

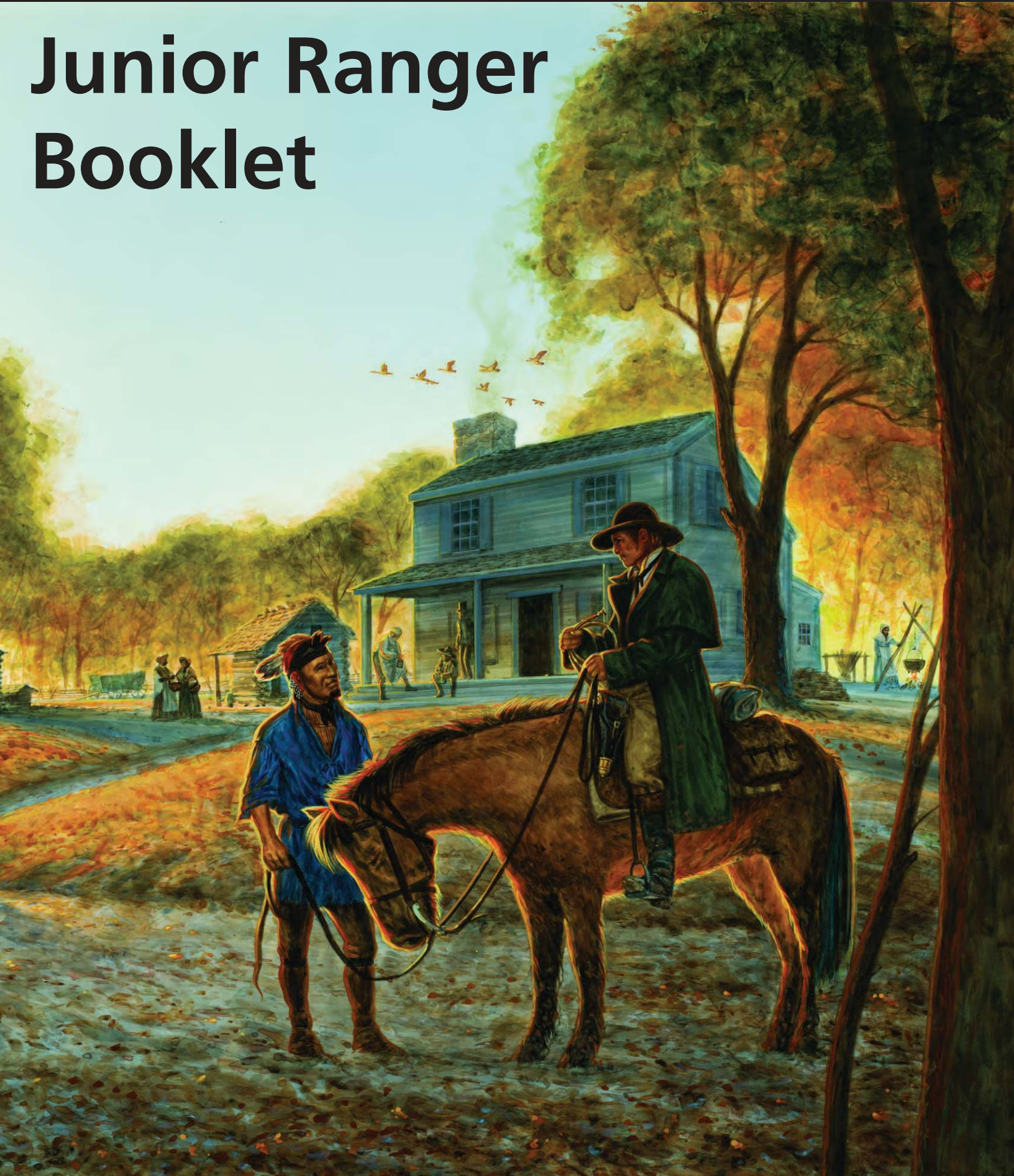
# Natchez Trace Parkway

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Natchez Trace Parkway  
Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee

