

# Smokey Bear & Friends Teacher's Guide

A Wildfire Prevention Program for  
Kindergarten Through 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Classes

## Dear Educator,

I'm Smokey Bear and I have an important message for you and your students.

Did you know that every year, tens of thousands of wildfires across the United States burn millions of acres of forests and grasslands and damage or destroy hundreds of homes? It's sad, because almost nine out of ten of these wildfires are caused by the careless behavior of people. These carelessly started wildfires can be avoided by the right behavior – fire prevention.

Here's where you come in. Information and education can help turn these numbers around. You are key in bringing this message to your students and their families. By using the three easy lessons in this guide with your classes, your students will get to know me and my important wildfire prevention message, and their parents will remember me from their childhood.

Since 1944, I have been the symbol of protection of America's forests and grasslands from human-caused wildfire. I'm recognized by 97% of adults. In fact, three out of four recall my message, "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires," without prompting. However, today's children are not as familiar with me and my message and I need you to introduce me to your young students. With your help, my message will be shared with a whole new generation.

Thanks in advance for helping to educate our nation's children on the important issue of wildfire prevention and what they can do to help.

Remember, "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires"



Let us know how you're using  
this program by e-mailing us at  
[SmokeyBear@jmheducation.com](mailto:SmokeyBear@jmheducation.com).



# Program Components



DVD featuring *A Day in the Forest with Smokey Bear*.



Teacher's Guide includes:

- Wildfires FYI: Background on wildfires (page 3)
- Three step-by-step lessons (pages 4-6)
  - Homes Galore!
  - Smokey's Story
  - Preventing Wildfires
- A Smokey Bear dot-to-dot mini-poster with take-home activity (page 7)
- Smokey Bear's Partner Certificate (page 8)

Take-home Activity Sheets including:

- Smokey's Story for reading in class and taking home
- Smokey Bear's Rules mini-booklet
- Smokey Bear and Friends stick puppets with forest stage

All full-color and black-and-white components are available for free downloading at [www.SmokeyBear.com](http://www.SmokeyBear.com).

## National Education Standards

This program aligns with the following education themes and standards for children in **kindergarten through second grade**:

### Social Studies Standards

**Theme Three:** Examine changes in the relationship between people, places, and environments.

**Theme Four:** Develop a personal identity in the context of families, peers, schools, and communities.

### Science Standards

6.3 Organisms and environments

6.4 Abilities to distinguish between natural objects and objects made by humans

6.5 Personal health; changes in environments

### English Language Arts Standards

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts.

4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

This program is provided by the USDA Forest Service, the National Association of State Foresters and the Advertising Council. The United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service manages 193 million acres of national forests and grasslands for the American Public. The National Association of State Foresters is comprised of the directors of forestry agencies from the fifty states, eight U.S. territories and associated states, and the District of Columbia. Through public-private partnership, NASF seeks to advance sustainable forestry, conservation, and protection of forest lands and their associated resources. The Ad Council is a private, non-profit organization that produces, distributes, and promotes public service campaigns on behalf of non-profit organizations and government agencies.



# Wildfires FYI

You have the opportunity to engage a whole new generation of young people to help conserve our forests and outdoor areas by teaching Smokey Bear's Five Rules for Fire Prevention:

## Smokey Bear's Five Rules for Fire Prevention:

1. Only you can prevent wildfires.
2. Always be careful with fire.
3. Never play with matches or lighters.
4. Always watch your campfire.
5. Make sure your campfire is completely out before leaving it.

