



# Assignment

## Write an Argument Based on the Sources

**Topic: To Risk or Not to Risk: The Los Angeles National Forest**

### Part 1

**Sources for the Performance Task:**

***Source #1***

You have found a source about the Los Angeles National Forest.

**The Los Angeles National Forest**

**By Ellie Beane**

The Los Angeles National Forest is a vast expanse of natural beauty, teeming with diverse wildlife that contributes to the region's ecological richness. From majestic mountains to lush valleys, this sprawling forest is home to a variety of animal species, each playing a crucial role in maintaining the delicate balance of the ecosystem.

One of the prominent residents of the Los Angeles National Forest is the black bear. These magnificent creatures roam the forested areas in search of food, often foraging for berries, insects, and small mammals. While encounters with black bears are generally peaceful, it is essential for visitors to exercise caution and adhere to proper food storage guidelines to prevent attracting them to campsites. Bears accustomed to human food can become a hazard, posing risks to both visitors and the bears themselves.

Black bears are ferocious. They are unstoppable creatures with short, sharp claws. Unlike grizzly bears, black bears will not cease their attacks on their prey until it is killed.

Another notable inhabitant is the mountain lion, a skilled predator that helps control the deer population. While these elusive cats are rarely seen, their presence adds an air of

mystery to the forest.

Visitors are advised to be aware of their surroundings and take appropriate precautions, especially during dawn and dusk when mountain lions are more active.

The Los Angeles National Forest is also a haven for birdwatchers. From the iconic bald eagle to the melodious songbirds, the forest offers a birdwatcher's paradise. However, it's crucial to respect nesting areas and avoid disturbing the natural habitats of these winged wonders.

While the forest is a sanctuary for wildlife enthusiasts, it also presents certain hazards that visitors should be mindful of. Wildfires are a recurring threat, especially during the dry summer months. It is essential for visitors to adhere to fire safety regulations, avoid open flames in restricted areas, and report any signs of smoke immediately.

Additionally, the forest's terrain can pose challenges for hikers and campers. Uneven trails, steep slopes, and rapidly changing weather conditions require adequate preparation and awareness. Visitors should equip themselves with proper gear, stay on designated trails, and be mindful of their surroundings to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience.

You may be wondering why someone would want to risk any of this to go to the wilderness. However, outdoor education in the national forest offers many benefits, fostering both personal growth and environmental awareness. The immersive experience of learning amidst nature provides students with a unique opportunity to develop essential life skills. From teamwork and problem-solving to leadership and resilience, outdoor education cultivates a sense of self-reliance and adaptability.

Engaging with the natural world in the national forest also enhances environmental consciousness. Students develop a deep appreciation for the delicate ecosystems, creating a sense of responsibility for conservation. Learning in the outdoors creates a connection between academic knowledge and real-world application, making lessons more tangible and memorable.

Furthermore, exposure to the national forest encourages physical activity and a healthy lifestyle. Hiking, exploring, and participating in outdoor activities contribute to improved fitness and overall well-being. The fresh air and natural surroundings provide a conducive environment for stress reduction and mental rejuvenation.

Incorporating outdoor education into middle grades not only enriches academic learning but also instills values of environmental stewardship, teamwork, and a love for the great outdoors. It is a holistic approach that nurtures both the mind and the spirit, fostering a generation of individuals who appreciate and protect the natural world.

#### Sources Used

Kidzworld (n.d.). The National Forests. Retrieved from <http://www.kidzworld.com/losangeles>

#### **Source #2**

This guide explains what to do in the event of a bear encounter in the wilderness.

#### **Help! There's a Bear Over There!**

**By Aaron Higgins**

Encountering a bear in the wilderness is a thrilling and potentially intimidating experience. Whether you're an avid hiker, camper, or nature enthusiast, understanding how to handle such situations is crucial for both your safety and the well-being of the bear. Here's a guide on what to do when facing a bear encounter in the wild.

