

John Muir, *Earth - Planet, Universe*: Pupil Activity Support Notes

I Will Walk One Thousand Miles – From Here to There



Before you begin this activity read the *I Will Walk One Thousand Miles* section from the John Muir graphic novel where John Muir describes himself as follows:

'I was like a man lost in the desert who finds an oasis and must drink. But I was thirsty for the whole world! I wanted to jump into it and immerse myself in its wonders. So I went on a thousand-mile walk to drink in the grand show of nature.'

John Muir: I'll follow my nose. The wind is full of haunting, unknown scents... strange animal cries... beautiful new plants and flowers...'

The aim of this activity is to plan and then embark (as a school trip or during your holidays) on your own mini journey of discovery, in the same spirit as John Muir. Your journey can include some or all of the following: a local wood or parkland, a coastal route or a local or long-distance pathway.

Detailed below are some places in Scotland that link to John Muir when he was a boy and/or when he returned to Scotland as an adult. Use this information to give you some ideas of where your own mini journey might take place.

Some of these locations may be near your school – if not you will have to check that you can go on an outing to your chosen place, as a school trip or by making your own arrangements to visit in your holidays.

Once you have discussed and agreed with your teacher where your mini journey will start and finish, begin doing some research and preparation for your trip.

John Muir, Earth - Planet, Universe: Pupil Activity Support Notes

Here is some background information (to help with your research) about some long-distance routes and other paths – sections of which could form your mini journey.

John Muir Way, West Highland Way, Southern Upland Way

The John Muir Way is a long-distance trail (opened on 21 April 2014) that crosses Scotland from John's birthplace in Dunbar through Central Scotland to the National Park at Loch Lomond, ending in Helensburgh. Walkers will also be able to branch off from the John Muir Way to other walks, such as the **West Highland Way** or the **Southern Upland Way**.



Photograph by Laura Dickson

The landscape crossed by the John Muir Way includes cliffs and beaches, farmland, industrial landscapes, hills, river valleys and woodlands.

John Muir, Earth - Planet, Universe: Pupil Activity Support Notes



John Muir, who had always considered himself a Scot, returned to his birthplace in 1893 to explore more of the country that first sparked his love of the natural world.

John Muir, Earth - Planet, Universe: Pupil Activity Support Notes created by Koren Calder © Copyright 2014 Scottish Book Trust. Permission to reprint for school purposes is granted to all public and private school teachers. All other rights reserved.

John Muir, *Earth - Planet, Universe*: Pupil Activity Support Notes

The places he visited are described below and if you would like to follow in his footsteps and visit some of Scotland's most outstanding natural and historic places too, maybe one of these locations could be where you plan to do your own mini journey?

Around Arthur's Seat, Edinburgh

John Muir admired Scotland's cosmopolitan capital for its geology. He walked to the top of and around its extinct volcano Arthur's Seat and enjoyed spectacular views across the city.



Ayrshire, Arran, Dumfries, Galloway

John Muir also explored the land that inspired the work of Scotland's National Bard Robbie Burns. Ayrshire, Arran, Dumfries and Galloway are home to a wealth of Robbie Burns' heritage along with a number of stunning natural landscapes, including the UK's only Dark Sky Park at Galloway Forest Park.



The Scottish Borders

Another of Muir's favourite writers was Sir Walter Scott, and it was in the Scottish Borders that he visited the home and burial place of the renowned literary figure.

John Muir, *Earth - Planet, Universe*: Pupil Activity Support Notes

Follow the Borders Abbeys Way and discover the four great abbeys in Kelso, Jedburgh, Melrose and Dryburgh amid beautiful countryside.



Loch Lomond, The Trossachs

En route to the Highlands, Muir stopped at Stirling to view the castle and the monuments of William Wallace and Robert the Bruce. He then made his way through the Trossachs and visited Loch Lomond and Loch Katrine – two of Scotland's most picturesque lochs.



The Highlands

Muir concluded his trip to Scotland in the Highlands, where he wrote that 'hundreds of miles thereabouts were covered with heather in full bloom'. The Cairngorms National Park, the largest National Park in the UK, is home to abundant wildlife, and with places such as Loch Morlich and Glen Coe you will find a wealth of natural sites and pathways to explore.



Source: Visit Scotland



John Muir, Earth - Planet, Universe: Pupil Activity Support Notes

I have read the above ideas (as well as my own research) and discussed them with my class teacher. It has been decided that I am going as part of a school trip to:

.....

Or I am going on a mini journey in my holidays to:

.....

Preparations for my journey

Food planner

I will take the following provisions for my journey

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

I have chosen these food and drink items because

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....



John Muir, *Earth - Planet, Universe*: Pupil Activity Support Notes

Clothing and equipment

I will take the following clothing and equipment for my journey

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

I have chosen these items of clothing and equipment because

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Research notes and map

The map(s) I will need for this journey is/are:

.....
.....

Other information I have found out about this route is:

.....
.....

John Muir, *Earth - Planet, Universe*: Pupil Activity Support Notes

When you go on your journey take your map, research notes and snacks you have prepared with you, as well as some paper and a pencil to record anything you discover while on your mini journey.

Begin by creating an annotated map of the path you are following and write down, photograph or draw symbols to represent what you see on your journey, including the following:

- a. Plants
- b. Trees
- c. Insects
- d. Birds
- e. Roads/bridges
- f. Buildings
- g. Water – rivers, ponds, lakes, sea

Back in the classroom

Once you have finished your journey add onto your map the following:

- a. The names of the trees or plants you included on your map
- b. The names of any insects you discovered and added to your map
- c. The names of any birds you saw or heard

To help you complete these tasks use the following web links:

- a. To discover the types of trees you observed on your mini journey go to:

www.nhm.ac.uk/nature-online/british-natural-history/urban-tree-survey/identify-trees/tree-key/index.html

Then add the names to your map with drawings showing the key things that

John Muir, Earth - Planet, Universe: Pupil Activity Support Notes

helped you to identify the trees and anything else you found out about them.

- b. To find out the names of any insects you came across on your mini journey go to:

www.oum.ox.ac.uk/thezone/insects/instant/index.htm

Once you have identified them as well as everything else you have found out add these findings to your map.

- c. To find out more or to identify any birds you discovered on your mini journey go to:

www.rspb.org.uk/wildlife/birdidentifier

Add your findings to your map as well as drawings and notes about the birds you have discovered on your journey.

Further work

If you would like to expand this activity further so that others can follow in your footsteps by repeating your mini journey, create a podcast of your walk describing all they should look out for, see and hear along the route.