

Lesson 10: COMPARE THE PARKS

- What You Need to Know:**
- Grade Level: All Levels
 - Curriculum Connections: English—Language Arts
 - *Kids' Guide* Correlation: Use this lesson in conjunction with pages 8-9 and 21 of the *Guide*. As your class explores MacArthur Park and Palisades Park, use this collaborative activity to help students reflect on how parks are similar and different and why parks are important in the life of the city. This activity is designed to be a supplement to additional trips along Wilshire Boulevard to see Hancock Park (the site of the La Brea Tar Pits), Lafayette Park, Christine Emerson Reed Park, and Douglas Park. You can easily modify this activity to have students explore and reflect on the parks in your own community.
 - Website Correlation: Go to “Explore the Blvd.” at www.curatingthecity.org. Use the neighborhood profile for the “Parks District” section and, within that section, the profiles on MacArthur and Lafayette Parks for photos and background information. You can also use “Sort By” “Contemporary Function” to see the parks along Wilshire, or “Find a Building” to locate photos and more information on Lafayette Park, La Brea Tar Pits, Reed Park, and Douglas Park.
- Focus Questions:**
- How are MacArthur Park and Palisades Park similar and different?
 - What makes other the parks along Wilshire, such as Hancock Park (the site of the La Brea Tar Pits), Lafayette Park, Reed Park, or Douglas Park special?
 - Why are parks important?
 - What do the parks tells us about how Los Angeles has changed over the years?
- Expected Learning Outcomes:**
- Students will be able to identify unique characteristics of MacArthur Park, Palisades Park, Hancock Park, Lafayette Park, Reed Park, and Douglas Park.
 - Students will be able to express why parks are important.
 - Students will be able to explain what the parks tell us about how Los Angeles has changed over the years.
- Assessment:** Work with teammates to write and illustrate a guidebook entry about one of the parks on Wilshire.
- Essential Vocabulary:** guidebook
template

Materials: Lesson 10 worksheet
paper
pencils
computer with desktop publishing or web publishing software (optional)
sample guidebooks to share with the class
camera (optional)

PROCEDURE

Motivation: Distribute paper and pencils to students. Ask them to write freely for five minutes about a time they remember at a park. Encourage them to use specific details, to describe what they did at the park, and to share what they like about it. Have students share their responses. Tell students that they will be working together to create a guidebook for the parks of Wilshire Boulevard.

Making Connections: Ask students to share what they know about guidebooks. What kinds of information are found in guidebooks? For what purposes do people use guidebooks? In what situations have they used guidebooks?

Guided Instruction:

1. Divide the class into small groups and distribute a sample guidebook to each group. Direct each group to look closely at the guidebook. Have them identify the categories of information covered, the method of presentation, and the use of images. Have students share their findings with each other, and compare different guidebook styles. Which styles do students feel are most successful? Why?
2. Ask students to think about these guidebooks in the context of having to design their own guidebook for Wilshire's parks. Which models did they like? Why?
3. Define *template* for the class. Help students understand that a template is a model to work from, to ensure that multiple pieces of work follow similar rules. Based on their observations of the sample guidebooks, direct a group conversation in which students generate a template for their class guidebook.
4. Take time with your class to visit the parks on Wilshire. Encourage students make close observations and take detailed notes. Have students use the first two pages of the Lesson 10 worksheet to record information. (You may need to make multiple copies of pages 1 and 2 if you visit many parks.) If cameras are available, delegate students to take pictures of each park. If not, they can make sketches or describe what they see in words.
5. When you return to the classroom, direct each group to use what they found out to create a guidebook entry. Have students use page 3 of the Lesson 10 worksheet for the written portion of their entry.
6. Have students lay out their text and their images on a piece of paper. Bind all groups' entries together to create a class guidebook. If you have the resources available, you can also have each group use desktop publishing software for design and layout; you could also have each group present their information as a web page.

7. When the class has finished the guidebook, help students reflect on parks as historic places. Help students see that natural environments, like buildings, tell us a great deal about our history as a community. Preservationists seek to preserve historic cultural landscapes, from urban parks, to college campuses, to farmland. Invite students to reflect on why these natural spaces are important to protect and preserve.

Assessment:

Have students work in groups to write and illustrate a guidebook entry for one of the parks on Wilshire.

Reflection/

Critical Thinking:

- Why are parks important?
- What do parks tell us about how Los Angeles has changed over the years?
- Why do cities need parks more than suburban or rural areas?
- What would life in Los Angeles be like without parks?
- How is preserving a park different from preserving a building? What makes it easier? More difficult? Why is it important? What would it be like if we lost these open spaces?