#### **1. Stay Calm and Assess the Situation**

The first rule when encountering a bear is to remain calm. Sudden movements or loud noises can startle the bear and escalate the situation. Assess the bear's behavior – is it aware of your presence, is it feeding, or does it have cubs? Understanding the bear's demeanor can help you determine the appropriate course of action.

The most dangerous situation you can find yourself in with a bear is if it is a mama bear with its cubs. This is especially true if you happen to startle her. There is a reason that there is a saying that someone is acting like a "mama bear". Be especially careful of this scenario.

#### **2. Do Not Run**

Bears are incredibly fast, and running may trigger their predatory instincts. Instead of fleeing, stand your ground. Running may provoke a chase response, putting you at

greater risk. Maintain a slow and steady pace backward while keeping an eye on the bear.

This may seem counterintuitive (the opposite of what you think you should do), but it is safest to stand still and respond with a clear mind. It will not help to panic.

### **3. Speak Calmly**

In a calm and assertive voice, talk to the bear. Let it know you are human by speaking in low tones. This can help the bear identify you as a non-threat. Avoid making direct eye contact, as bears may interpret it as a challenge or threat.

You may feel silly talking to a bear in the wilderness, but letting it know that you have a voice will help protect you. If it thinks you are another animal, it will more likely want to attack you. Remember to speak slowly and smoothly.

### **4. Make Yourself Big**

If the bear continues to approach, make yourself appear larger by raising your arms and opening your jacket. Pick up small children to make them less vulnerable. This can make you look more intimidating to the bear, discouraging further approach.

You may have seen people in movies raise their hands above their heads trying to mimic a standing bear pose. Again, it may seem ridiculous, but it helps to keep the bear afraid and away from you.

### **5. Back Away Slowly**

As you maintain eye contact and speak calmly, start backing away slowly. **Ensure that you're not turning your back on the bear.** Retreating slowly shows the bear that you are not a threat and allows you to leave the area without triggering aggressive behavior.

### **6. Use Bear Spray**

If you have bear spray, be prepared to use it. Bear spray is a potent deterrent that can deter a charging bear. Familiarize yourself with how to use it before venturing into bear country, and keep it easily accessible.

### **7. Identify Yourself**

Let the bear know you are human. If you have a backpack, raise it above your head to appear even larger. This helps the bear understand that you are not another animal in its territory.

## **8. Know When to Play Dead**

In the rare event of a bear charging and making contact, playing dead may be your best option, especially with a grizzly bear. Lie flat on your stomach, cover the back of your neck with your hands, spread your legs to make it harder for the bear to turn you over, and remain as still as possible.

## **9. Report the Encounter**

After the encounter, report it to local wildlife authorities. This information helps them monitor bear behavior and implement measures to ensure both human safety and the well-being of the bears.

Remember, bear encounters are relatively rare, and most bears will try to avoid human contact. By staying informed and following these guidelines, you can enhance your safety and coexist harmoniously with these magnificent creatures in the wilderness.

### **Sources Used**

Discovery News (2009, May 13). Bear Encounters. Retrieved from <http://news.discovery.com/bearencounters.html>

### **Source #3**

This table will give you information about bear attacks on humans over a three year period in the United States.

### **2020-2023 Bear Attacks That Ended in Death of a Human**

#### **Black bears**

<b>Name, age, sex</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description</b>
Steven Jackson, 66, male	June 16, 2023	Wild	Groom Creek, Arizona	The victim was sitting in a chair outside of his campsite when

Laney Malavolta, 39, female	April 30, 2021	Wild	Durango, Colorado	an adult male black bear attacked him. Malavolta was attacked and killed while hiking with her dogs. A mother black bear and two cubs were found nearby.
Patrick Madura, 43, male	September 2020	Wild	Great Smoky Mountains National Park	Madura was backpacking in the park. His remains were found on Sept. 11, 2020, near the remote Hazel Creek area where he had been camping.

