

Shenandoah National Park Education Program Teacher Checklist 2nd– 6th Grade Programs

Schedule the park field trip

Contact the Education Office at **540-999-3489** beginning the first week of August to schedule your program. Have the following information ready when you call: preferred date of visit, grade level and number of students, preferred program time, and the names of the teachers who will be on the field trip. Have alternate dates in mind in case the date you want is already taken. Obtain the necessary school and parental permission and make transportation arrangements.

Recruit Chaperones

Recruit competent chaperones to assist you on the field trip. The park requires at least 1 adult for every 10 students. Explain your expectations for the adults participating in the program as chaperones.

Collaborate with the other teachers and do pre-visit activities

The workshop-trained teachers should provide Shenandoah Education curriculum materials to all participating teachers. Administer the pre-test prior to beginning the unit of study. Then conduct pre-visit activities to prepare students for their park visit.

Talk with a ranger

A ranger will contact you approximately 1 week in advance of the field trip to discuss final details of your park visit.

Review appropriate park behavior

Review the mission of the National Park Service and Shenandoah National Park. Remind students of simple things they can do to protect the park during their visit and that they will still be “in school” while on the field trip.

- All plants and animals are protected. Do not pick, harm, or remove resources.
- Animals are all around. By staying quiet, you’ll have a better chance to observe them.
- Be aware of safety concerns. Look before you sit or touch. Running, pushing, and horseplay can cause accidents.

Plan lunch

School groups are welcome to picnic in the park after the program. *Note: Picnic areas offer picnic tables and restrooms, but there are no shelters for inclement weather.

Organize groups, nametags, clothing, and snacks: Divide students into groups of 15 or less before arriving at the park. Assign chaperones to groups. Provide nametags for all participants, including adults. Remind everyone to wear sturdy shoes (no sandals), long pants, and to dress in warm, water-resistant layers.

Check weather

Check the following web sites for conditions and forecasts

Weather camera at Big Meadows

<http://www.instacam.com/showcam.asp?id=LRAY1&size=S>

Forecast for Shenandoah National Park

<http://www.intellicast.com/Local/Weather.aspx?location=USVA9716>

We will not cancel the park field trip unless weather conditions are determined to be unsafe. If your school must cancel because of weather concerns, contact the Education Office. The Education staff will try to reschedule the program.

Develop pre-program introduction

Prepare a short introduction, no longer than 5 minutes, to be presented just prior to the ranger-guided hike. This introduction will bridge the classroom and park experience. This may be a teacher-led review that incorporates basic concepts, vocabulary, and appropriate park behavior; or a create a class skit, song, or puppet show. This will give the rangers a good perspective on what your students already know.

*Note: Please keep it brief! The more time spent on this activity will reduce the time spent exploring the park.

Field Trip experience

Plan for adequate travel time and arrive 15-20 minutes before the start of your program to allow time for a restroom break. Meet the rangers at the pre-determined location. Provide a snack break before the 2-hour program.

Do post-visit activities and assessments

Review and share experiences from the park visit. Have students do post-visit activities, discuss what they learned, and review the mission of the National Park Service. Administer the post-test after the unit is completed. Send class assessment results and student work samples to:

Education Office
Shenandoah National Park
3655 US Hwy 211 E
Luray, VA 22835.