



MOUNTAINFILM
FOR STUDENTS

HERE WE STAND

DIRECTOR Chris Cresci
DURATION 11 min

In 2018, Save the Redwoods League purchased a magical 700-acre stand of old-growth redwoods in Sonoma County. Conservation has long been about keeping people out of places, but with help from communities of color, the organization is reimagining its role in a diverse, inclusive California. The area will soon be opened to the public and anyone can walk among these ambassadors from another time — some of which have been around since before the fall of the Roman Empire.



Standards

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR READING

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1 / Key Ideas and Details

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.8 / Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9 / Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.10 / Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR SPEAKING & LISTENING

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1 / Comprehension and Collaboration

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2 / Comprehension and Collaboration

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.3 / Comprehension and Collaboration

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4 / Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Key Vocabulary

conservation, diversity, outdoor, recreation, wilderness, equity, redwoods

Pre-Screening Activities

Pre-Screening Activity 1

The Outdoor Industry Association creates annual participation reports for who is participating in the outdoors and what activities they are engaging in. Data is aggregated by gender, age, race, income, type of recreation, time recreating outdoors, and miles from home. The [2019 report](#) will need to be downloaded to access (just enter your school email), but provides a ton of great graphs and data to look at as a class.

For this activity, choose any of the graphs to display/show to the class, to facilitate a discussion about participation in the outdoors. If you want to, you could cover up the y- and x- axis or any keys on the graph, so students would have to make predictions about what they think the graph will be about. The following graphs and questions would lead to interesting, thought-provoking conversations as a class:

Outdoor Participation Trending (Page 5)

- Has the participation in outdoor activities increased or decreased? How can you tell?

Age & Gender Participation Rates (Page 14)

- Who has a higher participation rate in outdoor activities, males or females? Why do you think that is?
- What age group has the highest participation in outdoor activities? Why do you think that is?
- Do you notice a trend in female or male participation increasing?
- What about people who do not identify with a gender binary system? Are they represented in this study?

Participation Rates by Ethnicity (Page 21)

- Has the overall participation of different ethnic groups increased or decreased over time?
- Which ethnic group has the greatest amount of participation in outdoor activities?
- Which ethnic group's participation in outdoor activities has decreased since 2014?

Ethnicity Participation (Page 22)

- Which ethnic group has the lowest participation in the outdoors?
- Which ethnic group has the highest participation rate in the outdoors?
- Which ethnic group has the highest participation rate by age? Why do you think that is? (Specifically highest participation rate of Hispanic people over the age of 45)

Moderate Participation (Page 24)

- Do you notice overall participation in the outdoors increasing or decreasing?
- Which ethnic groups participation is increasing or decreasing?

Discussion Guide

GENERAL/OPEN PROMPTS

1. In the film, *Here We Stand*, it is argued that access to parks is fundamental to a healthy society and liveable community. Do you agree or disagree with this? Why or why not?

EXPLORING SELF

1. Do you like to go outside? What do you like to do outside? What would you do if you were no longer able to access the outdoors?
2. How much time of your day is spent outdoors? Do you think you would like to spend your whole day outside, including school? Why or why not?
3. In the film, *Here We Stand*, the filmmaker chose to put in the quote **“This right here is the closest you can get to magic”** (0:41) while showing the canopy of the Redwood trees. What does it mean to feel close to magic? Do you feel “close to magic” in nature?

EXPLORING THE WORLD

1. Do you think there is more or less diversity in the outdoors in other parts of the world? Why do you think that?
2. As a nation, how do we make the outdoors a more welcoming and inclusive space for all people?

EXPLORING FILMMAKING

1. The filmmaker, Chris Cresci, chose to display two screens playing next to each other in some scenes, and chose to show only one screen in others. Why do you think he chose to do this? What was his intention in showing two screens vs. one? Do you think it was effective?

EXPLORING SOCIAL ISSUES

1. Why do you think people of color are less likely to engage in outdoor activities?
2. In the film, *Here We Stand*, one of the people interviewed says **“I would say that this is a forest built on resilience, that this is a forest of consistent regeneration, and I think there is a lot of hope in that.”** (6:51-7:00) What does this quote mean? Is the interviewer making an analogy to their own resilience?

