



6TH GRADE THROUGH 8TH GRADE

WINNER

WHY ELIAS LOVES ARIZONA

WRITTEN BY ELIAS, A 6TH GRADER AT PHOENIX CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

There are many things I love about Arizona. In this essay, I will talk about Arizona's National Parks, fun hikes, Luke Airforce Base, Civil Air Patrol, Arizona's native history, Arizona's tax credit program, and Arizona's Phoenix Youth Symphony.

The Grand Canyon is one of three National Parks in Arizona. I love it because the types of rock change as you get lower into the Canyon. I also love how the Colorado river runs through the bottom of the Grand Canyon. The second National Park in the state is the Petrified Forest. The Petrified Forest is amazing because what was once wood, has now turned into the properties of rock. The third National Park in the state is Saguaro National Park. This National Park has a lot of neat hikes. I also enjoyed seeing all the saguaro cactuses everywhere. I earned one of my Junior Ranger badges here.

Arizona has lots of fun hikes, such as Hidden Valley Loop, Piestewa Peak, Phoenix Mountain Preserve, North Mountain, South Mountain, and Horton Creek. These are all fun and enjoyable hikes that I do with my family. Horton Creek is my favorite because it's in Northern Arizona, and it runs alongside a creek.

Another thing I enjoy about Arizona is going to Luke Airforce Base. I love aviation and aerospace, so I always love going to airshows there. My grandpa also takes me to the road by the end of the runway. We watch planes take off and land right over our heads. We have a lot of fun. One time we counted 54 planes in 30 minutes.

Arizona has a chapter of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP). Civil Air Patrol is a cadet organization that was founded during World War 2. Civil Air Patrol is now a cadet's organization for kids who are interested in aviation. I am joining CAP soon, and I can't wait.

The cliff dwellings around Montezuma's Well and Montezuma's Castle are two amazing structures built by the ancient native people in Arizona. I loved both of them for their structural design, irrigation systems, and clever ways of life. I would definitely recommend visiting them. My family also had the opportunity to get to know one of Arizona's first nations - the Yavapai. We got to join them in a number of celebrations.

I am thankful that Arizona is the only state that allows tax money to be donated for students to be able to go to private schools. I am thankful to be at Phoenix Christian PreK-8 because it is small, Christian, and we can learn about the Bible and memorize scripture. I have 5 good friends at my school. This year I was able to play school sports and our soccer team won the championships. I also worked hard to make principles list all four quarters. I can't wait for 6th grade.

Arizona has a number of youth symphonies. I got to play violin in the Phoenix Youth Symphony last year. I also had the opportunity to test with Arizona's chapter of the American String Teachers Association Certificate Advancement Program (ASTACAP). I am currently in level four.

Overall, I love Arizona for all the beauties, attractions, hikes, and the many other things Arizona has to offer. I can't wait to explore more of Arizona.