Enrichment

Opportunities:

1. Have students use what they know about parks to design their own parks. Encourage students to create images in a bird's-eye view, and remind them to include space in the park for different kinds of activities: walking, athletics, children's play, eating, and so on.
2. Griffith J. Griffith was a prominent Angeleno of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century who donated the land for Griffith Park. Have students use the Internet to do research on this individual.
3. Los Angeles' city parks and wildlife reserves are home to a surprising range of wildlife. Have students do research on the different animals that can be found in this area, including coyotes, mule deer, bobcats, raccoons, skunks, mountain lions, rabbits, owls, falcons, harriers, rattlesnakes, and gopher snakes.
4. Have students visit the website for the National Trust for Historic Preservation (www.nationaltrust.org) to find out more about efforts to preserve historic cultural landscapes.

Worksheet Answers:

Answers will vary.

California Standards:

English–Language Arts (Reading):

- 3.2.3 Demonstrate comprehension by identifying answers in the text.
- 3.2.4 Recall major points in the text and make and modify predictions about forthcoming information.
- 3.2.6 Extract appropriate and significant information from the text, including problems and solutions.
- 4.2.3 Make and confirm predictions about text by using prior knowledge and ideas presented in the text itself, including illustrations, titles, topic sentences, important words, and foreshadowing clues.
- 5.2.3 Discern main ideas and concepts presented in texts, identifying and assessing evidence that supports those ideas.
- 5.2.4 Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and prior knowledge.

- 9&10.2.5 Extend ideas presented in primary or secondary sources through original analysis, evaluation, and elaboration.
- 11&12.2.3 Verify and clarify facts presented in other types of expository texts by using a variety of consumer, workplace, and public documents.

English–Language Arts (Writing):

- 2.1.0 Students write clear and coherent sentences and paragraphs that develop a central idea. Their writing shows they consider the audience and purpose. Students progress through the stages of the writing process (e.g., prewriting, drafting, revising, editing successive versions).
- 2.1.1 Group related ideas and maintain a consistent focus.
- 3.2.2 Write descriptions that use concrete sensory details to present and support unified impressions of people, places, things, or experiences.
- 4.2.1 Write narratives:
- Relate ideas, observations, or recollections of an event or experience.
 - Provide a context to enable the reader to imagine the world of the event or experience.
 - Use concrete sensory details.
 - Provide insight into why the selected event or experience is memorable.
- 5.2.4 Write persuasive letters or compositions:
- State a clear position in support of a proposal.
 - Support a position with relevant evidence.
 - Follow a simple organizational pattern.
 - Address reader concerns.
- 6.2.2 Write expository compositions (e.g., description, explanation, comparison and contrast, problem and solution):
- State the thesis or purpose.
 - Explain the situation.
 - Follow an organizational pattern appropriate to the type of composition.
 - Offer persuasive evidence to validate arguments and conclusions as needed.
- 7.2.4 Write persuasive compositions:
- a. State a clear position or perspective in support of a proposition or proposal.
 - b. Describe the points in support of the proposition, employing well-articulated evidence.
 - c. Anticipate and address reader concerns and counterarguments.
- 8.2.1 Write biographies, autobiographies, short stories, or narratives:
- a. Relate a clear, coherent incident, event, or situation by using well-chosen details.
 - b. Reveal the significance of, or the writer's attitude about, the subject.
- 9&10.1.2 Use precise language, action verbs, sensory details, appropriate modifiers, and the active rather than the passive voice.
- 9&10.2.6.a Report information and convey ideas logically and correctly.
- 11&12.1.3 Structure ideas and arguments in a sustained, persuasive, and sophisticated way and support them with precise and relevant examples.

STUDENT WORKSHEET

Name _____

Though parks are used in similar ways around the world, no two parks are the same. Your mission: to learn more about the parks along Wilshire Boulevard. Use the guide below to take notes on your visits to MacArthur Park, Palisades Park, Hancock Park, Lafayette Park, and/or Reed Park.

Name of Park _____ Date visited _____

Location _____

General description _____

How would you describe the size of this park? _____

What is the green space like? What plants do you see? _____

What do you see in the hardscape? (that's anything in the park that was built by humans, such as tables, benches, concrete areas, and so on)

Does this park have play structures? If so, what are they like?