SENSE OF WONDER

1. In the film, one of the oldest Sequoia trees was discovered south of Mendocino county. The tree is 1,647 years old. What other things on Earth are that old? If your entire class added up their ages, how many times over would your class need to live to reach 1,647? (Ex: $9+10+9+10+32=70$, $1647/70=23$, so as a class, we would need to live 23 times collectively to reach the same age as the Redwood tree).
2. Why do you think Redwoods live so long (800-1500 years)? The average age of a human is 79 years! Other trees, such as a Palm tree will live to be 50 years, or an Aspen will live to be 150 years.

Activities

Activity 1

The [Redwood National Parks YouTube channel](#) is a wealth of short, educational videos about the health of the Redwoods and other trees, as well as information about the park, in Northern California.

In this video titled "[Redwoods in 360: Why are Old-Growth Redwood Forests Special?](#)", Ranger Greg takes you on a 1-minute tour of the Redwoods. You can watch this video with VR glasses, if you have them, or you can use the arrows in the upper left hand corner of the video to get a full 360-view of the forest, looking up at the canopy.

There is an 8-part series where Ranger Greg uses a 360-degree camera to create 1-minute videos of the Redwood forest, and all of them are highly-engaging, as students are able to move their cursor around the video and stare up at the canopy, look at the ferns, or just take in Ranger Greg. To find all of the videos, click on the videos tab from the Redwood National Parks YouTube channel homepage, and scroll down to the 3rd row. The latest videos were published in March of 2020, and the older ones were published in December of 2019.

To complete this activity, you could either watch the videos with the whole class, or set up student computers throughout the room, and have the students rotate through the computers as a small group to watch the videos.

The students could write down **one thing they learned on a sticky note** from the videos, and share their information with the class.

Everytime someone says something new about what they learned, you would place that on its own separate spot on the board, whereas, if there is a repeat-idea/fact, you would stack those together. You could do this activity a couple of times, to see if there is new information to be learned from the videos.

Another way to approach the watching of this video, is after watching some of the videos, you could discuss as a class, how they are feeling after looking at the huge forests. Our classroom is most familiar with the Zones of Regulation feeling chart as an anchor, but any anchor chart would do.

You could take this conversation a step further, by asking why it would be important to feel this way, or why it would be important for everyone to have access to being able to physically go to a forest.

The snag provides homes to plants and animals.

There are 40,000 acres of Redwoods in the park.

There are more than just Redwoods in the park like Douglas Firs.

Old-growth Redwood forests are complex.

Activity 2

This article, [Five Ways to Make the Outdoors More Inclusive](#), published by *The Atlantic* and REI, outlines five steps (plus one bonus step) to make the outdoors a welcome space for all individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Although you could go through all six steps as a class, step two — **Make all visitors feel welcome and secure** — would be the easiest to discuss and work on as a whole class. Dependent upon the age group you are working with, you could read the description under the subheader of step two. However, for this part of the activity, as a class, you could focus on Action Steps 2A and 2B (described below). As the teacher, it would be recommended to read and explain the paragraphs below the action steps, so that the class knows exactly what they need to do.

ACTION STEP 2A

Update park rangers' uniforms with a modern welcoming look.

It's time for park rangers to shed the law-enforcement look and replace it with one that's less intimidating for portions of visitor population. The United Kingdom's national park system decided to dress down its 2,000 staffers and park rangers, hiring Columbia Sportswear to design sleek outerwear-style garments with hoods and bright colors. The new look resembles that of a hiker or jogger—someone who looks approachable and who could actually blend in with visitors on the trail.

ACTION STEP 2B

Be flexible with rules to make visitors feel comfortable.

Parks can build goodwill with diverse groups by considering rule tweaks and changes that will better serve the interests of those visitors. Hard limits on campsite visitors, for example, are off-putting to LGBTQ campers and hikers, who feel more secure in larger groups. "If you want to do backcountry camping, and we're told that our group size may not exceed four or six, then what if we have six?" asked Cohen, the executive director of The Venture Out Project, which organizes hiking and backpacking trips for queer and transgender people. "Do we have four people in one place, and then the other two on their own? They're not going to sleep all night."

In California, meanwhile, dogs aren't permitted on many trails and at most beaches. This may not seem like a big deal, on its face, but some women are afraid to go deep into the woods on their own. "If women could bring dogs with them, it would allow them to feel safer," Hart suggested. By canvassing their constituencies, parks can uncover similar small tweaks that can make a big difference.

