

Check List

For Successful Outdoor Field Trips

(Some of this will be covered by Sandia Mountain Natural History Center staff when going to the Center.)

Before the Trip

Choosing a Site for the Outdoor Field Trip

- ___ Determine accessibility to the site by students, i.e. distance from school and the availability of transportation (walking, cars, or buses).
- ___ Assess the area for any safety considerations such as loose rocks, cacti, broken glass, etc.
- ___ Check to determine if the site is appropriate for the activities planned.
- ___ Determine location of nearest rest rooms, shelter, and telephone.
- ___ Secure approval from the owners of the site and from school authorities.
- ___ Speak with the host or guide, if applicable, and review the purpose of the trip and the activities planned.
- ___ Make a personal visit to the site to conduct a dry run of the day's activities.

Teacher Preparation

- ___ Send letters home to parents/guardians explaining the purpose of the field trip, appropriate dress, and requesting chaperone volunteers.
- ___ Send permission slips to parents requesting medical information, name and phone number of health practitioner, phone number of emergency contact, and the parent and student's signatures.
- ___ Contact parent volunteers and explain their responsibilities during the day's activities.
- ___ Determine what concepts will be addressed on the trip and what activities will be used to meet your objectives.
- ___ Plan pre- and post-trip activities to prepare for and reinforce lessons learned on the field trip (such as those in Ecosystem Explorations).
- ___ Gather material needed for trip, such as magnifying glasses, clip boards, extra pencils, crayons, and thermometers.
- ___ Gather material for a Group Leader Backpack, which should include:
 - √ First Aid Kit
 - √ Sunscreen
 - √ Extra Water Bottle



- √ Extra Hat
- √ Extra paper and pencils
- √ Extra Snacks
- √ Cell phone, if possible
- √ Permission slips and medical forms for students
- √ Any medication which students need

Student Preparation

- ___ Introduce students to the purpose for the trip and the activities that they will do.
- ___ Establish expectations with students for appropriate behavior by doing an activity such as the Ecosystem Explorations' "Goal Setting" lesson.
- ___ Demonstrate the appropriate methods of use for all equipment that will be used.
- ___ Divide the class into teams and give each team or individual (in each team) a specific task to be responsible for during the field trip.

During the Field Trip

- ___ Remember that teachers and adult chaperones serve as guides throughout the day to facilitate student learning and appropriate behavior.
- ___ Divide the class into smaller groups and assign each group to an adult chaperone.
- ___ Allow for initial orientation period to give an overview of the surroundings and highlight concerns.
- ___ Plan for rest room breaks immediately prior to departure and throughout the day.
- ___ Take a headcount at each stop and make sure that an adult is at the front and end of the line when hiking.
- ___ Keep the activities varied and allow sufficient time for observation and reflection.
- ___ Focus on keeping the activities student-centered by encouraging student input and participation.
- ___ Reflect on the pre-trip objectives during the trip to determine if they are being addressed.
- ___ Remember to remain flexible and to adapt your activities to fit the needs of your group, the weather, and the time available.



After the Field Trip

- ___ Brainstorm with the students, What did we learn? What did we do? Have them share that information with their families or another class.
- ___ List ideas or questions that were raised or unanswered during the trip (have students research these if you wish).
- ___ Expand on the field trip by relating the experience to classroom activities using Ecosystem Explorations or other activities.
- ___ File a short report on the field trip to use for future reference, noting factual information about site used and contact(s) as well as an evaluation of the activities.