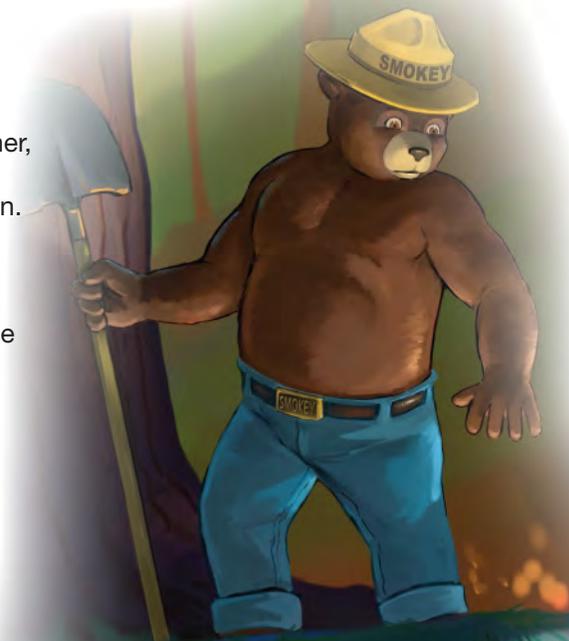
**I**t's always wildfire season somewhere in the U.S. A wildfire is any unwanted, unplanned damaging outdoor fire. Since 2000, almost 80,000 wildfires are recorded each year by the **National Interagency Fire Center**. On average, 9 out of 10 wildfires are caused by people's carelessness. Wildfires burn more than 6.5 million acres of forests and grasslands each year.

**C**ertain ecosystems need fire. Not all fires are bad. Many forest and grassland areas actually depend on fire to sustain them. In these fire-adapted areas, the plants and animals evolved with periodic wildfires. Longleaf pine in the southeast, ponderosa pine in the west, and prairies of the Great Plains are examples. These ecosystems need fire at the right time and under the right weather conditions to maintain their naturally occurring diversity of plant and animal life (see [www.smokeybear.com/natural-fire.asp](http://www.smokeybear.com/natural-fire.asp)). What they don't need are fires started carelessly by people.

**W**ildfires can have damaging effects. When wildfires occur during hot and dry weather, they can burn extremely hot, burning all vegetation. If heavy rains follow a wildfire, soils can erode, causing landslides and degrading streams. These huge fires create large plumes of smoke that affect people's health.

**L**arge wildfires impact communities and local economies. Large wildfires can disrupt recreation and tourism. Wildfires burn trees used by wildlife and for timber. Wildfires near towns can reduce property values because of landscape damage. Sources of drinking water can be degraded with soil and silt caused by runoff from vegetation-denuded slopes. Houses can be damaged or destroyed, and firefighters' and the public's lives can be put at risk.

**H**uman behavior is usually to blame. People, both directly and indirectly, are the cause of 9 out of 10 wildfires—whether due to children playing with matches or lighters; people carelessly discarding smoking materials or BBQ coals; sparks from power equipment and power lines; campfires or yard-debris fires left unattended or improperly extinguished; or arson. As a result, there is a continuing need for children and adults to learn the necessary care and caution when dealing with fire outdoors.



## More About Wildfire How To Prevent It, and Wildfire's Effects on Ecology

For topical information, relevant activities for kids, and regional or local data, consult these sites:

[www.smokeybear.com/](http://www.smokeybear.com/)

[www.adcouncil.org/default.aspx?id=60](http://www.adcouncil.org/default.aspx?id=60)

[www.fs.usda.gov](http://www.fs.usda.gov)

[www.fs.usda.gov/conservationeducation/smokeybear](http://www.fs.usda.gov/conservationeducation/smokeybear)

[www.stateforesters.org/smokey\\_bear/education](http://www.stateforesters.org/smokey_bear/education)

[www.symbols.gov](http://www.symbols.gov)

[www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fire\\_ecology](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fire_ecology)

[www.biology.usgs.gov/ecosystems/fire.html](http://www.biology.usgs.gov/ecosystems/fire.html)

Check out your State Forestry Agency at [www.stateforesters.org/about\\_nasf#](http://www.stateforesters.org/about_nasf#)



# Homes Galore!



## Learning Destination

Animals need homes (habitats) just like people. Fire at the wrong time can damage their habitats. Smokey Bear teaches people how to prevent human-caused wildfires and protect habitats.



