



# ACTIVITIES

for grades PK-5

**OLMSTED**  
**200**  
CELEBRATING PARKS  
FOR ALL PEOPLE

## Activities for Younger Students (Pre-K through elementary school)

### U.S. History

Olmsted was an author, a journalist, public official and landscape architect. Students could study and report on different facets or stages of Olmsted's life and career or use him as a window to explore significant trends in late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century America. They can study Olmsted's views on the roles parks can play in urban environments as democratizing spaces that contribute to public health and welfare.

### Science

Parks are living laboratories where students can view the life cycles they study in the real world. More than that, in keeping with FLO's views, students can study how accessible greenspace contributes to public health, both individually and through mechanisms such as helping take the pressure off aging stormwater infrastructure.

### Art

Public greenspaces can serve as inspiration for art, whether through photography, still-lives, or Plein-Air Painting. The parks themselves can be works of art. Students can study the design principles that FLO helped establish.

### [COLOR FLO!](#)

### DRAW YOUR PERFECT PARK

Frederick Law Olmsted designed some of our nation's best-known and most-loved parks and green spaces. He knew that children have a special relationship with public parks as places for outdoor play and life-learning. Have your students imagine and draw their own perfect park: What elements would they include in their ideal greenspace? This is another great opportunity to show the fruit of your students' imaginations with the world by sharing the designs on social media with the #CelebrateOlmsted or #PerfectPark hashtags.

### MAKE A PARK IN A (SHOE)BOX

Shoebbox dioramas allow students to express their vision with different materials and depth. All they need is a shoebox, paper, glue, paints, paintbrushes, Scotch tape, and any other materials they might use to bring their parks to life – clay, crepe paper, cardboard and maybe even natural materials such as rocks or leaves. Paint the park onto the back of the inside of the shoebox and then fill the foreground with other elements, including cardboard cut-outs of kids playing or animals going about their days.

### FIELD TRIP!

What child doesn't love a trip to the park? Find a local park and take the kids there. For younger learners, the opportunity to get outdoors and run around might be a sufficient experience in itself. Older students might have an assignment like cataloging flora or fauna they see or noting what sort of roles the park plays in your city or town's life.

### PARK "SCAVENGER HUNT"

As part of a field trip, consider a scavenger hunt. Provide younger students with a running list of flora and fauna they might identify. Or have older students identify the Seven S's of Design in an Olmsted park or place. *Remember: Leave only memories.*



### **VIRTUAL FIELD TRIP**

Talk about taking your students far afield: How about a visit to [Crater Lake National Park](#) in Oregon or the [U.S. Virgin Islands](#) or [Yellowstone National Park](#)? These are some of the dozens of parks around the country that offer virtual tours. Allow your students to see the beauty of far-away vistas without leaving their classroom!

### **PARK REPORT**

Elementary school students who have mastered the basics of writing and are starting to learn research can practice both skills by producing reports on local or national parks. How old is the park? How big is it? Who designed it? What sort of plants and animals call it home? This is an ideal opportunity for kids to find out about spaces close to home or which they might want to visit one day, far away.

