Junior Ranger Program
Explore, Learn, Protect: Be A Junior Ranger

Homestead National Monument of America was established to commemorate the Homestead Act of 1862. This law had a major impact on the United States, including changes in immigration and migration, changes to Native Americans, and improvements in industry and agriculture. This National Park Service site, located on the Daniel Freeman claim, memorializes the lives and accomplishments of all pioneers and the changes to the land and to people brought by the Homestead Act of 1862. You can find out more about Homestead National Monument of America by becoming a Junior Ranger.

Junior Rangers are special people who are dedicated to their National Parks. Their mission is to explore, learn, and protect, and to have fun while doing it!

To become a Junior Ranger:

1. Identify your age: 5-8 years old _____ 9 years or older _____ Complete any 4 pages Complete any 7 pages

Windmill indicates activities suggested for ages 5-8.

Plow indicates activities suggested for ages 9 and up.

2. Fill in your name: ______________________________________

3. As a Junior Ranger, take care of the monument by following these guidelines:
   • Explore the displays, but please don't touch.
   • Discover the tallgrass prairie, but please don't pick plants or collect things.
   • Help keep Homestead National Monument of America clean. Put litter in its place.
   • Avoid ticks, poison ivy, and stinging nettles by staying on the trails.

4. Turn in your booklet at the Heritage Center or the Education Center to have a Park Ranger review it.

Homestead National Monument of America is administered by the National Park Service. For more information, visit our website: www.nps.gov/home

Or, contact:
Superintendent
8523 W State Hwy 4
Beatrice, NE 68310
(402)223-3514

Experience Your America.
Revised 2006
Homestead Bingo

As you explore Homestead National Monument of America, locate as many items as you can and put an “X” over each item you find. When you find 5 items in a row—up/down/across/diagonal—you score “Homestead Bingo!” Have fun looking!
Let's Light-en the Load

Most farms did not have electricity until the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Electricity changed communication, household appliances, tools, and entertainment. Just think about the many ways you use electricity. How would you store food without a refrigerator? Would you have indoor plumbing without an electric pump to move water through pipes? Match the pioneer objects in the left column with the modern devices in the right column that replaced them thanks to electricity.
Where the Buffalo Roam

Bison once roamed the open prairie in large herds. This is the largest land animal in North America, and it can run 35 miles per hour and keep that pace for half an hour!

Plains Indian tribes used buffalo hide paintings to record their history. Tribal leaders chose the single most important event of each year, and added one picture representing that event to the hide painting. Members of the tribe often identified the year they were born by referring to the event depicted on these "winter count" hides.

Draw your own winter count. What images will you use to depict important events in your life?
Traveling in the Footsteps of Homesteaders

Locate your home state on the map. Trace the route you’ve traveled to get to Homestead National Monument of America. Can you imagine taking this trip by covered wagon?

People didn’t only travel by wagon to claim a homestead. Immigrants from across the ocean made the long, dangerous journey by ship for the promise of a new beginning in America. The Homestead Act brought people from many different backgrounds and cultures who wanted to claim their very own 160 acres.

The *Living Wall* at the entrance to the Heritage Center shows homesteading states and the amount of land homesteaded in each state. According to the *Living Wall*, was there homesteading in your state?

___ Yes         ___ No
Crowded Cabin Word Search

Many homesteaders grew up in one-room log cabins like the one here at Homestead National Monument of America. Imagine living with 9 siblings and your parents in such a small house! At the bottom of the page is a list of things found in the cabin. Can you spot them hidden in the cabin below?

BED
BROOM
CHAMBER POT
CUPBOARD
KEROSENE LAMP
PATENT

QUILT
CHAIR
SCONCE
SEWING MACHINE
STAIRS
TABLE

KETTLE
TRUNK
WASHBOARD
WOOD STOVE
Necessity is the Mother of Invention

The Homestead Act of 1862 led to the development of new inventions as homesteaders looked for ways to make farm life easier. The pictures below show the various sources of power used to harvest crops over the years. Can you figure out when each method was popular? Write the letter below each picture in the proper square on the timeline.

Many of these inventions were designed by ordinary people with big imaginations—people like you! Be an inventor and use the box to the right to describe or sketch what farms of tomorrow might be like. Will you invent a tractor that uses a new type of fuel? Will space exploration lead to new settlements? Be as silly or as serious as you want!
Farming on the Homestead

The Homestead Act required homesteaders to farm a portion of the land they claimed. Learn about the equipment used for farming by answering the following questions. Answers can be found in the Heritage Center or in the Farm Implement Displays near the Education Center and Palmer-Epard cabin.