## Overview of Route

Children learn that forests, grasslands, and plains are homes to animals... create a Word/Picture Wall about these areas... meet Smokey Bear... create a Smokey Bear dot-to-dot poster...sing about Smokey's motto.



## Getting Ready

- Set aside an area as a Smokey Bear Word/Picture Wall.
- Have several index cards available.
- Post a picture of Smokey Bear on the Word/Picture Wall (for example, copy one from this Teacher's Guide).
- Make copies of the Smokey Bear dot-to-dot mini-poster, one for each child.



## Getting There

### Homes for All

1. Sketch the outline of a house on the board.
2. Invite children to think of words that tell what "home" means to them. If necessary, prompt with questions such as: "Who lives at home? What do you do at home?" Establish that home is where most people meet their need for food, rest, and shelter.
3. Show pictures of forests, grasslands, and plains and explain that they provide homes to animals. Ask who has visited any of those areas and invite them to share the experiences they had during their visit.

**TIP:** You can find pictures at Google Images.

4. Ask: "Who can name an animal that lives in a forest? In grasslands? On plains?" Write the animal names on index cards and post them on the Word Wall.
5. Explain that animals find food, water, and shelter where they live. Smokey Bear protects their homes from unwanted fires just as grown-ups protect our homes. Ask: "Have you ever heard of 'Smokey Bear'?"

### Meet Smokey Bear

Point to the picture of Smokey Bear that you've posted on the Word/Picture Wall. Ask children what they know about Smokey. Establish that Smokey helps protect animals and forests by teaching people how to use fire safely outdoors.



Forests



Grasslands



Plains



## Smokey's Corner

1. Have children complete the Smokey dot-to-dot mini-poster and take it home. Encourage children to ask their parents what they remember about Smokey Bear, and then share what they've learned with the class.

2. Write Smokey's motto on the board and read it aloud.

### **Only you can prevent wildfires.**

Explain that a wildfire is an *unwanted, unplanned fire in forests, grasslands and plains*. Ask what children think "prevent wildfires" means (*keeping wildfires from happening; using fire responsibly*).

3. Teach Smokey's jingle to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."  
*Only you can prevent wildfires.  
Be careful what you do.  
Protect the forest and animals.  
Smokey counts on you!*



# Smokey's Story



## Learning Destination

Fire can be both helpful and harmful. Most wildfires are started by people's carelessness. Following Smokey's Five Rules for Fire Prevention can help prevent wildfires.



## Overview of Route

Children create a chart about helpful and harmful fires... view and talk about *A Day in the Forest with Smokey Bear*... sing about Smokey's rules ... make a mini-book (see the Activity Sheets).



## Getting Ready

- Review the DVD, *A Day in the Forest with Smokey Bear* or Smokey's Story activity sheet.
- Make a copy of the Smokey's Story mini-book for each child.



## Getting There

### Helpful Fire, Harmful Fire

1. Explain that Smokey Bear teaches people how to be responsible when using fire, but that not all fires are harmful.
2. Write the following sentence starters on the board.

**Fire is helpful for** \_\_\_\_\_.  
(cooking, keeping us warm, campfires)

**Fire is harmful when it** \_\_\_\_\_.  
(burns homes, burns out of control, harms animals)

3. Read them aloud and invite children to suggest different endings for each. Point out that fire is also helpful when trained experts use it to create wildlife habitat.
4. Ask the children if they know what it means to "prevent" something (to keep it from happening or starting). Tell children that they are going to learn more from Smokey Bear about how they can help prevent wildfires.

### A Day in the Forest with Smokey Bear

1. Show the DVD, *A Day in the Forest with Smokey Bear*, or read Smokey's Story aloud. Afterward, use questions such as these to prompt discussion:

"What were the dangerous things that people did in the forest?"

"Why is it dangerous to play with matches or lighters?"

"Who can describe what a safe campfire looks like?"

2. Invite volunteers to demonstrate how to put out a campfire safely.
3. Have older children write Smokey's Five Rules for Fire Prevention on cards and post them on the Word Wall. Have younger children repeat the rules to you.



