

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# John Muir: The Conservationist on the Quarter

by Liana Mahoney

Look carefully at the back of a California state quarter. A bearded man with a walking stick is pictured there. A bird called a California condor is flying overhead. Who is this man, and why is he so important that he is featured on the back of a coin?

Muir also wrote about problems. In order to create more farmland for sheep and cattle to graze, many trees were being cut down. This upset Muir, because he knew that trees were important to forests and to the animals that lived in them. Muir believed that nature should be conserved instead of being changed by human beings. He wrote articles in magazines and newspapers to spread the word about conserving forests. Soon, others began to



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The man on this quarter is John Muir. Even as a child, Muir loved watching nature. As a young man, he spent much of his life exploring the beauty of the wilderness. He walked more than a thousand miles across the country, through fields and woods. John Muir wrote about the places he visited, describing their beauty:

*"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves."*

about conservation. Later, President Roosevelt set aside 148 million acres of land for national forests and established five national parks. National parks are large areas of land that are protected from development. This means that people cannot build homes or businesses there. One of these parks is Yosemite National Park, the area that is featured on the back of the California quarter.

Though it has been almost one hundred years since John Muir died, people continue his work today. His work as a conservationist helped us to see the beauty of our natural world. John Muir made us understand the importance of protecting our earth and our resources – then, now, and for the future.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



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1. When John Muir walked across the country, what did he notice that bothered him?

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2. Into which genre could this article be categorized?

- a. historical fiction
- b. science fiction
- c. tall tale
- d. biography

3. What is the main purpose of the article?

- a. to entertain
- b. to inform
- c. to persuade
- d. to persuade



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4. Why did President Theodore Roosevelt agree to go camping with John Muir?

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5. What did President Roosevelt do after he went camping with John Muir?

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**Challenge:** John Muir wrote about the places he visited and described their beauty. On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph about the most beautiful place you've visited.

## Related Activities



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- Have students write an imaginary story about their camping trip with the current president. Students can tell where they would go, what they would talk about with the president, and what they would do.

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- With a parent or teacher's supervision, students can go online to find real photographs of John Muir. (There are lots of them on *Google Images*.) Students can print out their favorites and the pictures can be posted on a classroom bulletin board.
- With a parent or teacher's supervision, students can perform a Google search for "John Muir Quotes". Students can copy their favorite John Muir quotations and add them to the classroom bulletin board.

## ANSWER KEY



### John Muir: The Conservationist on the Quarter

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1. When John Muir walked across the country, what did he notice that bothered him?

**John Muir noticed that trees were being cut down in order to create more farmland.**

2. Into which genre could this article be categorized? **d**

a. historical fiction                      b. science fiction

c. tall tale                                      d. **biography**

3. What is the author's purpose for writing this article?

a. to entertain us with a story about a mountain man

b. to g

c. **to g**

d. to p

4. Why did



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**Roosevelt went camping with John Muir because he admired Muir's love for nature.**

5. What did President Roosevelt do after he went camping with John Muir?

**After he went camping with Muir, President Roosevelt set aside 148 million acres of land for national forests and he established five national parks.**

Challenge: John Muir wrote about the places he visited and described their beauty. On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph about the most beautiful place you've visited.