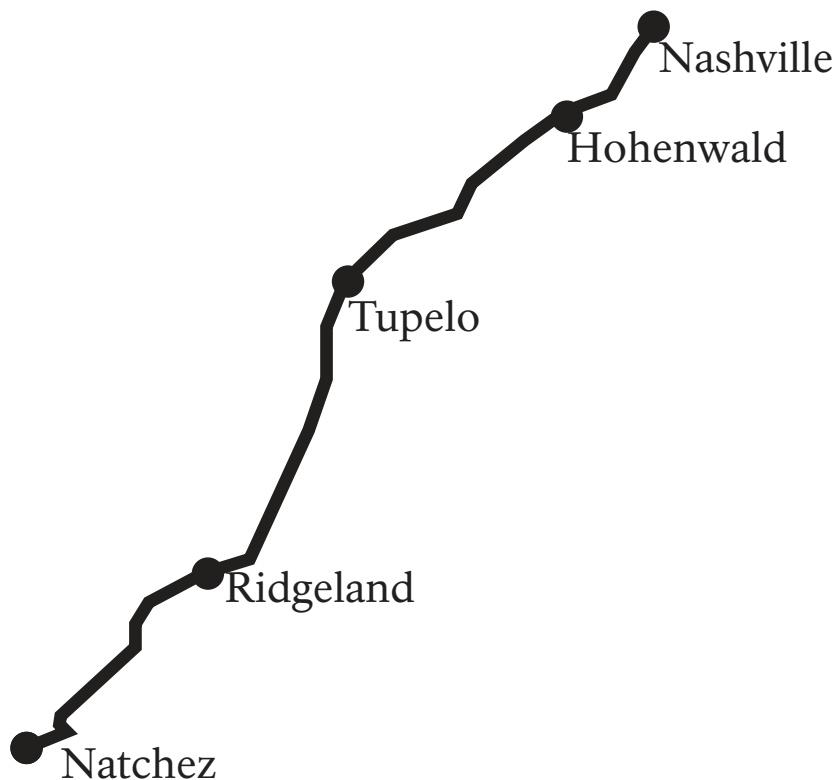


## Junior Ranger Booklet



# Trace Your Steps

Use the map below to trace your steps along the Natchez Trace Parkway! Write, draw, or stamp in the circles, then draw a line to the approximate location on the map you have visited. Use the Parkway map to help you find the milepost numbers shown on the map in red. For stamp locations, contact the Parkway Visitor Center at (800) 305-7417. Add additional stamps to the journal at the end of this booklet.



## Talk about it!

Look at the scene on the cover of your booklet. Colbert's Stand, or inn, at milepost 327.3 was busy with people traveling the Old Natchez Trace. What do you think the postrider (the man carrying the mail on the horse) and the Chickasaw man might be talking about?

# Welcome to the Natchez Trace Parkway

The Natchez Trace Parkway is a 444-mile long national park that travels through three states. It roughly follows the “Old Natchez Trace”, a historic travel corridor used by American Indians, “Kaintucks,” European settlers, enslaved people, soldiers, and future presidents. Today, people can enjoy not only a scenic drive but also hiking, biking, horseback riding, and camping along the Parkway.

**Earn your junior ranger badge and a signed certificate in three easy steps.**

## Step One

- I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old. Complete the same number of activities as your age.

## Step Two

- Take your completed booklet to a park ranger at one of our visitor centers. For visitor center locations and hours of operation, call (800) 305-7417.

Or

- Mail your completed book to: Natchez Trace Parkway  
Attn.: Junior Ranger Program  
2680 Natchez Trace Parkway  
Tupelo, MS 38804

## Step Three

- Share your experience with others!

