

COLO-ROAD  
**TRIPS**  
-K TO 5TH GRADE-  
EDUCATIONAL ITINERARIES

EXPLORE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM. LEARN INSIDE OUR STATE.

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**Poetic Canyon**  
**Black Canyon of the Gunnison**

**Background:** The Black Canyon is a stunning landscape of color. The views from the rim are amazing with the colors, steep canyon walls and the Gunnison River flowing below.

Learn about how the canyon was formed by visiting the [park's website](#) and reading about the [geologic story](#) of the park and the [canyons minerals](#). Be sure to stop by the visitor center to pick up the Jr. Ranger book as well as more information.

For this activity you will be writing a haiku and/or a tanka poem about the geology of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison. To learn how erosion still affects the park today [watch this video](#).

**Word Alert:**

**Haiku**—a Japanese nature poem consisting of seventeen syllables in three lines of 5 syllables, 7 syllables, 5 syllables.

**Tanka**—a Japanese poem consisting of 31 syllables in five lines. The first and third have 5 syllables and the others have seven syllables.

**Metamorphic rock**—literally means “change in form”. These original rocks underwent periods of heat and pressure.

**Gneiss**—a metamorphic rock with banded structure with feldspar, quartz, and mica

**Schist**—a metamorphic rock which has layers of different materials and can be split into thinner pieces.

**Igneous rock**—formed from lava or magma

**Pegmatite**—igneous rock that is pink or white with mica or quartz and a mineral called feldspar

**Questions to Ask:**

1. What makes the beautiful colors on the canyon walls? (metamorphic rock with bands of pegmatites).
2. What features do you notice as you look from up above? (steep canyon walls, dark colors with pinks and whites, river below)

**Activity:** For this activity, you will be writing a poem about the Black Canyon of the Gunnison. You can choose to write either a haiku or tanka poem, or you can choose to try both!

**Haiku**

[Watch this video](#) on how to write a Haiku. After reading the example haiku below, draft your own haiku poem about the Black Canyon of the Gunnison and don't forget to add a title. Remember it's only three lines. 1<sup>st</sup> line is 5 syllables, 2<sup>nd</sup> line is 7 syllables, 3<sup>rd</sup> line is 5 syllables.

Black Canyon  
Pink and black artwork  
Steep canyon rock forming wall  
River flowing bottom

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

Line 1 (5 syllables): \_\_\_\_\_

Line 2 (7 syllables): \_\_\_\_\_

Line 3 (5 syllables): \_\_\_\_\_

## Tanka (means short song)

[Watch this video](#) on how to write a Tanka. After reading the example tanka below, draft your own tanka poem about the Black Canyon of the Gunnison and don't forget to add a title. Remember it's only 5 lines. 1<sup>st</sup> line is 5 syllables, 2<sup>nd</sup> line is 7 syllables, 3<sup>rd</sup> line is 5 syllables with a transition to the last two lines of 7 syllables.

**Black Canyon**

Beautiful black, pink  
Metamorphic rock schist, gneiss  
Leading to river  
Flowing treacherous waters  
Happy I'm seeing from rim

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

Line 1 (5 syllables): \_\_\_\_\_

Line 2 (7 syllables): \_\_\_\_\_

Line 3 (5 syllables): \_\_\_\_\_

Line 4 (7 syllables): \_\_\_\_\_

Line 5 (7 syllables): \_\_\_\_\_