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SBAC
RANGEFINDING
MEETING

Grade 7

Argumentative – Long Write

Sources

Form 1

Item 43438

National Park Tourism

Assignment and Sources

**SBAC State Assessment
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ITS ID: 43438

Grade: 7 (7)

Item Point: 4 pts. (4 Points)

00. You have 70 minutes to review your sources, plan, draft, and revise your argumentative article. You may refer to the sources. Read your assignment and the information about how your article will be scored; then begin your work.

Your Assignment

Your class is planning a field trip to a national park. After researching about the role of the National Park Service, you have been asked by your teacher to write an argumentative article about national parks for the school newspaper.

Write an article that argues whether the National Park Service should or should not promote tourism for national parks to increase attendance. Be sure that your argument acknowledges both sides of the issue so that people know that you have considered the issue carefully. Support your claim with evidence from the sources. You do not need to use all the sources, only the ones that most effectively support your argument.

Article Scoring

Your argumentative article will be scored on the following criteria:

1. **Statement of purpose / focus and organization**—How well did you clearly state your claim on the topic and maintain your focus? How well did your ideas logically flow from the introduction to conclusion using effective transitions? How well did you stay on topic throughout the article?
2. **Elaboration of evidence**—How well did you provide evidence from the sources to support your opinions? How well did you elaborate with specific information from the sources you reviewed? How well did you effectively express ideas using precise language that was appropriate for your audience and purpose?
3. **Conventions**—How well did you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling?

Now begin work on your article. Manage your time carefully so that you can:

- plan your article
- write your article
- revise and edit for a final draft

Type your response in the space provided. Write as much as you need to fulfill the requirements of the task; you are not limited by the size of the response area on the screen.

REMEMBER: A well-written argumentative article:

- has a clear main idea

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- is well-organized and stays on topic
- provides evidence from the sources to support your topic
- uses clear language that suits your purpose
- follows rules of writing (spelling, punctuation, and grammar)

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Parks Performance Task
CAE

Document #1

from "Statement about the 'Legacy of Parks' Program"
by President Richard Nixon

[An] important event will occur next year, when the United States celebrates the centennial of the beginning of its own national park system—a system which not only has enhanced the American landscape but has also inspired other nations to act in similar ways to save their most valued natural wonders for the enjoyment of future generations. It was in 1872 that Congress established our first national park at Yellowstone and laid the foundation for the creation of other parks in later years. That was a time when Americans were more interested in taming the wilderness than preserving it; yet farsighted and sensitive men and women were able to begin the great work of preservation even then.

In [the twentieth century] that work has been accelerated. In 1916, when the National Park Service was established, we had 37 national parks and monuments. Since that time we have added 246 new areas for the enjoyment of all Americans. Thirteen new areas have been added to the national park system since January of 1969 alone. In 1916, less than one-half million people visited our parks; last year there were 170 million visitations in our national park areas; and as our system has grown to include not only national parks but also national seashores, lakeshores, recreation areas, monuments, parkways, historic sites, and wilderness areas, we have also been learning to meet the many new challenges brought on by the increased prosperity and mobility of our people.

At the same time, the growing popularity of our parks has created a number of serious new problems as millions of Americans have sought the recreation and respite¹ they provide. Traffic congestion and crowded campsites are becoming more common. In many places, natural systems have been overburdened and damaged by the presence of too many people. Wild animals and unique plants have often been crowded out of their traditional habitat. In short, we are beginning to understand that there are limits to the amount of use our parklands can withstand, and that as more and more people seek the great rewards of outdoor life, the experience can be somewhat diminished for each of them.

But these problems are not insoluble. We can meet them, if only we have enough will and imagination and discipline. I believe, for example, that our growing management expertise can teach us how to use our existing parks and forests more efficiently. And I am also convinced that we can substantially expand the acreage of our parklands, providing more adequate and more convenient recreational opportunities for all of our people.

I believe our nation can afford to make these opportunities available. In fact, it is my view that we cannot afford not to provide them. For such a program can significantly enhance the quality of our nation's life and spirit—both now and for future generations.