For more information on the Natchez Trace Parkway, visit our website: [www.nps.gov/natr](http://www.nps.gov/natr) or our Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/NatchezTraceParkwayNPS](http://www.facebook.com/NatchezTraceParkwayNPS)

*If you have questions, ask a park ranger. We are here to help.*



Special thanks to Frank Estrada for volunteering his time to create the illustrations throughout this booklet. The images on the cover and on the American Indian pages were painted by artist Michael Haynes and can be seen on waysides along the Parkway.

# Mail by Horseback

In 1801 the Old Natchez Trace was designated as a postal route between Nashville and Natchez. Postriders carried the mail by horseback. Now we use the postrider as a symbol of the Natchez Trace Parkway. Look for the postrider symbol as you travel in the park.



**Directions:** Gone are the days of delivering mail by horseback. Today we have a variety of ways to communicate. After walking a trail along the Parkway, use the space below to write a social media post, letter, or email about your experience.



*One postrider  
headed south from  
Nashville while another  
headed north from  
Natchez. The two met at  
Tockshish and exchanged  
mail bags.*

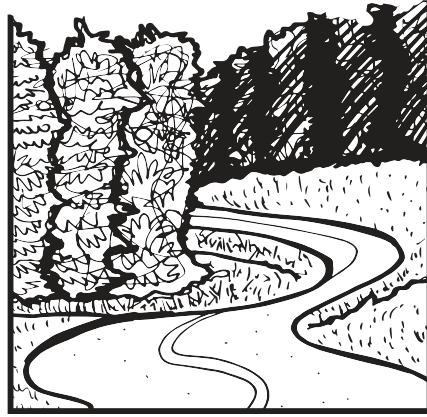
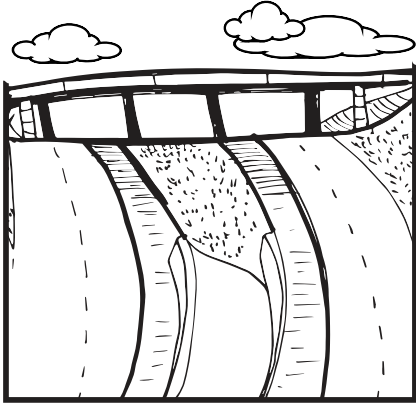
## **Talk about it!**

Do you think it is a good thing that communication is so much faster today? Why or why not?

# What's in a Name?

Do you know the difference between the Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail, the Natchez Trace Parkway, and other highways? A scenic trail is a path used for walking and horseback riding. A parkway is a scenic road driven or biked that connects natural and historic points of interest. Billboards and commercial vehicles are not allowed on the Natchez Trace Parkway. Highways have multiple lanes, higher speeds, restaurants, semi-trucks, and cities.

**Directions:** Identify each picture as a scenic trail, highway or parkway.



**Directions:** Check the box if the activity can be done on a highway, parkway, or scenic trail. Some may have more than one answer.

|                            |                                  |                                  |                                       |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| See gas stations           | <input type="checkbox"/> Highway | <input type="checkbox"/> Parkway | <input type="checkbox"/> Scenic Trail |
| Ride bicycles              | <input type="checkbox"/> Highway | <input type="checkbox"/> Parkway | <input type="checkbox"/> Scenic Trail |
| Hear birds                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Highway | <input type="checkbox"/> Parkway | <input type="checkbox"/> Scenic Trail |
| Follow Kaintuck footprints | <input type="checkbox"/> Highway | <input type="checkbox"/> Parkway | <input type="checkbox"/> Scenic Trail |
| See trees                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Highway | <input type="checkbox"/> Parkway | <input type="checkbox"/> Scenic Trail |
| Smell flowers              | <input type="checkbox"/> Highway | <input type="checkbox"/> Parkway | <input type="checkbox"/> Scenic Trail |
| Go hiking                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Highway | <input type="checkbox"/> Parkway | <input type="checkbox"/> Scenic Trail |

## Talk about it!

How would billboards impact your experience on the Natchez Trace Parkway?