1. What year was the McCormick Reaper invented?

2. What was the corn husker used for?

3. What crop was “king” in the Midwest?

4. How many miles would a homesteader walk to plow 10 acres?

5. What tool made rows for planting, loosened soil around plants, and removed weeds?

6. What hand tool was used for threshing grain?
Before homesteaders could receive the patent for their land, they had to survive on it for five years. They faced countless dangers, and many did not stay to fulfill the requirements. Crops could be wiped out by grasshoppers or drought, and many settlers perished from disease, accidents, and in storms. Can you help this homesteading family just arriving in their covered wagon navigate past the obstacles between them and their land patent?
**Homestead Puzzle**

Find the words to solve the puzzle. All the answers can be found in the Heritage Center. Good luck! (When in doubt, ask a ranger!)

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**Across**
1. Name of last homesteader
4. Used to remove husks
5. Law that granted free land
7. Place to file a claim
9. Type of homestead house
10. Animals that pull a plow
11. Insect that invaded farms

**Down**
2. Name of first homesteader
3. Number of years to prove up
6. Needed to receive patent
8. Staple food in pioneer diet
9. Used to cut grass
Hidden Critters

The tallgrass prairie is home to many animals. Today there remains only 1% of the original 140,000,000 acres of tallgrass prairie. Homestead National Monument of America is home to 100 acres of restored tallgrass prairie - the second oldest restored prairie in the country.

Unscramble the letters below to discover some of the animals that live on the Monument. Then match the number of each animal with its description.

1. VAEBER
   __________________________
   A. I defend myself by spraying an unpleasant odor and I have a white stripe down my back.

2. ALITEHTDEWIRDEE
   __________________________
   B. I am a big bird, but you don’t often see me flying. Ben Franklin wanted me to be the national bird, but the eagle was chosen instead.

3. KNSKU
   __________________________
   C. My name may have originated from my short tail which is only 6 or 7 inches long. I can weigh up to 20 pounds and I am a carnivore, eating rabbits, squirrels and mice.

4. NCCAROO
   __________________________
   D. You can find me across the country, usually in green and gray. I can be found day or night protecting and preserving special places.

5. RENGAR
   __________________________
   E. I am the largest rodent in North America. I use my front teeth to help me cut trees to build a lodge or dam.

6. YURKTE
   __________________________
   F. I am a large mammal; I have a white tail and spots.

7. BCTABO
   __________________________
   G. I am nocturnal, meaning I hunt for my food at night. I scavenge for food such as berries, insects and seeds. I always wear my mask.

8. TECYOO
   __________________________
   H. Native Americans call me the trickster. I yip and yelp and howl. I am adaptable to many environments and I’m a member of the canine family.
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

The early homesteaders had to make due with limited means. In some ways, they were true recyclers. Look at the following items and name two ways homesteaders may have reused these items in their daily lives.

1. _________________  1. _________________  1. _________________
2. _________________  2. _________________  2. _________________

Now, look at these everyday items. How might you reuse these items in your daily life?

1. _________________  1. _________________  1. _________________
2. _________________  2. _________________  2. _________________
Name That Park!

One of the oldest ways for children to learn to read was with a picture story, or "rebus writing." Can you read and solve the names of these National Park sites? Write each word on the blanks provided below the puzzles.

GRRR + &

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __

+ yon

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __

Learn more!

Check out your National Parks online:  http://www.nps.gov
GPS Prairie Walk

Homesteaders could stake a claim on government surveyed land. The rectangular survey system was enacted by the Land Ordinance Act of 1785. Now known as the Public Land Survey System, this system divided the western lands into grid-shaped townships and sections. Surveyors would use compass and sextant to map out grids across the country.

Today surveying is done with the use of satellites and Global Positioning Systems, or GPS. At Homestead National Monument of America, you can find history using GPS units.

To participate in this activity, have an adult go to the Education Center and provide a driver's license to borrow a GPS unit. The ranger there will give you instructions on how to proceed with this activity. Once you are done, the license will be returned! (If you have your own GPS unit, the coordinates are listed under each stop sign. Set your datum on your unit to WGS 84.) Have fun!

**Go to waypoint Cabin**
1. Who lived here and when did they live here____________________
2. What did most homesteaders use to build houses?______________

**Go to waypoint Soil**
1. What did railroads promote?____________________________________
2. In the 1920’s breaking the sod became easier. Why? ______________
3. Look north, south, east and west. List four different things that are here now that were not here when homesteaders first settled.
   a. __________________________________
   b. __________________________________
   c. __________________________________
   d. __________________________________

**Go to waypoint Squatt**
1. Who lived here before the Freemans did?__________________________
Homestead National Monument of America

Junior Ranger

This certificate is awarded to

for successfully completing the requirements of the Junior Ranger Program

Junior Ranger Pledge:
As a Junior Ranger, I pledge to protect the plants, animals, and history at Homestead National Monument, to teach others about what I learn, and to keep exploring National Parks.

Park Ranger

Date