¹respite: brief time of rest

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Excerpt from "Statement about the 'Legacy of Parks' Program" (August 19, 1971), by President Richard Nixon. In the public domain.

Document #2

Read this essay by a parent who took her children to a national recreation area.

Trip to Chickasaw

If you asked my teenagers two weeks ago if they would enjoy camping out in the wilderness, they would look at you like you were crazy. The older one would tell you, "Of course not! There's nothing to do except stare at all those stupid trees." The younger would say, "No way! There's no electricity or Internet or anything! How would we survive?" And two weeks ago, that's exactly what they said. Of course, at that point, they really didn't have an option; I had made a weeklong reservation for my family at a campsite in the Chickasaw National Recreation Area, which was a short drive away from our home. So off we went into the not completely wild wilderness of the national park.

The first day was somewhat of a nightmare between trying to set up our brand-new tents and trying to get the kids to budge from the tents once they were properly set up; the open space definitely made it much harder to send them to their rooms. Thankfully, the rest of the week went better. My kids, who've lived in and around cities all their lives, started to understand and see the beauty of nature.

Having grown up in a small, rural town with more cows than people, I have always loved nature. Few things are better than the feeling of sun-warmed blades of grass between your toes and the wind against your face. There's nothing like looking out and seeing only green grass and blue skies all the way to the horizon. The city with its tall buildings, concrete streets, and hundreds of honking cars can never replace the wide-open spaces, dirt roads, and songbirds in my heart. This trip was for selfish reasons; I needed a vacation away from the noise of the city that they love so much. But it seemed that despite my selfishness and their initial reluctance, my kids grew to appreciate all the wonders that the park offered.

They loved the swimming beaches with their crystal clear waters, distinct lack of chlorine, and minnows that nipped at their toes and fingers if they stood still enough. They took incredible joy in seeking out and keeping count of the variety of birds we saw as we hiked the numerous trails. And at night, they learned to appreciate nature's music, the chirping of summer crickets and the rustling of leaves in the light breeze. But most important, they realized that when you stopped the ringing of the phones and the click-clacking of keyboards, there are other, more subtle, more soothing sounds to fill the void.

Can I say that a week in nature changed my kids completely? No, but I can definitely say that they seem to have learned to move a little more slowly and to take a little more time to appreciate the world around them because of it. And that's definitely worth the

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whining and the fee of just over a hundred dollars I paid for that campsite. Where else in the world, besides the other national parks, can you find that kind of deal? Not anywhere else that I know of, that's for sure.

Oh, and yes, we'll be returning next year—at the request of my two formerly nature-phobic teenagers, no less.

Document #3

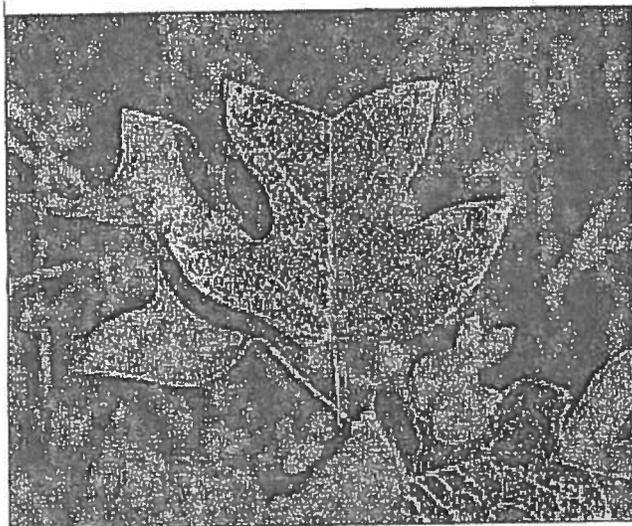
Read this text about some of the issues affecting national parks.

Issues Affecting National Parks

Ozone Pollution

Ozone is a chemical that occurs naturally in the upper atmosphere. When it forms at ground level, it can be harmful to plants and animals. Ozone forms at ground level due to exhaust from cars and trucks reacting with chemicals in the air. At national parks, this can be a problem when many cars and trucks drive by.

