the railway. In 1883, three railway workers saw steam coming up from the ground. They climbed down a tree sticking out of the hole and discovered Banff Hot Springs, today known as the Cave and Basin. They had dreams of becoming rich. People would pay for a nice hot bath in this wonderful mineral water.

These men were not the first to discover the springs but they did bring the springs to public attention. The government of Canada paid the men and declared that the hot springs would belong to all Canadians. 26 square kilometers around the hot springs became a protected area. Canada's first national park was born and today it is more than 6500 square kilometers. There are now 43 national parks in Canada.

**Discussion Questions**  
***Run and Write “First National Park”***

1. Do you know the names of any other national parks in Canada?
2. Have you ever been to a national park in Canada? If yes, where did you visit and what did you do? If no, where would you like to go?
3. Do you have national parks in your country? If yes, describe them: what is the purpose, how many are there, have you been to them etc.
4. What was some new information that you learned from this Run and Write?
5. The railway helped with the discovery of the Banff Springs (which is now called the Cave and Basin). Have you ever taken a train in Canada? If yes, how was that experience?

## **Keeping Safe**

When you are hiking, you want to stay safe. The best way to keep yourself and bears safe is to not meet them. Remember to do these things.

- 1) Make noise so bears know you are there. Clap your hands, sing or talk loudly.
- 2) Keep your dog on a leash. Or leave your dog at home.
- 3) Hike in a larger group. A group of 4 or more people is best. Keep close together.
- 4) Use an official trail or path. Hike in daylight.
- 5) Watch for bear signs. You might see bear droppings or rocks turned over. If you do, leave the area immediately.
- 6) Have fun in Banff National Park!

**Discussion Questions**  
***Run and Write “Keeping Safe”***

1. Have you ever been to a national park in Canada? If yes, where did you visit and what did you do? If no, would you like to visit one?
2. Have you ever seen any animals in the wild?
3. What new information did you learn from the Run and Write?
4. Do you have national parks in your country? If yes, how many are there, have you been to them etc.
5. Do you know the names of some national parks in Canada?