You could then break up the class into two groups, one group would be responsible for designing more appropriate and welcoming park rangers uniforms, and the other would be responsible for coming up with rules to help everyone feel welcome.

The groups could then present to the class and share why their uniform and/or rules would welcome everyone into the outdoors! Bonus points for students who actually wear the uniform while presenting. If so, please send us a photo to studentprograms@mountainfilm.org.

Activity 3

Using [Newsela.com](https://newsela.com) – you create a free login using your school Google Drive account (or can set up a free account for teachers/students), search for the article titled **“African-American Pioneers Played a Big Role in Settling the West.”**

Dependent upon the age group you work with, you can change the Lexile score. The lowest Lexile score the article is available in, is 610, which equates to a 3rd-grade reading level. The article can also be translated into Spanish. The article gives background on several African-American males who were pioneers on the Western frontier. Dependent upon the Lexile score chosen, the article gives either more in-depth details, or less, as well as background knowledge.

You could either read the article as a whole-class, in small-groups, or as a jig-saw (small groups assigned paragraphs, and the small group is responsible for summarizing what was read in their assigned paragraph). There is a quick quiz that accompanies the article, if you would like to assign it to your group of students as a quick comprehension check.

Have you heard of these African-American males in your textbooks or outside of school?

After reading the article, it would be really interesting to hear from students if they have heard of these African-American males in their textbooks or outside of school. Depending upon their answer, you could ask the class why they think that they haven't heard much about these people, prior to the article. Does your class think that if these stories were more widely told/shared/celebrated that more people of color would participate in the outdoors currently? Why do you think the article does not cover any females of color?

RECOMMENDED EXTENTIONS

The Wilderness Society has created a curriculum, titled [“Public Lands in the United States.”](#) which is meant to “give people a complete and accurate understanding of the history and context surrounding these places and movement to protect public lands. We especially want to reinforce the knowledge that the public lands we love today were once Indigenous lands, and that the actions taken to “conserve” them have sometimes been exclusionary, insensitive or engineered to benefit only a privileged few.” Although designed for high-schoolers in mind, the curriculum is adaptable and has been used for a range of students in indoor/outdoor settings.

The Outbound, which is the founder of the hashtag [#everyoneoutside](#) is a minority-owned business with the mission to make adventure more accessible to everyone. Their four episode film series (*Here We Stand* is episode four), explores topics of creating equity for people of color in outdoor and wilderness spaces. All films can be watched on their website.

Teresa Baker, who is the focus of the film, *Here We Stand*, is the founder of the African American National Park Event. [Here is an interview with her](#) and her experience in being an activist for increasing diversity in the outdoors.

Supercoloring.com has free printables, if you would like to [color a giant sequoia or redwood tree.](#)

Do you know how to spot the difference between Redwoods and Sequoia trees? [This video](#) (7:16), published by Redwood National Park’s YouTube channel, is appropriate for all ages, and will explain the difference in detail, while providing great analogies for how long and tall Redwoods and Sequoias are. Did you know the trunk of the Great Sherman Sequoia tree is estimated to be the size of approximately 52,500 basketballs?

[Buffalo Soldier](#) by Tanya Landman (4 ½ stars on Goodreads.com), is a YA novel about an African-American girl, Charley, and her life during and post-Civil War. When she cannot find employment as a former freed slave and a girl, she joins a cavalry as a scout, and fights as a Buffalo Soldier. This book deals with mature content, so it would be best recommended for 7th-grade and above. [Here is an honest review](#) from *The Guardian*.

These non-profits focus on creating affirming and welcoming spaces for underrepresented communities in outdoor spaces:

- [Black Girls Run](#)
- [Outdoor Afro](#)
- [Latino Outdoors](#)
- [LatinXHikers](#)
- [Brown Girls Climb](#)
- [Black Girls Do Bike](#)
- [GirlTrek \(Harriet’s Handbook\)](#) created by GirlTrek is a handbook of checklists to encourage women to takewalks to improve their health. Categories include “Emotional Healing Walks,” “Fun in the Sun Walks,” and “Black History Walks.”
- [Hispanic Access Foundation](#)

Chris Cresci, the director of *Here We Stand*, has a collection of short films. [Here is the link](#) to all of his films he has either directed, shot or edited.

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