



Target Audience

Students in grades K-5

Program Objectives:

- Educate children ages 4-11 about how wildfires start and how they can help prevent wildfires.
- Create familiarity and enthusiasm among children about Smokey Bear, his friends, and his message about wildfire prevention.

Grades K-2

Activity One

What is a Forest?

Objectives:

- Students will understand the importance of forests and wildfire prevention.
- Students will understand the impact a wildfire can have on the land and inhabitants in and around the forest.

Establish Prior Knowledge:

Ask students what they know about forests. Have they ever been to a forest? What did they see in the forest? If there is a forest near your school, arrange a field trip to walk through the forest and jot down observations.

Procedure:

1. Read or paraphrase the following information about forests.

Forests cover a lot of land on Earth. They are filled with trees, plants, animals, and insects. Forests give shade, food, and shelter to the many animals and plants who live in them.

Forests are good for people, too. They are fun to visit. They also give us food, medicine, and clean air.

Forests are important. We do not want forests to catch fire. We need to help keep forests safe and healthy.

2. Ask: Why do you think it is important to keep forests safe?
3. Ask students if they have ever seen or experienced a campfire. If so, did they notice if their parents or camp leaders took any special steps to make sure the fire was put out? Connect the importance of campfire safety to preventing wildfires. Direct students' attention to the rules illustrated in Smokey's forest scene on the activity sheet.

Read each rule aloud and discuss them with students.

- Smokey's friends don't play with matches or fireworks.
- Never leave a campfire alone.
- Always keep a bucket of water and a shovel near a campfire.
- Have an adult put out the campfire completely before leaving the forest.

Extension Activities:

1. Invite students to write about or discuss what they like best about forests.
2. Ask students to consider who might be affected by wildfires. Is it just trees and animals? How might people be affected too?
3. Encourage students to bring their activity sheets home to parents.
4. Talk to your school librarian about setting aside some forest books to read with students, or for them to read on their own. Students may present reports on the books they have read. See the last page of this guide for suggested titles.

This program meets the following National Science Content Standards for grades K-4 (also applicable to grade 5):

Life Science

- Organisms and their Environments

Science in Personal and Social Perspectives

- Types of Resources
- Changes in Environments

The Story of Smokey

Objectives:

- Students will be introduced to Smokey Bear.
- Students will learn and comprehend Smokey's fire prevention message.

Establish Prior Knowledge:

Ask students if they have heard of Smokey Bear. Ask if they know what his message to children is.

Procedure:

1. Read students the following story of Smokey Bear.

It was a hot, dry May in the Lincoln National Forest in New Mexico. Deer rested under cool trees. Fish hid along cool stream banks. Sticks and pine needles on the forest floor were so dry that they would crackle and crunch when animals or people walked on them.

One day, a person who was visiting the forest was careless with fire. No one knows if he dropped a lit match, or left his campfire burning, or forgot to crush out a cigarette. But everyone knows what did happen next. The little spark, caused by one person, quickly became a huge wildfire.

The animals, birds, and fish tried to escape the fire. Some could not escape. Even in streams, fish choked on ash from the fire. Many firefighters worked for five days to put the wildfire out.

When the fire was finally out, the firefighters found a frightened bear cub clinging to a burned tree. Bits of the cub's fur and his paws had been burned in the fire. The firefighters took care of the bear cub until his injuries were all healed. They named the bear "Smokey."

Smokey Bear became a living symbol of wildfire prevention. He travels around the country, telling boys and girls how they can help prevent wildfires.

2. Ensure that students understood the story. Ask follow-up questions:

- What do you think Smokey's home was like?
- What was the weather like that spring? Why do you think that is important?
- What are some ways the fire might have started?
- What happened after the fire?
- Find Lincoln National Forest in New Mexico on a map.

3. **Work with students to complete the poem on the activity sheet.**

If your students are pre-readers, read the poem aloud and elicit responses from the class to fill in the blanks. Students who can read and write on their own can work independently or with a partner to complete the poem.

*This is the story of Smokey Bear
who wants you to treat our forests with care.*

A forest is full of animals and trees.

It's also home to birds, fish, and bees.

*Smokey Bear spends every day and night
making sure the forest is just right!*

*He works very hard and he does not tire
to make sure he prevents a forest wildfire.
He tells his friends not to handle matches
because in a forest, fire quickly catches.
Keep forests safe, so animals can roam.
After all, the forest is their home.*

Extension Activity:

Play a game of **Wildfire Tag** on your playground or in your school gymnasium. This game acts out Smokey's Friends protecting a forest from a spreading fire.

