



The Bear Hunt at Bull Mountain Preserve

Once upon a crisp autumn morning, two intrepid hikers—Ella and Liam—set out for an adventure in the heart of Bull Mountain Preserve. Their goal? To reach the breathtaking vista that awaited them at the top!

The green-blazed main trail wound through a shady hemlock forest, the air fragrant with pine. Ella's hiking boots crunched on fallen needles, and Liam's eyes scanned the underbrush for signs of wildlife. They had heard rumors of black bears in these woods, and while they walked they sang out lines from a favorite storybook.

"We're going on a Bear Hunt, gonna catch a big one, I'm not [1 _____]!"

As they ascended, the forest shifted. Hemlocks gave way to mountain laurel, then majestic [2 _____]. Sunlight filtered through the canopy, dappling the path. Liam pointed out a pileated woodpecker hammering away at a decaying log, its crimson crest a vivid contrast against the [3 _____].

"Imagine if we DID see a bear," Ella said, her eyes [4 _____]. "What would we do?"

Liam scratched his [5 _____]. He recalled learning about this at camp: "Stand tall, make noise, and [6 _____] away [7 _____]. If there are cubs, be careful not to get between them and the [8 _____]. Don't take time to take photos unless you are sure you are safely away."

They continued, the trail leading them higher. The anticipation grew with each [9 _____]. Finally, they walked out atop the rocky outcrop—their reward for the climb. Below them lay the Womenshenuk watershed, a wetland complex winding southward towards Gaylordsville and beyond. To the west, they overlooked

[10 _____] Golf Course, South Kent School, and glittering Hatch Pond. The view stole their [11 _____] away.

But then, a rustling in the bushes! A shadow moved—a massive silhouette against the [12 _____] hills. Ella's heart raced. Could it be?

Gulp, yes, it was: a black bear, lumbering into view about 75 yards down the trail. Its fur glistened in the sunlight as it [13 _____] the blueberry underbrush. Fear and awe mingled as they watched this [14 _____] creature. Sniffing the air, it [15 _____] on its hind legs before lumbering into the forest.

"[16 _____]!!! We actually saw a bear," Liam whispered.

Ella [17 _____], her pulse still racing. The sighting had only been for a few [18 _____] but it felt like much longer! They made sure they could no longer hear the rustling, then [19 _____] set out to finish the loop, senses heightened, leaving the bear behind.

As they descended, they reflected on Bull Mountain's natural history—the ancient rock formations left by glaciers that shaped the land, the clearing of [20 _____] during the iron industry, and the resilient forests that had returned. They felt a kinship with the bear, both explorers in this wild sanctuary.

Back at the trailhead, they paused by the kiosk. Together, they vowed to return—to hike, explore, and perhaps, just perhaps, to glimpse the bear once more (from a distance please). For in the heart of Bull Mountain Preserve, adventure awaited those who dared to seek it. 🌲🐻🏠

Note: The Bull Mountain Preserve in Kent, Connecticut, offers stunning views and the possibility of encountering wildlife, including black bears. Remember to follow safety guidelines and enjoy the magic of the outdoors!