

BACKPACK THE PARKS

Expeditions in Education



Backpack the Parks!



At Expeditions in Education, we believe that learning extends far beyond the classroom walls. That's why we're thrilled to introduce our "Backpack the Parks" initiative, designed to ignite students' curiosity and love for the great outdoors while fostering a deeper understanding of our national parks.

With "Backpack the Parks," educators have the unique opportunity to curate and pack 8 engaging activities into backpacks, making it easier than ever for students to check out and explore the wonders of our national parks. From hands-on science experiments to wildlife scavenger hunts, each activity is carefully crafted to immerse students in the beauty, history, and natural wonders of these treasured landscapes.

Join us in empowering the next generation of park enthusiasts and conservationists as they embark on unforgettable learning adventures in our nation's most cherished natural spaces. With "Backpack the Parks," the journey to discovery begins with the turn of a backpack strap, and the possibilities for educational exploration are endless.

Backpack the Parks!



Instruction

Step 1: Ask for Donations of Backpacks and Clean Them Up

- Reach out to parents, local businesses, or the school community to request donations of gently used backpacks.
- Inspect the donated backpacks for any damage or excessive wear.

Step 2: Print the Activity Cards and Laminate

- Prepare activity cards that detail each of the educational activities you plan to include in the backpacks.
- Print these activity cards on durable cardstock paper.
- Laminate the activity cards to protect them from wear and tear during use.

Step 3: Put Cards on Rings

- Hole punch each laminated activity card.
- Use rings or zip ties to secure the cards together, creating a set of instructions for each activity.

Step 4: Purchase or Collect the Materials Needed for the Activities

- Create a list of materials required for each activity, as outlined in your activity plan.
- Gather all the necessary materials for each activity. This may include items such as magnifying glasses, sketchbooks, rocks, clay, flashlights, and more.

Step 5: Put Materials in Ziplock Bags

- Organize the materials for each activity into separate ziplock bags.
- Ensure that each bag contains all the necessary materials, making it easy for students to access and use them.

Step 6: Attach the National Park Tag to the Outside of the Bag

- Create or print a National Park-themed tag that identifies the backpack as part of the Backpack the Park program.
- Attach this tag securely to the outside of the ziplock bag or backpack.

Activity 1: Sand Dune Formation and Stabilization Lab

Materials:

- Sand
- Containers
- Water
- Various objects
- (e.g., shells, rocks)
- Native plant seeds

Instructions:

1. Create small sand dunes in containers.
2. Simulate erosion by pouring water gently on some dunes and leaving others untouched.
3. Discuss how native plants can stabilize dunes and have students plant seeds in the sand.

Activity 2: Sea Turtle Nesting Simulation

Materials:

- Sand
- Plastic sea turtle models or drawings
- Sticks
- Eggs (marbles or beads)

Instructions:

1. Create a mock sea turtle nest on the sand.
2. Place plastic sea turtle models or drawings near the nest.
3. Discuss the life cycle of sea turtles and their nesting habits, and have students simulate the nesting process with sticks and placing eggs (marbles or beads) in the nest.

Activity 3: Historical Restoration Design

Materials:

- Images of historical structures on Cumberland Island
- Drawing materials
- Cardboard or craft materials

Instructions:

1. Show students images of historical structures on Cumberland Island.
2. Assign them the task of designing a model of a restored historical building using drawing materials and craft supplies.

Activity 4: Wild Horse Ecology Study

Materials:

- Photos or drawings of wild horses
- Paper
- Markers
- Research materials

Instructions:

1. Introduce students to the wild horses of Cumberland Island.
2. Have students create fact sheets or reports on these horses, including their behaviors, habitat, and importance to the island's ecosystem.

Cumberland Island NS



Cumberland Island NS

Activity 5: Invasive Species Identification

Materials:

- Pictures or samples of invasive species
- Field Guides or online resources

Instructions:

1. Teach students about invasive species that threaten Cumberland Island's ecosystem.
2. Show them pictures or samples and have them identify these species.
3. Discuss the impact of invasive species and potential solutions.

Activity 6: Carnegie Family Historical Timeline

Materials:

- Historical information about the Carnegie family
- Paper
- Markers

Instructions:

1. Create a timeline of key events in the history of the Carnegie family's influence on Cumberland Island.
2. Assign students to research and present different aspects of the family's impact.

Activity 7: Island Formation Model

Materials:

- Sand
- Clay
- Rocks
- Water
- Shallow containers

Instructions:

1. Discuss the formation of barrier islands like Cumberland Island.
2. Have students create a model using sand, clay, rocks, and water to simulate the formation of barrier islands over time.

Activity 8: Beach Erosion Experiment

Materials:

- Sand
- Water
- Small beach area (a sandbox or tray)
- Toy figures (optional)

Instructions:

1. Set up a small beach area with sand.
2. Use water to simulate the effects of erosion on the beach, discussing the importance of protecting coastlines.