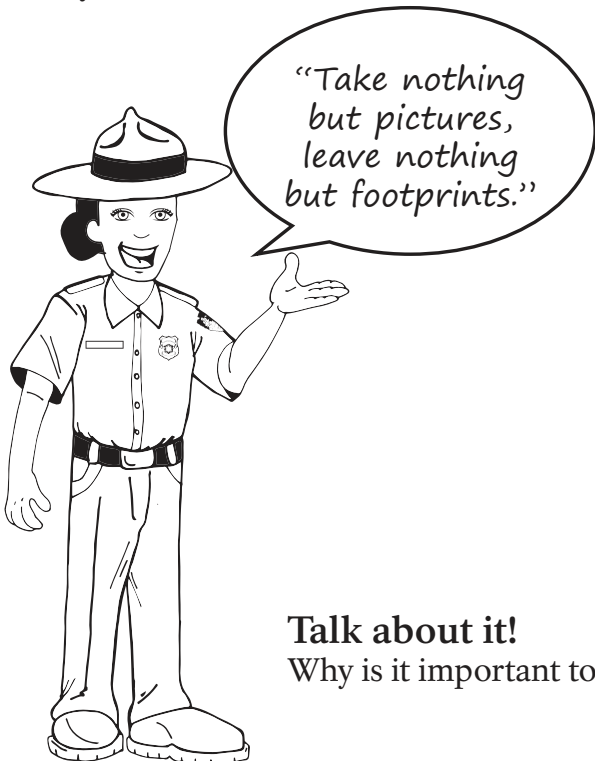
# Playing it Safe

**Directions:** Decode the following Morse Code for an important reminder when visiting the Natchez Trace Parkway's natural spaces!

Aa Jj Ss  
Bb Kk Tt  
Cc Ll Uu  
Dd Mm Vv  
Ee Nn Ww  
Ff Oo Xx  
Gg Pp Yy  
Hh Qq Zz  
Ii Rr

# Leave No Trace

The Old Natchez Trace got its name from a French word—trace—meaning animal track. Trace can also be used to indicate that someone has been here before. By leaving no trace, it's as if you were never here!



## Leave No Trace Principles

- Plan ahead and prepare.
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces.
- Dispose of waste properly.
- Leave what you find.
- Minimize campfire impacts (be careful with fire).
- Respect wildlife.
- Be considerate of other visitors.

## Talk about it!

Why is it important to leave the Natchez Trace Parkway “as if you were never here”?

# Leave No Trace on the Trail

Whether you are camping, hiking, biking, or horseback riding, make sure you keep the environment healthy by following Leave No Trace principles.

**Directions:** Finish the hike safely by making good choices. Circle either A or B for each question. The correct choice will lead you to the next decision. Use the Leave No Trace principles to help navigate the trail.

**You forgot your map, food, and water. Do you...**

- A.) Return to get the items before proceeding—it's important to have necessary supplies.
- B.) Keep going—you'll risk thirst and getting lost.

**You see a beautiful flower. Do you...**

- A.) Pick it—it's so pretty!
- B.) Leave what you find—plants are a food source for animals and insects.

**You have food left over from lunch. Do you...**

- A.) Pack it in your backpack—you don't want to litter.
- B.) Leave the food—maybe someone will pick it up later.