Ozone can damage human lungs and immune systems, making people more vulnerable to sinus, lung, and throat diseases. Ozone can also damage plants, decreasing their ability to produce and store food. Plants affected by ozone often show visible signs of the damage, as seen in the following picture.



Invasive Species

One invasive species found just recently in California's Yosemite Park is the goldspotted oak borer. This insect, originally from Mexico and Guatemala, was probably brought to

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California in firewood from Mexico. In the last decade, it has spread and caused damage to oak trees throughout California.

With increased travel and trade around the world, invasive species are becoming more common. Throughout the United States, our forests are threatened by various invasive species. For this reason, visitors may not bring firewood or other plants to national parks.



goldspotted oak borer

Depreciatory Use

National parks seek to provide enjoyment for all visitors. Unfortunately, many visitors will do damage to the park. People may leave garbage and waste in the forest. Feeding animals may be enjoyable to people, but it can disrupt animals' natural habits. Some campers may cut down trees or otherwise kill plants growing in the park. These types of behaviors can threaten the ecosystems of parks and ruin the experience for others.

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damage to a living tree

Source: "Ozone, and Smog," by the National Park Service. In the public domain. Photographs © U.S. Forest Service Ozone Biomonitoring Website; © nps.gov; © Rancy Cyr.

Document #4

Read these two letters written by readers of Travel U.S.A. magazine. The first letter appeared in the July 2011 issue of the magazine, and the second letter appeared in the August 2011 issue.

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor,

I've always enjoyed reading articles about our country's national parks in your magazine. They bring back memories of wonderful experiences I had as a boy. I remember hiking out in the wilderness, falling asleep under the stars, and exploring new areas. My father is a

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park ranger, and every summer he took us to a different national park. These trips gave us great opportunities to learn about science, nature, and history.

Last week, I took my wife and three children to the Grand Canyon National Park so I could show them some of the things that my father showed me when I was young. But there was a difference; the times have changed and, unfortunately for enthusiasts like me, they've changed for the worse.

An enormous parking lot rose up from the middle of the desert as we approached the Grand Canyon. Outside of the park, my children could hear only the roar of motorcycles and the honks of trucks and cars. Roads were lined with restaurants, souvenir shops, and gas stations. Inside the park, lines for the restrooms wrapped around every building, and trash littered the ground. As we got farther away from that ghastly scene, the crowds eventually dispersed, but the trails were badly maintained. Some trails were difficult to walk along because they were so overgrown. Others, to our disappointment, were closed to visitors. When I go to a national park, I want to replicate the experiences that I felt when I was a kid. How can I do that with all of this happening? I couldn't believe my eyes. What are our national parks coming to?

I am sad that my children cannot experience the national parks as the places of beauty and serenity they once were. It's impossible to show my children the same places in this country that were shown to me because they aren't there anymore. What is the point of these parks if no one can even enjoy them?

Kurt Arnot
Little Rock

To the Editor,

I would like to respond to Kurt Arnot's letter in your last issue. Like Mr. Arnot, I am a nature enthusiast, and I have similar childhood memories of enjoying visits to national parks. I have been a park ranger for three years, and I want to show other people what can be experienced in these parks. It's troubling to see how overcrowding can limit people's enjoyment of some of these great places, but most of our national parks are not overcrowded at all; they are practically empty of visitors all year round.

Our national parks are facing a crisis. In tough economic times, such as those our country has recently experienced, the parks offer a way to have an enjoyable and relatively inexpensive vacation. Going to a park does not cost very much, and the fees we collect provide funding for the parks. We need people to visit the parks and pay the fees so we can keep these parks open.

It's expensive to maintain our parks. We can't possibly cover all of the costs involved in park maintenance under our current budget, unless we encourage tourism and charge attendance fees.

**SBAC State Assessment
Secure Materials**

For example, let's look at Shenandoah National Park in Virginia. It's frequently described as one of the most beautiful parks in the country. Over the last decade, attendance at Shenandoah has fallen by about 25 percent. The effect is two-fold. There are fewer people enjoying the beauty of Shenandoah, and fewer people are contributing to the funding of it.

Encouraging people to visit our national parks and charging attendance fees are essential to preserving their lasting power and beauty.

Sandra Ost
U.S. National Park Service