

# exploring National Parks

**Many countries all over the world have National Parks. There are about 7000 National Parks throughout the world. Most of them protect natural settings as well as the plants and animals that live there, but a few are in towns and cities.**

The United States of America created the very first one, Yellowstone National Park, in 1872. It is so big that it covers part of three states: Wyoming, Montana and Idaho. People go there to see the geysers (natural hot springs) and amazing rock formations. The most famous geyser, 'Old Faithful', erupts about 20 times a day.

The largest National Park in the world is in Northeast Greenland. The park is so vast that only 30 countries in the world are larger.

**Map showing the National Parks of the United Kingdom.**



## Are there National Parks in England?

There are nine National Parks in England. The first three were the Peak District, the Lake District and Dartmoor, which were all named as National Parks in 1951. Others followed soon afterwards: the North York Moors in 1952, the Yorkshire Dales and Exmoor in 1954 and in 1956 Northumberland. No new ones were added for nearly 50 years. The final two, the New Forest and the South Downs, were designated as National Parks in 2005 and 2010 respectively. The Norfolk Broads was given similar status to the parks in 1989, so it is generally included in information about them.

## Are National Parks in England the same as those in other countries?

Many National Parks around the world cover huge areas of land where nobody lives, but in England most of the countryside within them is used for farming and other activities. As a result, National Parks in England include places where people live and work, as well as wild and beautiful areas where there is little sign of human life.

The National Parks in England are often called 'England's Breathing Spaces' because they are places where people can go to be in the open air, away from the dirt and noise of cities and towns. They provide spectacular scenes of mountains, meadows, moorlands, woods and wetlands.



## Why go to the National Parks?

There are plenty of activities to do in all of the National Parks in England. Visitors can walk or cycle, following marked routes, and many of the parks put on activities for families.

In the Norfolk Broads there are boat trips on the environmentally friendly boat, *The Electric Eel*, and in Dartmoor and the Yorkshire Dales families can go 'geocaching', which is a sort of electronic treasure hunt using maps and satellite navigation devices. In the Lake District, there are 'treetop treks', where children from the age of 5 (and adults!) can clamber across rope bridges, cross wobbly logs and zoom down zip wires.

People who are interested in history can walk along sections of Hadrian's Wall in Northumberland National Park. In some places, people do not even have to go walking: the North Yorkshire Moors Railway has a steam train that takes tourists through all the moorland scenery towards the seaside at Whitby.

## Are there any problems in the National Parks?

There are about 110 million visitors to the parks every year, bringing many benefits to the areas but creating problems too. National Park authorities have to encourage this tourism so that they can afford to conserve the parks and improve them. However, while conservation is made possible and some businesses flourish from the extra customers, many popular towns, villages and beauty spots can be swamped by

visitors. This results in overcrowded car parks and roads choked with traffic. Life can be difficult for people who live there, as gift shops and cafes take over from everyday shops; in popular areas, house prices can become too expensive for local people making it hard for them to stay in the area.

In the rural parts of the parks, too many people walking, cycling or horse riding on the same tracks can result in erosion. Paths can be strengthened, but then they look less natural. Sometimes walkers try to avoid the main paths to lessen the damage, but that can create more of a problem if they trample down grass which provides winter food for animals, or if they climb over fences and dry stone walls and break them down. This also disturbs wildlife and farm animals, especially when sheep are about to have lambs or birds are nesting.

Another major problem, which is not confined to the National Parks, is litter. In the parks it is a particular danger to animals. Broken glass can also cause fires by focusing the rays of the sun. When these start in wild places, they are much harder to control and can damage large areas very quickly, posing a threat to wildlife, people and small villages.

## How can people help?

All National Parks in England promote the Countryside Code, which tells people how to take care of their environment. In America they run a similar scheme: Leave No Trace. If these rules are followed, the National Parks will be preserved and continue to give pleasure to many people for a very long time.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**1**

Which was the first National Park to be established in the world?

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark

**2**

Draw a line to match each place to the date it became an English National Park.

**Place****Date**

New Forest

2010

Lake District

1989

South Downs

1951

Norfolk Broads

2005

Yorkshire Dales

1954

1 mark

**3**Look at the paragraph beginning: *Many National Parks around the world...*

Give one thing that is different about the National Parks in England compared with those in the rest of the world.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark



**4**

Use the following sentence to answer questions 4 (a) and (b).

They provide **spectacular** scenes of mountains, meadows, moorlands, woods and wetlands.

(a) What does the word *spectacular* mean in this sentence?

Tick **one**.

aerial

enormous

impressive

exciting

1 mark

(b) This sentence contains:

Tick **one**.

a simile

alliteration

onomatopoeia

a metaphor

1 mark

**5** Tourism in National Parks has both positive and negative outcomes.

Explain fully what these outcomes are, referring to the text in your answer.

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|  |

3 marks

**6** Put a tick in the correct box to show whether each of the following statements are **fact** or **opinion**.

|  | Fact | Opinion |
|--|------|---------|
| Yellowstone park contains geysers and rock formations.                           |      |         |
| The most recent place to be made a National Park in England was the South Downs. |      |         |
| It is fun clambering over rope bridges in the Lake District.                     |      |         |
| England's National Parks are beautiful.  |      |         |

1 mark

**7**

National Park authorities have to encourage this tourism so that they can afford to **conserve** the parks...

What does the word *conserve* mean in this sentence?

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**1 mark****8**

Look at the subheading: ***Why go to the National Parks?***

Which of the following would be the most suitable replacement for this sub heading?

Tick **one**.

Where are the National Parks?

What are the historical sites in the National Parks?

What can you do in the National Parks?

Where can you cycle in the National Parks?

**1 mark**

9

When explaining the impact that tourists have on the parks, the writer has deliberately chosen language that will have an effect on the reader.

Some of the words in the table below are in bold. Explain the effect of these in each sentence.

| language used                                | explanation of the effect of the language |
|--|---|
| <p>...<i>trample</i> down grass...</p>       | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>                   |
| <p>...roads <b>choked</b> with traffic.</p>  | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>                   |
| <p>...some businesses <b>flourish</b>...</p> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>                   |



3 marks

**10**

This text was written to **inform** people about National Parks.

Give **two** features of the text that support this purpose.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

**1 mark****11**

How does the final paragraph link back to the beginning?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**1 mark**