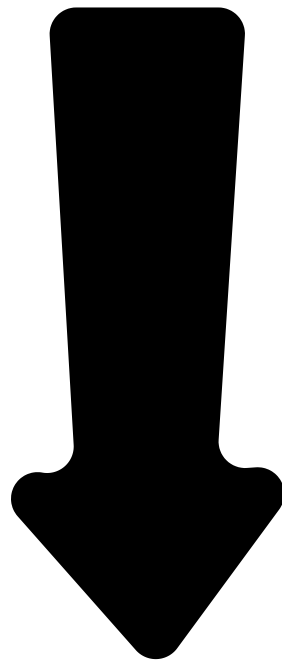
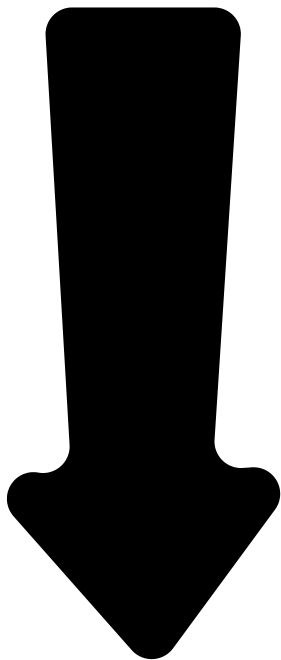


Activity Cards

Print on cardstock

Laminate

Put on rings



Activity 1: Sand Dune Formation and Stabilization Lab

Materials:

- Sand
- Containers,
- water,
- Various objects (e.g., shells, rocks),
- Native plant seeds



Instructions:

1. Create small sand dunes in containers.
2. Simulate erosion by pouring water gently on some dunes and leaving others untouched.
3. Discuss how native plants can stabilize dunes and have students plant seeds in the sand.
4. Draw a diagram of your sand dune and label it.

Activity 2: Sea Turtle Nesting Simulation

Materials:

- Sand
- Plastic sea turtle models or drawings
- Stick
- Eggs (marbles or beads)



Instructions:

1. Create a mock sea turtle nest on the sand.
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Activity 5: Invasive Species Identification



Materials:

- Pictures or samples of invasive species
- Field Guides or online resources

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Activity 6: Carnegie Family Historical Timeline



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Instructions:

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BAG TAG BELOW!



**Cumberland Island
National Seashore
Backpack the Parks!**

#ExploreTheParksWithUs

**"Pack Your Curiosity,
Explore Nature's Beauty!"**

www.expeditionsineducation.org

More Resources for bags:

Carnegie History:

The Carnegie family's history on Cumberland Island is intertwined with their significant influence on the island's development and conservation. Here is a timeline highlighting key events and milestones related to the Carnegie family's presence on Cumberland Island:

1880s: Thomas M. Carnegie, the brother of steel magnate Andrew Carnegie, and his wife Lucy purchased land on Cumberland Island as a winter retreat.

1884: Construction begins on Dungeness, a grand mansion on Cumberland Island.

1886: Dungeness is completed as a 59-room castle-like mansion.

1900: Greyfield, another estate on Cumberland Island, is built by Lucy Carnegie. It is now a private inn owned by the Carnegie family.

1929: Dungeness is last used for the wedding of a Carnegie daughter.

1959: Dungeness mansion burns down in a fire, believed to have been started by a poacher.

1972: Plum Orchard, another estate on the island, is donated to the National Park Service, which maintains it and offers daily tours.

1980s: Cumberland Island National Seashore is established, preserving a significant part of the island.

1996: John F. Kennedy Jr. and Carolyn Bessette are married on Cumberland Island in the First African Baptist Church, with their reception at the Greyfield Inn.

More Resources for bags:

Invasive Species:

Feral Hogs: Imagine big, wild pigs running around on the island! These are feral hogs, and they can be a bit of a problem. You know how you sometimes dig in the sand at the beach? Well, feral hogs dig too, but they do it in the soil, looking for food. This digging can hurt the plants that grow on the island and make it easier for bad plants to grow.

The people who take care of the island, called the National Park Service (NPS), are working to control these wild pigs. They want to make sure the island stays healthy for all its animals and plants.

Japanese Climbing Fern: This is a vine that likes to climb up on other plants and trees. It's a bit like a plant that won't share. When it grows too much, it can cover up the other plants and make it hard for them to get sunlight and air. That's not fair! The NPS is trying to stop this plant from spreading too much and taking over the island.

Chinese Tallow: This is a tree that doesn't belong on the island. It's from far away, and it's really good at growing fast. Sometimes, it grows so much that it blocks out the sun for the other trees, and they can't grow. It's a bit like a tree bully. The NPS is keeping an eye on these trees to make sure they don't take over the island.

Cogongrass: Imagine a grass that grows really quickly and doesn't let other plants grow. That's cogongrass. It's like having too many weeds in your garden. This grass can make it hard for the other plants and animals on the island. The NPS is working hard to stop cogongrass from spreading too much.

Brazilian Pepper: This plant is a bit like an unwelcome guest. It comes to the island and takes up space, pushing the other plants away. It can form big groups, like a gang of plants, and it's hard for the native plants to compete. The NPS is trying to keep this plant from taking over and crowding out the other plants.

Privet: Privet is a plant that's not supposed to be on Cumberland Island. It grows into big, dense groups and can make it tough for other plants to grow. It's like having a party and not inviting anyone else! The NPS is making sure privet doesn't become too popular on the island.