

Quotations from John Muir

"Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wilderness is a necessity; and that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life."

Questions to ask students:

- ❖ What does reservation mean in this context? (To reserve something, to set it aside, in this case mountain wilderness.)
- ❖ What is a "fountain of timber"? (A source of timber.)
- ❖ What is irrigation?
- ❖ How do we get water from rivers to irrigate? (Dams, diversion canals, water pipelines. Irrigation can pull so much water from a river that not enough remains to sustain fish and other life downstream.)
- ❖ What happens when you dam a river? (Create a reservoir, which floods a valley.
- ❖ Dams can be useful, but destroy animal - and sometimes human - homes.)
- ❖ Does John Muir think that wild places are valuable left wild?

"Keep close to Nature's heart...and break away, once in awhile, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean."

"The wrong done to trees, wrongs of every sort, are done in the darkness of ignorance and unbelief, for when the light comes, the heart of the people is always right."

"Brought into right relationship with the wilderness, man would see that his appropriation of Earth's resources beyond his personal needs would only bring imbalance and begat ultimate loss and poverty by all."

- ❖ What does "appropriation" mean? (To take or seize.)
- ❖ What are personal needs? Do we use things beyond our needs?
- ❖ What sorts of "ultimate loss" and "poverty" do you think John Muir had in mind?