How do national parks represent different regions of the US?
Anchor Text
*On this map above, the Intermountain region refers to the Southwest region and part of the West Region. The Pacific West region is the West region.

Questions:

Does each region have the same amount of parks?

How are the parks distributed within the regions?

How are the parks distributed across the United States?
The Northeast Region of The United States
Characteristics of The Northeast Region

States:
- Maine
- New Hampshire
- Vermont
- Massachusetts
- Rhode Island
- Connecticut
- New York
- Pennsylvania
- New Jersey
- Delaware
- Maryland

Climate:
- Winters are long and cold
- Snowstorms are common

Features:
- Atlantic Ocean
- Coastal Plain (a low flat plain along the coast)
- Appalachian Mountain Range
- Harbors
- Groovy Coastline
- Erie Canal
- New York (the largest city in America)
- Factories
- Washington D.C. – Our Nation’s Capital
- Megalopolis
- Densely Populated Areas
Questions:

Based on the climate and features, what do you think a National Park in this region might look like?

What are some things people would see there when they visited?
The East

*In this book, the East combines the Southeast and the Northeast region.

In the 1930s, increased automobile travel and new highways made the eastern region of the country more accessible than ever. As a result, people began flocking to this area and its national parks, which eventually became some of the most popular in the country. Today, the northeast and southeast region remain a magnet for national park enthusiasts. Three of this region’s parks – Acadia, Great Smoky Mountains, and Shenandoah – receive millions of visitors each year.

Here you'll pretty much see it all: thick forests, sparkling lakes, meandering streams, bubbling hot springs, and beaches rimmed by coral reefs. There are peaks towering nearly 7,000 feet in the sky and deep caves carved out almost 400 feet below the ground. There are parks set in the heart of the city, and others out in the wilderness. Rich historical sites highlight the birth and growth of our country. And wherever you roam, the diversity of the region’s parks provides habitat for a wide variety of animals. Simply put, from the mountains meeting the sea in Acadia to the fields of flowers in Shenandoah, the region’s biodiversity is breathtaking – and beyond vast.

Questions:

Why are the parks in the Northeast and the Southeast the most visited national parks?

What do you know about the Northeast and Southeast that might cause more people to visit?
Text 3

Acadia National Park – Maine

Otter Cliffs, Acadia National Park, Bar Harbor, Mt. Desert Island, Me. – Tichnor Brothers

Acadia National Park – National Park Service
Question:

*For Each Picture* – What do you see in this picture that represents the Northeast?
The Southeast Region of The United States
Characteristics of the Southeast Region

States:
- West Virginia
- Virginia
- Kentucky
- Tennessee
- North Carolina
- South Carolina
- Georgia
- Florida
- Alabama
- Mississippi
- Louisiana
- Arkansas

Climate:
- Mild winter climate
- Summers are hot and humid
- Hurricanes

Features:
- Atlantic Ocean
- Coastal Plain (low flat plain along coast)
- Appalachian Mountain Region
- Swamp lands
- Coal production
- Petroleum production
- Mississippi River
- Mississippi Delta
- Bayous
- Highlands and lowlands
- Gulf of Mexico
- Port Cities
- A long growing season
- Floodplain
- Plantations

Questions:

Based on the climate and features, what do you think a National Park in this region might look like?

What are some things people would see there when they visited?

How is the Southeast similar to the Northeast? How is it different?
Everglades National Park – Florida
Question:

For Each Picture – What do you see in the picture that represents the Southeast?
The Midwest Region Of The United States
Characteristics of the Midwest Region

States:
- Ohio
- Michigan
- Indiana
- Illinois
- Wisconsin
- Minnesota
- Iowa
- Missouri
- Kansas
- Nebraska
- South Dakota
- North Dakota

Features:
- Inland Region (does not border any ocean)
- Farming Region
- Great Lakes
- Great Plains
- Rivers
- Flat
- Prairie
- Fertile Soil

Questions:
Based on these features, what do you think a National Park in this region might look like?

What are some things people would see in the Midwest if they visited?

How is the Midwest similar to the Southeast region? How is it different?
The Midwest

Nestled in between the Appalachians and the Rocky Mountains, the Midwest parks offer a variety pack of landscapes, from the grand Great Lakes to the sweeping sandstone cliffs of the badlands. Mile upon mile of prairies and cornfields make up most of the Midwest, and the area’s national parks let you roam free among these seemingly endless grasslands. The spirit of America’s frontier is preserved in the rugged scenery and untouched acres that are showcased in the Midwest national parks.

That’s not to say the Midwest is all fields and flowers- it is also home to urban national parks, including Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis (where you’ll find the Gateway Arch) and Cuyahoga Valley near Cleveland, Ohio (visit waterfalls galore!). These areas are incredibly rich in history- one park, for example, traces the route taken by the Lewis and Clark expedition to the Pacific Ocean in the early 1800s, and another is named in honor of President Theodore Roosevelt, who became enchanted with this unique area back in 1883.

And if that’s not enough, there are ancient rock formations to gawk at and a massive network of underground passages to explore. Not to mention there’s plenty of wildlife, too: Deer, pronghorn, bison, reptiles, and of course the prairie dog can all be spotted during your visit to the Midwest.

Questions:

What are some of the biggest differences among parks in the Midwest?