**You want to build a campfire, but there is a burn ban posted. Do you...**

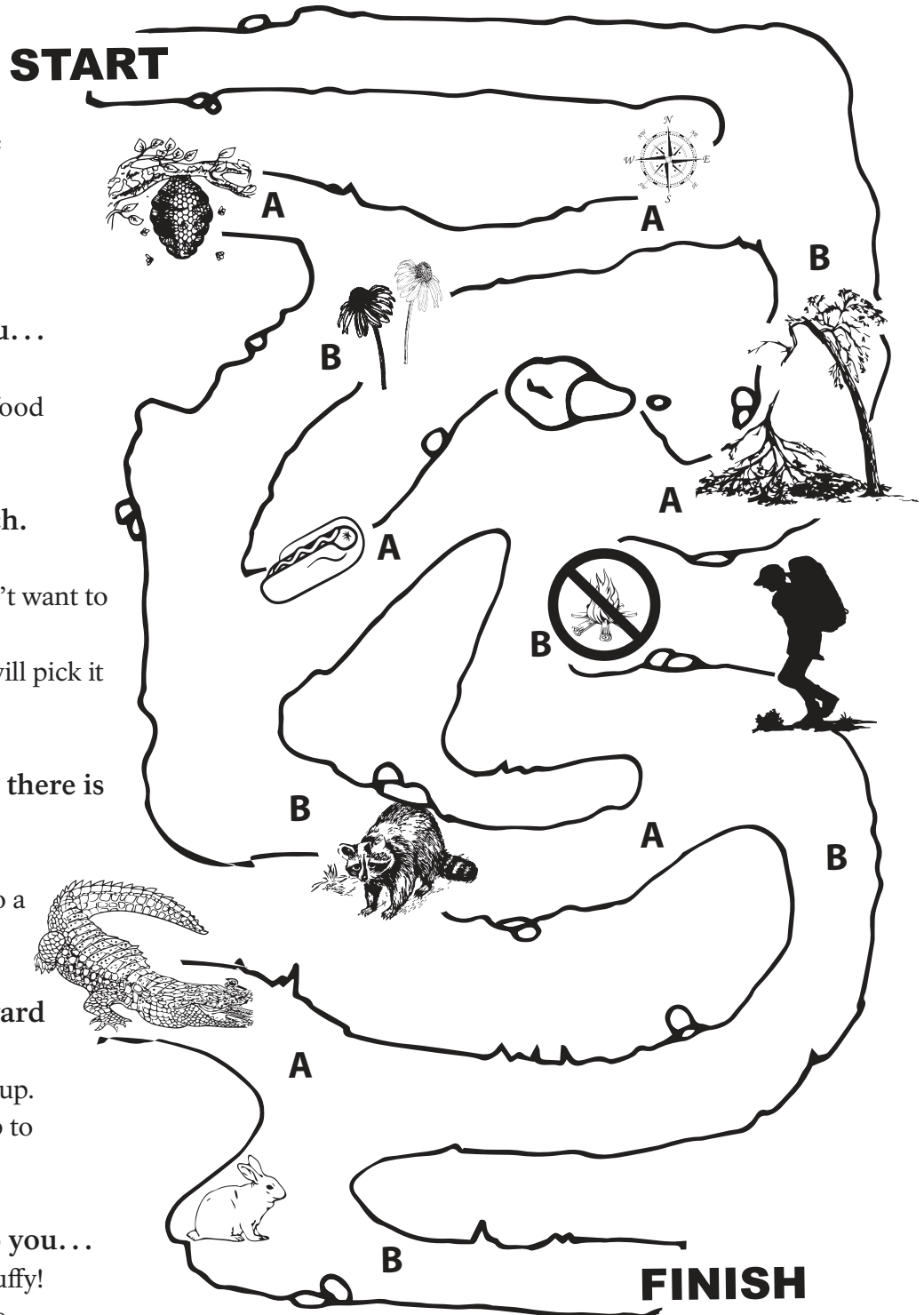
- A.) Build a fire anyway.
- B.) Do not make a fire—it could lead to a wildfire.

**A group of hikers are coming toward you on a narrow trail. Do you...**

- A.) Keep walking and break up the group.
- B.) Respect your fellow hikers and step to the side.

**You see a rabbit in the woods. Do you...**

- A.) Leave the trail to catch it—it's so fluffy!
- B.) Stay on the trail and respect wildlife.



# Five Degrees of Latitude

An ecosystem is the place where living organisms, like plants and animals, depend on each other for survival. Along the Parkway there are many different ecosystems like forests, prairies, and swamps. Habitats within these ecosystems provide shelter, food, and water for wildlife. The Natchez Trace Parkway crosses five degrees of latitude which increases the biodiversity of the Natchez Trace Parkway.

