

Video session:

Wildfire Photographer

Before you watch:

- Look at the photo of Mark Thiessen. He is a wildfire photographer. Can you guess what a wildfire photographer does and describe it?
- What do you think are the good and bad points of Mark's job?
- What kind of skills does a good photographer need?



While you watch:

Decide if these statements are true or false.

- 1 *National Geographic* photographer, Mark Thiessen, gets to photograph wild animals. ☐
- 2 Every summer Mark drives east to photograph wildfires. ☐
- 3 A 'fire whirl' occurs when some of the flames start twisting together, creating a fire tornado. ☐
- 4 Mark's goal is to photograph the people who have the tough responsibility of fighting fires. ☐
- 5 Mark thinks that the sight of trees damaged by fire can be quite beautiful, almost magical. ☐
- 6 Every time he finishes taking photographs of a fire, he feels tired and really depressed. ☐

After you watch:

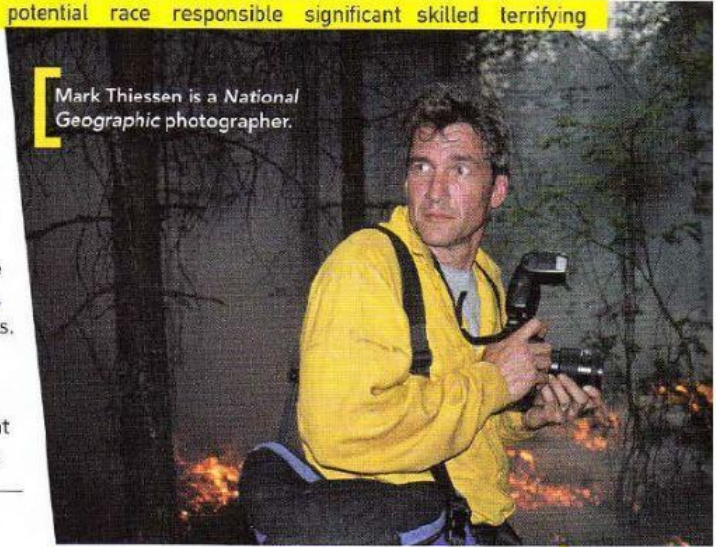
Complete the summary below using these words.

Mark Thiessen is a *National Geographic* photographer. The (1) _____ of his pictures are of things like dinosaur bones or people, but during the summer, he photographs forest fires. He drives quickly from place to place, interviewing firefighters and taking pictures. Wildfires frequently (2) _____ in the USA during the summer, and they are (3) _____ for people being injured or losing their homes.

Mark had known he wanted to be a photographer ever since he was a child. He used to listen to police radio messages at night and whenever he heard of fire, he would wake his mum and they would (4) _____ to see it. One of the reasons why Mark is so interested in fires is because they are unpredictable. He thinks that makes them interesting, but also absolutely (5) _____.

Mark also has a second (6) _____; he is a(n) (7) _____ and capable wildland firefighter too – the perfect mix for being a wildfire photographer. When Mark is with the firefighters, he feels part of a team. A team that does a very (8) _____ job. Being near forest fires gives him the (9) _____ to take the best photographs. Even though Mark knows that fires have the (10) _____ to destroy a lot of land, he is amazed by their beauty.

Mark Thiessen is a *National Geographic* photographer.



Discuss these questions:

1. Some people risk their lives to make a living? Would you? Why? / Why not?
2. Does it take a special type of person to do a dangerous job?
3. Being a wildfire photographer is a dangerous job. What other dangerous jobs can you think of?