### Smokey's Song

To review Smokey's rules, lead children in a call-and-response song to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb."

#### Teacher's call (sung):

*Smokey has a safety rule, safety rule, safety rule.  
Smokey has a safety rule. I'll tell you what it is:*

**(shouted):** *[Only you can prevent wildfires!]*

#### Children's response (sung):

*I can follow Smokey's rule, Smokey's rule, Smokey's rule.  
I can follow Smokey's rule. I'll tell you what I'll do.*

**(shouted):** *[I can prevent wildfires!]*



## Smokey's Corner

Have children create their own Smokey's Story mini-book by folding the Activity Sheet. Suggest they take their finished books home and use them to teach family members about fire prevention.





# Preventing Wildfires



## Learning Destination

Smokey Bear's Five Rules for Fire Prevention:

1. Only you can prevent wildfires.
2. Always be careful with fire.
3. Never play with matches or lighters.
4. Always watch your campfire.
5. Make sure your campfire is completely out before leaving it.



## Overview of Route

Children review Smokey's Five Rules for Fire Prevention... create and perform puppet shows about Smokey's rules... participate in a Smokey's Partner Pledge ceremony... receive a Smokey Bear's Partner Certificate.



## Getting Ready

- Make copies of Smokey Bear and Friends puppet pages (see the Activity Sheets) and Smokey Bear's Partner Certificate for each child. Fill in a certificate for each child.
- Provide craft sticks and other materials for making puppets.



## Getting There

### Puppet Show!

1. Have children make stick puppets of Smokey Bear and Friends. Help them prepare the forest stage.
2. Review Smokey Bear's Five Rules for Fire Prevention with the class.
3. Tell children they will create and perform a puppet show about Smokey Bear's Five Rules for Fire Prevention. Write the following possible scenarios on the board:
  - Smokey sees some campers about to start a campfire.
  - Smokey finds children playing with matches or lighters.
  - Smokey meets a family putting out a campfire incorrectly.
  - Smokey sees a family not watching an open campfire.
4. Tell children they can develop a story idea of their own or choose one of these.
5. Divide children who are able to work independently into groups of three. Allow time for them to create their show.
6. Read the scenarios aloud for the younger children. Let them choose a scenario and then take turns moving and speaking for the puppets as they act out their story.



### Celebrate Smokey

1. Plan a Smokey Bear Fire Prevention Party with parents and children from other classes. Enlist children's help in planning and carrying out the event. Have children perform their puppet shows and sing the two songs about fire prevention.
2. Conclude the celebration with a Smokey's Partner Pledge ceremony. You can use the following Pledge or create your own.  
*I (child's name) pledge and promise to follow Smokey Bear's Five Rules for Fire Prevention at all times and to help my family remember to follow them also.*
3. Distribute the completed Smokey Bear's Partner Certificate to each child.



## Smokey's Corner

Give each child a Smokey Bear's Partner Certificate to take home.



# Hey Kids!

1. Complete the Dot-to-Dot to make a mini-poster. Color it in!
2. Share it with your family!

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Your name)  
**can prevent wildfires.**



## Family Talk!

### Dear Parent/Caregiver:

Did you learn about Smokey Bear when you were young? What Smokey Bear stories can you remember? Please take a moment to share your memories with your child. If you are not familiar with Smokey Bear, invite your child to share Smokey's story with you!

**Smokey Bear's**



## **Partner Certificate**

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\_\_\_\_\_ has earned this  
**Smokey Bear's Partner Certificate**  
by  
demonstrating knowledge of  
**Smokey Bear's Five Rules for Fire Prevention**  
and pledging to follow them  
at all times.

**Smokey Bear's Five Rules for Fire Prevention:**

1. Only you can prevent wildfires.
2. Always be careful with fire.
3. Never play with matches or lighters.
4. Always watch your campfire.
5. Make sure your campfire is completely out before leaving it.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_