- You will need one piece of red construction paper, four pieces of brown construction paper, and twenty pieces of thick colored yarn tied into circles. Prepare the game by cutting a flame shape from the red construction paper, and Smokey Bear shapes out of the brown paper.
- One student in the class is the wildfire. Adhere the red paper flame to the student's shirt with masking tape.
- Four students are Smokey's Friends (who represent forest rangers or firefighters). Adhere the bear shapes to their shirts. Smokey's Friends will each hold five yarn circles. Other students in the class are trees in the forest, and should stand in random locations around the area.

How to play:

- When the teacher says "Go!" the "Wildfire" starts to run around, grabbing the hand of as many "trees" as he or she can.
- When the "Wildfire" catches a tree, that tree becomes part of the wildfire and runs around catching more trees. The "Wildfire" will thus become a chain of students holding hands.
- Smokey's Friends run around and "protect" as many trees as possible by putting the yarn circles over their heads. A tree can only be protected if it has not yet become part of the wildfire. Once a tree is protected, it cannot become part of the wildfire. The protected trees join hands to become a "firebreak" which will keep the fire contained in one area. (In a real fire, this might be a section of wet earth.)
- The game is over when all the trees have been tagged. See how many trees became part of the fire, and how many were protected by Smokey's Friends.

Smokey Says...

Objectives:

- To familiarize students with Smokey's Rules of Fire Prevention.
- To provide students with the knowledge and skills to prevent accidental fires.

Establish Prior Knowledge:

Students may have participated in Fire Prevention Week activities at your school this year or in previous years. If so, review the key points your class learned during Fire Prevention Week.

Procedure:

Copy and distribute the activity sheet. Have students work on the activity sheet either in school or at home with parents. They should bring the completed sheets back to class to discuss answers. Suggested answers appear below in italics.

Smokey's Five Rules of Fire Prevention

- Smokey's friends don't play with matches.
WHY? A match can accidentally drop and start a fire.
- If you find matches at home, give them to your parents.
WHY? Adults should handle matches, not kids.
- If you find matches on the way to school, give them to your teacher.
WHY? Adults should handle matches, not kids.
- If you see younger children playing with matches, tell an adult.
WHY? Kids should not play with matches. Matches are not toys. They can be dangerous.
- If you see a fire burning out of control, tell an adult.
WHY? An adult needs to know about any dangers in the area. An adult should call 911 or your local emergency number immediately to report the location of the fire. If no adult is available, know to call 911 or your local emergency number!

Grades K-2

Take-Home Activity

What's the Story?

Copy and distribute the take-home activity. Instruct students to work with a parent/guardian, using the information they have learned through the other three activity sheets and using information found on www.smokeybear.com to complete the comic strip by adding the words that tell the story. Adults can help writing down the words that children create for the story. If students do not have Internet access at home, encourage them to visit their school or local library.



Note to Teachers: Would you like Smokey Bear to visit your school? Go to www.stateforesters.org to contact your state forester and arrange an educational and memorable visit from Smokey.

Grades 3-5

Activity One

Our Nation's Forests

Objectives:

- To familiarize students with the United States' state and national forests.
- To develop interest among students about caring for forests and their resources.

Establish Prior Knowledge:

Ask students: Have you ever visited a state or national forest? Which forest(s)? Share photos, brochures, and web sites about national forests with students. You can find national forest web links

at the United States Forest Service web site at www.fs.fed.us, or the National Association of State Forester's web site at www.stateforesters.org.

Procedure:

Copy and distribute the activity sheet. Have students read over the forest and fire facts. Students should work independently on the math problems.

Answers: 1. c; 2. b; 3. a; 4. 20,833,300.

Extension Activities:

1. Are there any state or national forests in your state? If so, have students locate them on a map.
2. Have each student select a state or national forest to research. Have them create travel brochures for their forests to share with their classmates. Be sure to have them include a map showing where the forest is, and tips for keeping the forest safe.
3. Compare the different types of forests that students find. For example, how is the Coconino National Forest in Arizona different from the White Mountain National Forest in New England? Or, what are the different types of trees found in geographically diverse state forests?
4. Discuss the high number of visits to national forests. With over 25 million visits every year, what are some precautions visitors can take to make sure that they do not have a negative impact on the forest environment?
5. Ask students if they have ever seen or experienced a campfire. If so, did they notice if their parents or camp leaders took any special steps to make sure the fire was put out? Connect the importance of campfire safety to preventing wildfires. Direct students' attention to Smokey's Campfire Rules. Read each rule aloud and discuss them with students.

Smokey's Campfire Rules

- Smokey's friends don't play with matches or fireworks.
- Never leave a campfire alone.
- Always keep a bucket of water and a shovel near a campfire.
- Have an adult put out your campfire completely before leaving the forest.