Why do you think the Midwest has the fewest national parks?
Theodore Roosevelt National Park – North Dakota

Hiking Trail on a Clear day at Theodore Roosevelt National Park, North Dakota - N.a.
Winter Wonderland – National Park Service/ Laura Thomas

Question:

*For Each Picture* – What do you see in this picture that represents the Midwest?
The Southwest Region of The United States
Text 9

Characteristics of The Southwest Region

States:
- Oklahoma
- Texas
- New Mexico
- Arizona

Climate:
- Hot
- Dry

Features:
- Plateaus/Mesas
- Canyons
- Deserts
- Caves/Caverns

Questions:

Based on the climate and features, what do you think a National Park in this region might look like?

What are some things people would see in the Southwest Region when they visited?
Text 10

The Southwest

Thousands of years ago, an ancient sea sculpted the landscapes of the Southwest. This resulted in a wide range of dazzling scenery seen in the Southwest’s national parks, including amazing mountain chains, cool dark caverns, dramatic canyons, a flowing river, and rolling dunes of sand. With such diversity in landscapes, the Southwest holds the potential for plenty of fun wherever you go, whether hiking a mountain trail, shooting down river rapids, exploring canyons and caves, or taking a spin along one of the area’s many scenic drives.

Depending on the yearly precipitation, the Southwest is either awash with brilliant blossoms, like the gorgeous Texas bluebonnets, red and orange cactus flowers, and white yucca blooms, or covered by cacti and other plants that thrive in a parched terrain, like the prickly pear.

This varied climate and topography brings a world of wildlife to the Southwest; it’s not unusual to see lizards skittering or snakes slithering along the many trails dissecting the parks. In fact, animals have been roaming this land long before humans, as evident in the many dinosaur fossils found by paleontologists in the Southwest, including the Big Bend pterosaur, the largest animal ever to fly.

Questions:

What led to such diverse parks in the Southwest?

How may national parks in the Southwest look different from year to year?
Grand Canyon National Park - Arizona

Grand Canyon at the Foot of the Toroweap, Looking East – William Henry Holmes
Question:

For Each Image – What do you see in this picture that represents the Southwest?
Questions:

Do the temperatures and rainfall amounts change from month to month in the Grand Canyon?

Thinking about how much rain fell each month and what the temperatures are, how would you describe the weather/climate?
The West Region of The United States
Text 13

Characteristics of the West Region

States:
- Montana
- Wyoming
- Colorado
- Utah
- Idaho
- Washington
- Oregon
- Nevada
- California

Features:
- Mountain Ranges
  • Rocky Mountains
  • Sierra Nevada Mountains
- Great Basin
- Valleys/ Gorges
- Gold Mining
- Forests/ Lumber
- Ranches

Questions:

Based on these features, what do you think a National Park in this region might look like?

What are some things people would see in the West Region when they visited?

How is the West region similar to the Northeast region? How is it different?
The West

Of all the regions in the United States, the West by far has the most national parks. And it’s no wonder. Here, you’ve got it all. You can chill on a tropical island or scale a snow-covered peak. You can hike in the most barren of wildernesses or camp out under a sky of sparkling stars. There are active volcanoes, soaring mountains, majestic glaciers, stunning rock formations, and trees that seem to touch the clouds. Another unique element to the West? The climate is as varied as the landscape: In some locations it’s downright cold, like in Mount Rainier in Washington State, while in others it’s unbelievably steamy, like in California’s Death Valley National Park- the hottest place in North America.

Take a trip to the West and discover large, ancient forests and vast expanses of desert that have been virtually untouched since the days dinosaurs roamed the landscape. Here, you’ll find an abundance of animals, from bears to beavers, frogs to foxes, seals to snakes, and almost everything in between. Whatever you do and wherever you roam, one thing’s for sure: You will be amazed by the spellbinding sights offered by some of our country’s most picturesque parks.

Question:

Why do you think the West has the most national parks?
Text 15

Grand Teton National Park – Wyoming

Moose at Grand Teton National Park – National Park Service/ Gwen Gerber

Willow Flats Area and Teton Range at Grand Teton National Park – Michael Gäbler
Question:

*For Each Image* – What do you see in this picture that represents the West?
From *Happy Birthday to America’s National Parks*

Throughout 2016, the National Park Service will celebrate its 100th anniversary. The National Park service oversees our national parks as they welcome visitors and preserve our heritage. Altogether, there are more than 400 national parks, covering more than 84 million acres, with at least one in every state. They are yours- that is, they belong to all the American people- to explore and enjoy.

Every year people come from across the globe to visit our national parks. Americans visit them, too. In 2014, there were 292,800,082 visitors to our national parks. The very idea of setting aside special places that can never be privately owned is an American idea, and the first national parks were in America. A few of them are actually older than the National Park Service itself, because wise people could see that saving wild places of great beauty would be a great benefit for the future.

At age 100, the National Park Service is both old and young. In its first century, presidents and members of Congress and thousands of ordinary Americans have promoted the idea that the nation’s natural wonders and wildlife, its scenery and its shorelines, its history and its battlefields, should be preserved and protected forever. Now it’s your turn. What the national parks are and what they become in their second century is up to you.

Questions:

How do visitors to National Parks in the United States experience the diversity of our regions?

How can we continue to protect and promote National Parks and the regions they represent?