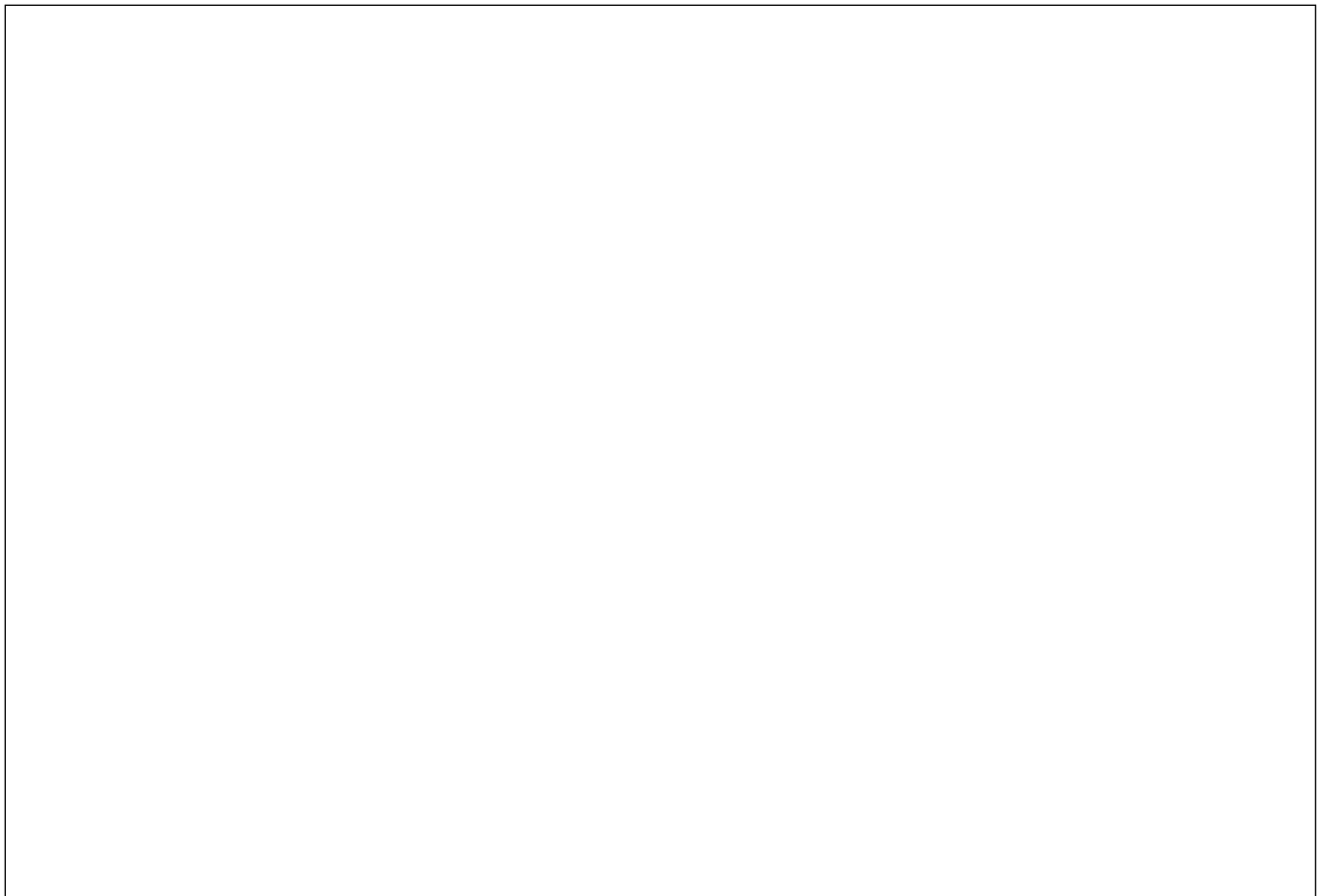
What do you like/dislike about this park?

How are people using this park?

What is the “feel” of this park?

Do you recommend this park as a good place to visit? Why or why not?

Sketch a scene at this park:



WRITE A GUIDEBOOK ENTRY.

Now you'll be working with classmates to create an entry for a guidebook on Wilshire's parks. Here's what you need to do:

1. **Write an entry.** Use your notes to make sure you've included all the important information.
2. **Make sure you have good images.** You may choose to draw illustrations, use photographs that you've downloaded from the Internet, or use photographs that you've taken yourself.
3. **Lay out your page.** You may choose to cut and paste your text and images onto a piece of paper. You can also choose to use a computer program to design and lay out your page.
4. **Create a website.** Use your information to design an exciting web page for your park. Work with your partners to find a way to present your information to the reader in a clear and interesting way.