Grades 3-5

Activity Two

The Story of Smokey

Objectives:

- Students will be introduced to Smokey Bear.
- Students will learn and comprehend Smokey's wildfire prevention message.

Establish Prior Knowledge:

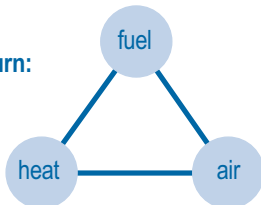
Ask students if they have heard of Smokey Bear. Ask if they know what his message to children is.

Procedure:

1. Ensure that students know how fires occur. Draw the fire triangle on the board.

Fire needs three things in order to burn:

- Fuel (something that will burn)
- Heat (enough to make the fuel burn)
- Air (oxygen)



Ask: In a forest, what might be some sources of fuel and heat?

2. Copy and distribute the activity sheet. Students should read and answer the questions on their own. Go over their answers as a class.

Possible answers:

1. A campfire could have been left unattended, not put out properly, or built near low branches or flammable matter on the ground. A match may have been dropped. A cigarette may not have been put out completely.
2. By knowing Smokey's rules for building and managing campfires (see parent letter), or by taking care with matches, lanterns, and smoking materials, the fire may have been prevented.
3. Loss of or serious damage to forest resources, loss of wildlife and plant habitats, damage to homes and towns surrounding a forest, loss of recreational areas.

Extension Activity:

STORY TIME: Write a story about wildfire prevention. Use Smokey Bear as your main character. What would Smokey want kids your age to know about wildfires?

Grades 3–5

Activity Three

Smokey Says...

Objective:

Students will apply information they have learned to a creative public service project.

Procedure:

1. Copy and distribute the activity sheet. Discuss each of the five rules of fire prevention.
2. Assign students to each pick one rule and design a public service poster around it. The posters should state the rule and clearly convey why each rule is important. Students can present their posters in class. Arrange to display the posters in the school or in your community.

Smokey's Five Rules of Fire Prevention

1. Smokey's friends don't play with matches.
2. If you find matches at home, give them to your parents.
3. If you find matches on the way to school, give them to your teacher.
4. If you see younger children playing with matches, tell an adult.
5. If you see a fire burning out of control, tell an adult.

Grades 3–5

Take-Home Activity

Copy and distribute the take-home activity sheet. Students can work independently or with their families to search the Web for facts. Direct them to www.smokeybear.com — all of the answers can be found on this site! They can also explore other sites. See Web Resources below for more information.

Search for Facts

Answers: Part I

How many acres of forest are there in the United States? *Over 700 million acres*

What kind of bear is Smokey Bear? *American Brown Bear*

Which came first, the Smokey Bear ad campaign — or the discovery of a frightened bear cub, dubbed Smokey, at the site of a forest fire in New Mexico? *The ad campaign*

What are Smokey's Match Rules? *Smokey's friends don't ever play with matches. If you find matches, or see a younger child playing with matches, give them to a grown-up.*

Name three products that are made from trees. *Answers may include: gum, turpentine, cellulose, lumber, wood pulp for paper, maple syrup, cinnamon, nutmeg, coffee, cocoa, rubber, fruit, nuts, cork, and medicine*

Answers: Part II

The following statements are *not* Smokey's Campfire Rules.

1. Look to make sure there aren't any birds in the area.
4. Make sure someone has brought marshmallows.
8. Let every camper take a turn adding wood to the fire.

Smokey's Surveys

Have students conduct the surveys both in class and at home. Tally your answers as a class and create pie charts or bar graphs to display answers. You can also express your answers in terms of percentages.

Web Resources

www.smokeybear.com — The official site of Smokey Bear. Activities for kids with Smokey N' Da Boyz.

www.fs.fed.us — The USDA Forest Service's site, with links to each national forest site.

www.stateforesters.org — The National Association of State Foresters' site.

www.firewise.org — Informative site from the National Fire Protection Association.

Suggested Titles

Our Living Forests (Rookie Read-About Science) by Allan Fowler. Children's Press, 1999.

Forest Fire! by Mary Ann Fraser. Troll, 1999.

Forest (An I Can Read Book) by Laura Godwin. HarperCollins Juvenile Books, 2000.

My Favorite Tree: Terrific Trees of North America (Sharing Nature With Children Book) by Diane Iverson. Dawn Publications, 1999.

Be a Friend to Trees (Let's-Read-And-Find-Out, Stage 2) by Patricia Lauber. HarperCollins Juvenile Books, 1994.

Trees are Terrific! by the National Wildlife Federation. McGraw-Hill Professional Publishing, 1998.

Once There Was a Tree by Natalia Romanova. E. P. Dutton, 1992.

Meeting Trees by Scott Russell Sanders. National Geographic Society, 1997.



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