**Directions:** Draw a circle around each animal found in their habitat. Then, add one animal and one plant to each ecosystem. If time permits, stop at each location to learn more about the biodiversity of the Parkway.

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**Forest:** Upper Choctaw Boundary, milepost 128.4; Sweetwater Branch, milepost 363.0

A forest ecosystem is an area of land covered in trees. Each tree provides food and shelter for many animals. While visiting the forest, notice how many birds, insects, and mammals depend on just one tree!



## Talk about it!

Climate change can have an impact on biodiversity. What are some of the ways climate change might impact you and your family?

## Blackland Prairie: Black Belt Overlook, milepost 251.9; Chickasaw Village Site, milepost 261.8

Prairies are wide open grass areas where animals can graze and hawks can search for food. The rich prairie soil provides nutrients for wildflowers. Wildflowers provide food for rabbits and butterflies.



## Tupelo/Cypress Swamp: Cypress Swamp, milepost 122.0

Swamps are like sponges. They soak up water during heavy rains. Wildlife can use the excess water during droughts.

Fish, tupelo trees, bald cypress trees, alligators, birds, dragonflies, and beavers rely on the water that swamps provide in order to survive.



# People of the Past

**Directions:** Read the descriptions below, then place the number in the box next to the historic figure on the map on the next page.

1

**Federal Soldier:** During the Vicksburg Campaign, Federal soldiers under the command of General Ulysses S. Grant used the Old Natchez Trace from Port Gibson north to Raymond, Mississippi. The march was hot and dusty and food was scarce along the route.

2

**Enslaved Person:** From the 1820s through the Civil War, enslaved people from Maryland and Virginia were forcefully marched down the Old Natchez Trace to be sold at a large slave market in Natchez, Mississippi. The journey from Virginia to Natchez often separated children from their parents and took three months of walking every day in the hot and humid weather of the South. Enslaved people were freed after the Civil War.

3

**Tennessee Militia:** These citizen soldiers from Tennessee traveled on the Old Natchez Trace from their homes to defend the United States of America against a possible invasion of the British during the War of 1812.

4

**Choctaw Warriors:** In the fall of 1813 some Choctaw warriors joined US forces during the Creek War and fought alongside Andrew Jackson's troops. In December 1815, Mississippi's territorial government gave special recognition to Choctaw leaders for their efforts in protecting settlements in the Creek War.

5

**Conquistadors:** In March of 1541, conquistadors, led by Hernando De Soto, explored the area for treasure to take back to Spain. Their arrogance doomed the expedition. They demanded 200 Chickasaw men to carry their supplies. Soon after, Chickasaws launched a surprise attack.

6

**Stand Owners:** Inns or stands provided occasional shelter for travelers along the Old Natchez Trace. These stands offered food and protection. Many stands were operated by American Indians. Levi Colbert, a Chickasaw, and his wife, Minti-Hoyo, operated a stand at Buzzard Roost Spring.