### Grizzly bears

Name, age, sex	Date	Type	Location	Description
Amie Adamson, 48, female	July 21, 2023	Wild	West Yellowstone, Montana	The officials communicated that the same bear had also injured a person near an Idaho state park back in 2020. Lokan was attacked and killed in her tent near her campsite in Powell County by a grizzly bear. The bear had wandered into the campsite multiple times before the attack. The grizzly bear was later identified and killed by wildlife officials.
Leah Davis Lokan, 65, female	July 6, 2021	Wild	Ovando, Montana	Wilderness guide Charles "Carl" Mock, 40, was attacked on Thursday, April 15, 2021, while fishing. He was mauled by a 20 year old male grizzly bear likely defending a moose carcass.
Charles "Carl" Mock, 40, male	April 17, 2021	Wild	West Yellowstone, Montana	

### Source #4

You have found a source about a camp that neighboring students have attended in the past.

### Camp Hi Hill Outdoor School

#### By Unknown (The Long Beach Post)

Camp Hi Hill Outdoor School opened in 1948, in the Angeles Crest north of Mt. Wilson. For six decades it was a beloved Long Beach tradition. In the final year of elementary

school, students from across the district would pack their things, hop on a yellow school bus, and spend a week in the mountains with their classmates, sleeping in cabins and learning about science, nature and the outdoors under the stars.

Stories about beloved camp traditions and songs have been a cultural touchstone in Long Beach ever since—regardless of where in the city someone grew up, how much money they had, or what their background was, almost all Long Beach kids got to experience Camp Hi Hill. Many hung onto their “memory sticks” signed by other campers to this day and can recite which cabin they stayed in on their trip. There are multiple social media sites dedicated to Hi Hill memories.

In 2008, the twin forces of budget cuts and wildfire concerns closed the Hi Hill Outdoor School. In 2009, the Station Fire burned much of the forest around the camp, yet [left Hi Hill itself unscathed](#). Still, concerns remained, and after one year of relocating the program to the YMCA’s Camp Oakes, it was shuttered in 2009, ending 61 years of a much-loved tradition in Long Beach.

Moskovitz said that there was a genuine feeling of heartbreak among the district’s leadership at closing Hi Hill. Much of that leadership team are LBUSD alums themselves, with their own fond memories of the week away. Moskovitz has spent much of the last 13 years as one of the voices within the district who’s tried to look for opportunities to bring it back.

“I personally have been advocating behind the scenes for the return of Hi Hill,” he said. “I didn’t necessarily think it would be a reality, but every year I’d kind of surface it.”

### **Planning to bring back a beloved tradition**

The first piece of the puzzle came with the additional “Expanded Learning Opportunities” program funds given to school districts in California as part of the government’s COVID-19 response.

“There’s been conversations for 15 years, but it wasn’t really until the desire to bring it back met with the ELO additional funding that it became feasible,” said Moskovitz.

The charge of ELO funding is to increase learning opportunities outside the traditional school day, with an additional emphasis on social emotional learning. While some of

those concepts might seem new and trendy, they also happen to align perfectly with the Hi Hill tradition in the LBUSD that dates back to the 1940s.

With the funding in place, the LBUSD team began looking at Hi Hill with the possibility of reopening it—but they quickly realized that the original site would not work. There's the issue of the buildings having sat unused for more than a decade, which is a big hurdle, but the real stumbling block is fire safety.

Hi Hill only has one road in and out—under modern state fire regulations passed because of increased wildfires in California, that would have to change.

“We would be required to upgrade the roads,” said Moskovitz. “We’d have to fund a new road in and out—and even so, the camp is a walk from the parking lot. If there were a fire, it would be almost impossible for transportation to get to the camp to evacuate them.”

In other words, re-opening Hi Hill Outdoor School wouldn't just require upgrading some cabins. It would also require two 1-mile roads being constructed in the mountains.

Because the LBUSD already has a partnership with the YMCA of Greater Long Beach, Camp Oakes became the next site to look at. Oakes has a very similar layout and already has programs with school districts to bring students there.

“Their service area is Long Beach, so they had a lot of interest in making that available to us,” said Moskovitz.

