

**Garden of the Gods Park**  
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**Program updates can be found at: <https://gardenofgods.com/educational/edu-1/school-field-trips>**

### **Land Use Acknowledgement:**

We gratefully acknowledge the native peoples on whose ancestral homeland we gather, as well as the diverse and vibrant Native communities of Colorado today.

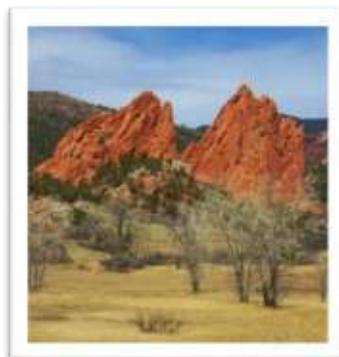
### **Garden of the Gods History Program**

Welcome! We look forward to sharing the historical story of Garden of the Gods with your students.

We align with current Colorado Academic Standards for middle and high school Social Studies: History and Social Studies: Geography.

### **Goals:**

- Students become invested in understanding and caring for the exceptional wonder of the Garden of the Gods and the world around them
- Students gain an understanding of how humans use and shape natural surroundings
- Students understand responsible citizenship bolstered by knowledge of the region's history and how it shaped the world they've inherited
- Students understand how the Nuu-ciu (Ute) and other Native Nations thrived in this area prior to European and American expansion and where and how they thrive today



## Teacher Reference Guide:

### Garden of the Gods History

Garden of the Gods Park has a long history of human use which includes ancient peoples, American Indian Nations, European/American exploration, prospectors and pioneers, the growth of Colorado Springs in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and recent history.

Archaeological evidence reveals 12,000 years of human use in the American Southwest including:

- Clovis People (9000-1100 BC)
- Folsom people (9000-7500 BC)
- Plano People (8200-5300 BC)

Following these Paleoindian groups, came cliff dwelling people. Archaeologists label them *Ancestral Puebloans*. Their culture has been identified by artifacts such as baskets, pottery, sandals, tools, and their incredible architecture on display in Mesa Verde National Park and other sites. There is little evidence of Ancestral Puebloan presence in our park. They lived in the area between 1500 BC and 1300 AD. Theories vary as to what happened to these people.

People of the Ute Nation (*Nuu-ciu*) have a long-standing association with the Garden of the Gods. Two bands in particular, the Tabeguache and Mouache, spent time here, typically wintering among the shelter of the rocks. Archaeological evidence shows that these people frequented the park up to 4,000 years ago. *Nuu-ciu* history says they have always lived in central Colorado. They held *tava* (Pikes Peak) sacred and offered gifts to spirits of the mineral springs found in Manitou Springs.

Other American Indian nations frequented the Garden area, to include the Jicarilla Apache, Arapahoe, Cheyenne, Comanche, Navajo, and Kiowa. Relations between these peoples changed at different times in history. They sometimes traded together, allied against common enemies, or fought for resources such as hunting grounds, horses, and firearms. Some nations, including the Kiowa, Arapaho, and Cheyenne considered the Garden a sacred place.

The first Europeans to arrive were Spanish explores in the mid-1500's. In the 1700's French explorers and fur trappers came through. In fact the oldest evidence of European visitation to the Garden is the signature of a Frenchman named Wll. Ketner whose name and "1731" are carved into one of the park's rocks. Both nations claimed the land until France and America concluded the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 and Spain signed the Adams-Onis Treaty of 1819.

Captain Zebulon Montgomery Pike led the first American expedition to the area in 1806. He did not visit the Garden nor did he climb Pikes Peak. He reached the summit of Mt. Rosa, west of Fort Carson, before adverse weather drove him back to his main camp near where

Fountain Creek flows into the Arkansas River. The name Pikes Peak became commonplace after Dr. John H. Robinson, a member of Pike's expedition, published a map of the west in 1818. This was the first document to label the mountain Pikes Peak.

Other significant American expeditions came through this area in the following decades. Major Stephen Long's Expedition of 1820 followed Fountain Creek to the location of present day Manitou Springs. The bubbling springs earned the area the name *Fontaine qui Bouille*, French for "boiling fountain." This expedition recorded sightings of giant fins of rock along the Front Range and the first recorded ascent of Pikes Peak by Dr. Edwin James and three other men. Long named the mountain James Peak, but the name did not hold.

In the 1830's, American fur trappers were collecting pelts throughout the Colorado Rockies, following rivers like the South Platte, Arkansas, and Fountain Creek. They operated using a Rendezvous System which greatly improved logistics and set up several blockhouse-style forts for trade. A prime example of this is Bent's Fort near La Junta.

