# Meet Smokey Bear

NAME _____

In 1950, after a destructive fire in New Mexico, a badly burned bear cub was found by a U.S. Forest Service worker. The cub was healed and named "Smokey." Smokey Bear became an icon for the Forest Service's advertising campaign.

Today, Smokey Bear is often found on signs showing a fire-danger rating. The colors range from green, which indicates a minimal risk of fire, to red, which stands for extreme danger. What determines the risk level of a wildfire? How does Smokey know the fire-danger rating?

**1.** Working in your group, list all the factors that you think would affect the spread of a forest fire.

**2.** Which of these factors are most important? Which factors are least important?

**3.** Do you think that a fire will spread more quickly on a steep hillside or on level ground? Explain your reasoning.

**4.** Why must rangers know the likelihood that a fire will start? Why must rangers know the likelihood that a fire will spread?

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