*The Natchez Trace Parkway preserves 10,000 years of human history.*



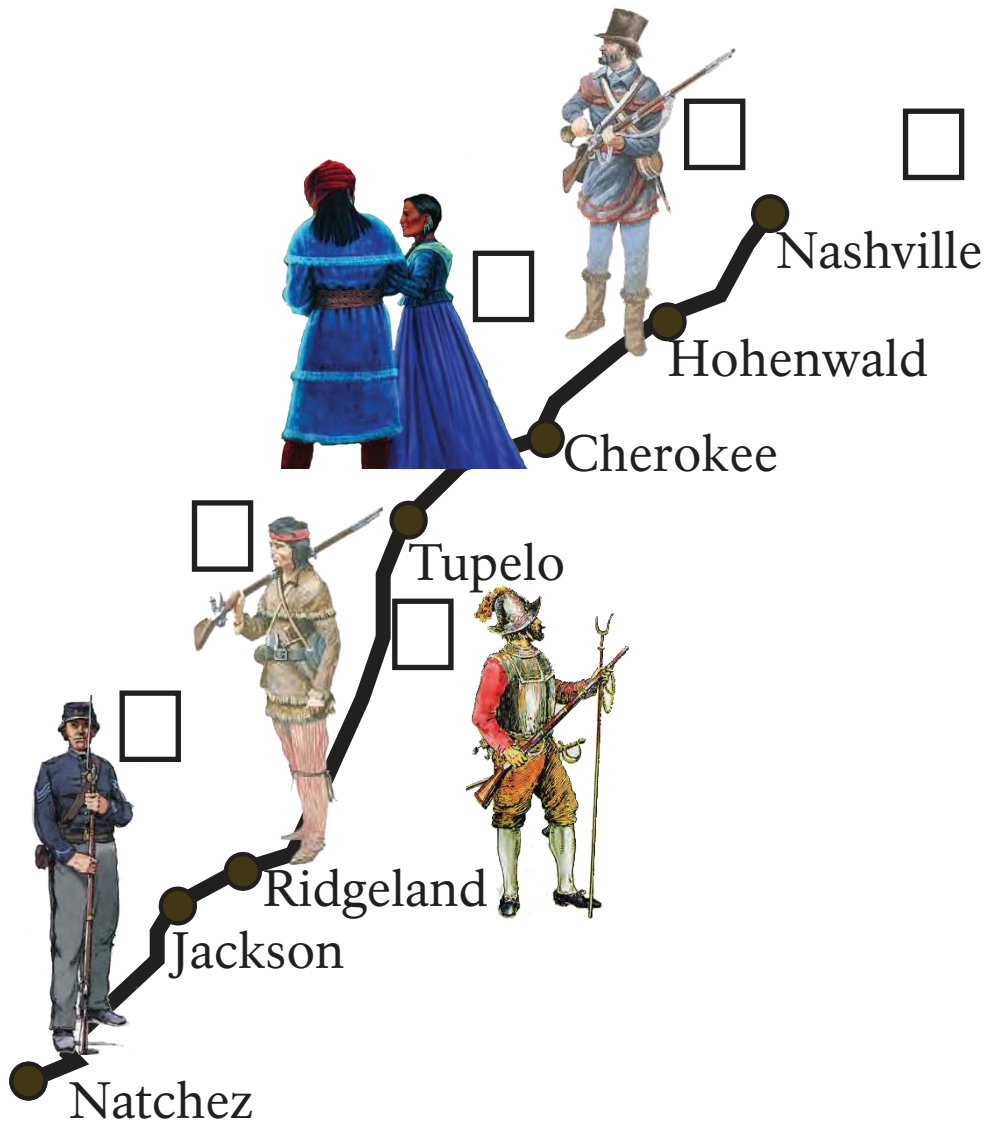
## Talk about it!

War was often used along the Old Natchez Trace to resolve conflict. How do you resolve conflict?

# Used by Many

The Old Natchez Trace is one of the oldest transportation routes in the United States. As groups of people traveled the route, they encountered people different from themselves.

This often led to confusion, conflict, and war because of people's different ways of life. As the different groups of people came to know and understand each other, it sometimes led to learning, safety, and friendship.



## Talk about it!

The diversity of cultures makes the Natchez Trace Parkway's history complex. How do you celebrate different cultures?

# Prehistoric American Indians

A thousand years ago American Indians lived along the area now called the Natchez Trace Parkway. Villages busy with trade and everyday chores like planting and making tools, pottery, and clothing were common. For entertainment, people shared news, told stories and played games.

**Directions:** Imagine yourself in this village. Use the images to describe what you see, hear, smell and feel in the box on this page.

This painting tells the story of life in a Woodland period village 1,000 to 3,000 years ago. Visit Bynum Mounds at milepost 232.4.

