

“In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks...”

-John Muir

This is a guide and pre-trip planning tool for parents and educators alike to capitalize on a visit to Jenny Lake, located inside Grand Teton National Park. This material is intended to target an audience of 2nd- 6th grade learners with a range of prior knowledge and exposure to the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

1. **Engagement:** The purpose of this structured lesson plan is to expose, excite and engage young populations about the vast majesty of the flora (vegetation) and fauna (animals) of the Jenny Lake area. A main objective is to instill a lasting appreciation through a quality and profound (first-time) exposure. In addition, the instructor or parent should facilitate in cultivating the instinct for children/students to evolve into young stewards of our protected public lands and advocate for a future of preservation, lasting into future decades and generations.

2. **Explain:** This portion will happen over a varied expanse of time before and includes the field experience. Introduce this lesson with conversation meant to assess previous knowledge and help to make any past experience connections the student(s) could have. In addition, read aloud the short picture book [The Camping Trip That Changed America](#), written by Barb Rosenstock. This entertaining story is the nonfiction account which frames the unlikely friendships between naturalist John Muir and President Theodore Roosevelt which supported the creation and preservation of U.S. National Parks. In addition, obtain a copy of [Who Pooped in the Park](#), by Gary Robson for a quick fact reference of animals native to this region.

The next step is preparing for and conducting the actual trip into the field. With help and support, students will be expected to complete the following learning targets:

- Preparedness for outdoor adventure for a variety of mountain weather conditions, including packing a backpack, appropriate layers and food/water.
- Demonstrate initial awareness and risk assessment of self within environment.
- Explain the [Leave No Trace](#) platform and remember the seven principles.

Plan ahead and prepare.

Travel and camp on durable surfaces.

Pack it in, pack it out.

Dispose of waste properly.

Leave what you find.
Minimize use and impact of fire.
Respect wildlife.
Be considerate of other visitors.

- Define the term environmental stewardship.
- Warrant knowledge by providing examples of native and common animals to area and describing natural habitat and diet.
- **Explore:** While in the field and exploring Jenny Lake, ride the shuttle boat across the lake to the West dock and hike the established trail to Hidden Falls. During the ride, ask staff and operators about systems and policies they have incorporated to cultivate environmental sustainability and examples of how they model those practices at Jenny Lake Boating. While hiking, be observant for sign of animal presence, diet and habitat. In addition, keep a heightened awareness to notice signs of area overuse from tourists and brainstorm strategies to suggest to Jenny lake Boating Staff. After arriving at Hidden Falls, eat snack or lunch and facilitate a discussion around *LNT* and human food/ waste.

Once back at the main Jenny Lake boat dock, inquire about recent wildlife trends, seasonal weather patterns and how this season has behaved within those norms. Irregularity could affect otherwise normal animal behavior and weather trends.

Elaborate: In the hours or day after the field experience, a powerful tool to solidify learning and create a space for follow up conversations is to reflectively journal, including notes and pictures. Parents and educators should encourage the young author to hone in on small moments of the trip and specific interests from the adventure as a segway to elaborate on how to apply their new knowledge to alternative, but similar situations. For example, *“how to act as an environmental ambassador in an area closer to home, potentially improving a current situation, or be a founding member of a cause with a positive effect on that natural place.”*

Additional materials and resources for the support of this lesson:

[Jenny Lake Boating](#)
[National Park Service](#)

Access the Leave No Trace website [here](#)
[The Camping Trip That Changed America](#)

Who Pooped in the Park