### **What's next for Hi Hill and the LBUSD?**

Contracts to present to the LBUSD board have not been finalized yet, but planning is well underway, and it's likely that the board will have something to vote on in early 2023. The LBUSD will require about 80% of the available weeks at Camp Oakes, making it a big partnership between the district and the LB YMCA.

Once an agreement is signed, a curriculum will be developed, with input from some current fourth graders and families who will be among the first to go next year. The district team, which has already toured Oakes, will go up again in the spring. Moskovitz was part of the team that went up earlier in 2022.



"We took a tour of the facility, and surprising to me—not surprising to the folks at Camp Oakes—a lot of the programming they run is very similar to what was run at Camp Hi Hill," he said. "It's a model that's been developed over the last 50 years, a lot of the same songs and routines and daily structures, sleeping arrangements, things that are very familiar to what we had at Hi Hill."

The plan with the ELO funding will be that the trips will be fully funded next year and for the foreseeable future, with no cost to campers. That means beginning next school year, Long Beach fifth graders across the city will once again have the opportunity to go out into nature for a week as part of a public school program.

"I think after the last two challenging years, our students having opportunities to experience nature and...disconnect from the grind here (is great)," said LBUSD board member Juan Benitez. "I think it's wonderful."

For Moskovitz and the rest of the LBUSD team, that experience was the reason it was worth the hard work to try and revive the program.

"Students who don't have the opportunities to be in the mountains or snow get that chance to connect with nature," he said. "To spend a week there, that effect is profound. And as we continue to develop social emotional learning, the value in helping students connect with each other, too. It's so much more powerful when you can get them away from their environment and day-to-day challenges and just connect in a place that's peaceful and beautiful."

#### Sources Used

The Post (n.d.). Camp Hi Hill. Retrieved from <http://www.thepost.com/camphiill>

SAVE NOW

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**Which source has the most useful information about deciding whether or not a school field trip is worth the risk? Include the source title or number and explain**

**why this source has the most useful information about deciding whether or not a school field trip is worth the risk. Support your answer with at least two details.**

### **Your Response**



Word Count: 0

**SAVE NOW**

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## **Part 2**

You will now review your sources, take notes, and plan, draft, revise, and edit your writing. You may use your notes and go back to the sources. Now read your assignment and the information about how your writing will be scored; then begin your work.

### **Your assignment:**

Your school board is considering an outdoor education trip to the Los Angeles National Forest. Some people don't want to approve this adventure because they say that the wilderness is too dangerous for 7th graders.

You are a middle school student in the city of Compton. The school board, the group of people who make decisions regarding school policy, is holding a meeting to decide

whether or not outdoor education (camp) should be offered to students.

Today, you will write a letter addressed to the school board. In your letter, establish an argumentative claim for or against the outdoor education field trip. Make sure to address potential counterarguments in your letter and support your claim with information from the sources you have examined.

### **Argumentative Scoring**

Your argumentative letter will be scored using the following:

1. **Statement of claim and organization:** How well did you state your claim, address opposing claims, and maintain your claim with a logical progression of ideas from beginning to end? How well did your ideas thoughtfully flow from beginning to end using effective transitions? How effective was your introduction and your conclusion?
2. **Elaboration/evidence:** How well did you integrate relevant and specific information from the sources? How well did you elaborate your ideas? How well did you clearly state ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose?
3. **Conventions:** How well did you follow the rules of grammar usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling?

**Now begin work on your story.** Manage your time carefully so that you can:

- plan your multi-paragraph story
- write your multi-paragraph story
- revise and edit the final draft of your multi-paragraph story

**Now begin work on your argumentative letter.** Manage your time carefully so that you can:

- plan your letter

- write your letter
- revise and edit the final draft of your letter

Word-processing tools and spell check are available to you.

For Part 2, you are being asked to write a multi-paragraph letter, so please be as thorough as possible. Type your response in the space provided. The box will expand as you type. Remember to check your notes and your prewriting/planning as you write and then revise and edit your letter.

## **Your Response:**

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