

Nebraska State Parks Centennial Lesson Plan



Activity Title:

Civilian Conservation Corps; Building Our State Parks

Grade Level:

Upper Elementary
Middle School

Method:

During this activity students will learn about the background of the CCC and the projects completed in our Nebraska State Parks.

Materials:

Computer
Pencil
Paper

State Standards:

SS 4.4.4.c; SS 6.4.5.c; SS 5.3.1.a; SS 7.4.5.a

Objective:

Students will 1) research Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and Works Progress Administration (WPA) projects in Nebraska, 2) understand the role the CCC and WPA played in developing facilities at Nebraska State Parks 3) utilize writing skills to write a news program report on the projects in Nebraska State Parks.

Background:

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the United States experienced difficult economic times. Many people were out of a job and poor. When Franklin Roosevelt became president in 1933, he started a program called the New Deal. The popular New Deal program was used to help build Nebraska State Parks, along with other state and national parks. The Civilian Conservation Corps provided jobs to put young men back to work. Through their work, these programs built parks, planted trees, and many other things. They also provided important services to the public.

In 1933, the United States was in the grip of the Great Depression. Banks no longer had money. Many people were out of work and hungry. The CCC was established in 1933 by President Roosevelt as one of the first programs in the New Deal. The CCC was designed as a work program for young men from ages 18 to 25. The workers would sign up for a renewable six-month term in which they would work on projects mostly related to land management, soil conservation and parks construction. They received a \$30 per month stipend, \$25 of which was sent home to their families. A number of Nebraska State Parks were developed by the CCC.

The CCC was, and remains, one of the most popular programs of the New Deal. CCC workers lived at camps that were run like army camps. The CCC offered education and skills training. Camps had sports teams, newsletters and recreational activities.

Students will learn about the CCC in general and why it was formed. For this lesson, the students will be divided into groups to do research on the New Deal program that impacted Nebraska State Parks the most: the CCC. As a result of their research, the students should work together to prepare a live-broadcast news program to report on the work of the CCC. Students should be prepared to report on a variety of topics, including President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the CCC camps, and the daily life and work of a member of the CCC. After the news programs, students will discuss how the program benefited the state parks we have here in Nebraska such as Lake Minatare State Recreation Area, Wildcat Hills SRA and Chadron State Park. The students should be able to explain two or three positive things and two or three negative things about the New Deal.

Vocabulary:

Civilian: a person who is not a member of a particular profession or group, as viewed by a member of that group

Conservation: prevention of wasteful use of a resource

Great Depression: the financial and industrial slump of 1929 and subsequent years.

New Deal: series of programs, public work projects, financial reforms, and regulations enacted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the United States between 1933 and 1939

Focus Questions:

In what ways did the CCC help people?

How do we remember the CCC today?

Step-By-Step Instructions:

1. Divide the students into groups of three or four students each.
2. Direct them to conduct Internet research following the links to the resources listed below.
3. Students will use their research to write a news program that reports on the CCC. The news program should include information about President Roosevelt, the CCC camps and the daily life and work of a member of the CCC or WPA. These can either be done as written reports or done as a media broadcast as a video.
4. After the news programs by each group, students should discuss as a class how the program benefited Nebraska State Parks. The students should be able to talk about two or three positive things and two or three negative things about the New Deal in general and the CCC specifically.

Resources:

CCC Legacy www.ccclegacy.org/CCC_Brief_History.html

Brochure on CCC 517th Company www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/files/sp-CCC517_brochure.pdf

Charles E. Hamberger: <https://history.nebraska.gov/collections/charles-e-humberger-1907-2006-rg1574am>

The Civilian Conservation Corps in Nebraska:

<https://history.nebraska.gov/sites/history.nebraska.gov/files/doc/publications/NH1994CCCNebraska.pdf>

CCC Camps in NE: http://www.ccclegacy.org/CCC_Camps_Nebraska.html

American Experience, Teacher's Guide CCC:

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/ccc-teacher-resource/>

State Parks Featured:

Chadron State Park: <https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/chadron-state-park-chadron-ne/>

Niobrara State Park: <https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/niobrara-state-park-niobrara-ne/>

Ponca State Park: <https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/ponca-state-park-ponca-ne/>

Adapted from Indiana State Park Centennial Curriculum