The 1840 expedition of Brevet Captain John C. Fremont started the migration of pioneers and homesteaders to Colorado. He wrote of the land's suitability for ranching and farming. He also discovered gold in several creeks along the Front Range.

The Lawrence Party of 1858 was a forerunner of the gold rush the following year. This group of 48 prospectors and their families came west to find gold. They camped along Camp Creek (thus the name) and many wrote their names in the soft sandstone of the Garden. Included in this party was suffragette Julia Archibald Homes (aka The Bloomer Girl), the first woman of European descent to summit Pikes Peak. After an unproductive month, most of the party moved elsewhere to find their fortunes.

The Pikes Peak or Bust Gold Rush of 1859 brought thousands of prospectors to the area. Most failed, coining the phrase, "Busted by God." That same year, two men surveying the area for the Colorado City Company gave the Garden its name. Rufus Cable and Melancthon Beach rode through the Garden. Beach told Cable that the area was an excellent site for a beer garden. To which Cable responded, "Beer garden? Why it is a fit place for the gods to assemble!" The area became referred to as Garden of the Gods from then on.

Homesteaders claimed land in and around the Garden starting in 1858. The Homestead Act of 1861 brought in fresh pioneers looking to make a life for themselves. Between 1858 and 1879 the land surrounding the Garden changed hands many times.

1870 was the final year the *Nuu-ciu* wintered in the Garden. Waves of explorers, prospectors, and homesteaders had robbed them of both their privacy in the region and essential game animals like the bison. Propaganda campaigns by greedy corporate and media moguls and the federal government's repeated treaty violations resulted in *Nuu-ciu* moved to reservations in Colorado's southwest corner and in the deserts of Utah by 1880.

In 1871 Gen. William Jackson Palmer, owner of the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad established Colorado Springs in conjunction with the founding of Manitou Springs by his

close friend Dr. William Bell. The next year, Palmer completed his railroad line between Denver and Pueblo. This opened the Pike's Peak region to international tourism.

Palmer prompted his friend Charles E. Perkins to buy 240 acres of land encompassing much of the Central Garden in 1879. Perkins was the CEO of one of the nation's most prominent railroads, the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad. Perkins hired a local real estate mogul to maintain his property and keep it open for public use. He bought two additional parcels later, bringing his land holdings to 480 acres.

From 1883-1915 the Park housed various entrepreneurial sites, to include a small, self-styled resort, a series of curio shops, a beer hall, a lemonade stand, and kiosks selling carvings made of local gypsum.

In 1909, the Perkins family deeded their 480 acres of land to the City of Colorado Springs on condition that the park be forever known as "Garden of the Gods" and that it be kept free to the public.

In 1911-1913 a Shan Kive event was held in the park. While it allowed *Nuu-ciu* to return to the area and conduct many of their traditional ceremonies and dances, the Shan Kive was set up as a tourist attraction to bring revenue into Colorado Springs. Shan Kive was touted as "a Ute phrase meaning heap big fun," though the truth of that is dubious at best.

In 1915, the first structure built with city approval was placed in the park. The Hidden Inn was intended to be the home of the caretaker and offer services to visitors.

Other structures and land have been added to the park over the past century. In 1994 the city approved the Master Plan for the Garden of the Gods and most facilities were removed. The current Visitor and Nature Center opened in 1995. It sits on private land just east of the park. The park now encompasses over 1336 acres.

Today, *Nuu-ciu* live and work around the region. An annual powwow takes place at Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site where the culture and heritage of *Nuu-ciu* and other regional American Indian nations are demonstrated for the broader public.

## Supplemental Activities:

- Create a historical timeline of the Pikes Peak region.
- Conduct greater research on a particular historical figure associated with the Garden and identify how the park might be different without that person's influence.
- Compare pictures taken on your field trip with historical photos of the Garden. Many historical images are available through the Pikes Peak Library District.
- Complete artwork or creative writing projects based on your experience in the Garden of the Gods.
- Contact the cultural representatives of one of the Ute reservations and learn more about these People of the Shining Mountains.

## Additional Resources:

*Official Guide to Garden of the Gods and Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site. 2012.*

*Pikes Peak Library District Digital Collections at:*

*<http://cdm15981.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/search/searchterm/garden%20of%20the%20gods/order/nosort>*

*[www.cspm.org/learn/regional-history/](http://www.cspm.org/learn/regional-history/)*

*Marsh, Charles S., [People of the Shining Mountains](#), Pruett Publishing Co.; Boulder, Colorado, 1982*

*<https://www.southernute-nsn.gov/>*

*<http://www.utemountainutetribe.com/>*

*<http://www.utetribe.com/>*