

TEACHER INFORMATION PACKET

INTRODUCTION

To The Teacher

Welcome! This information has been designed to help teachers, chaperones and students prepare for a Self-Guided Visit to the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum and to enhance the educational value and enjoyment of the field trip. We recommend that a Desert Museum visit coincide with classroom studies of desert ecology or natural history. We developed this packet of Sonoran Desert information and activities to contribute to your classroom ecology unit; it is not intended to be a complete curriculum on its own. We hope you'll find this information useful and easy to incorporate into your science curriculum. All material is designed to be used by students in grades 3-5 and may be duplicated for student and chaperone use. However, the reading level on the student handouts may be too advanced for 3rd graders. You may need to read this information to your students and use your creative teaching strategies to assist those students having difficulty with vocabulary and concepts. For more information about the Desert Museum and the Sonoran Desert visit our web site at www.desertmuseum.org.

This packet contains pre- and post-visit information and activities to accompany the *Explorer's Guide* to the Desert Museum.

- **Pre-visit Information and Activities:** Pre-visit readings and activities provide students with background information on plants, animals, people and environmental conditions of the Sonoran Desert Region. Each reading is correlated to specific Museum Exhibits and contains information students will need to know in order to successfully complete the *Explorer's Guide*. By completing pre-visit activities, students will be able to more accurately anticipate and understand what they will see at the Desert Museum.
- **Explorer's Guide:** The purpose of the *Explorer's Guide* is to encourage students to make careful observations of plants, animals and artifacts while on their field trip, as well as read exhibit signs. Students should complete the *Explorer's Guide* at the Desert Museum.
- **Post-visit Activities:** Post-visit activities give students a chance to synthesize information learned before and during their trip; and construct their own understanding of the components and ecology of the Sonoran Desert Region. Suggested research projects allow students to explore areas of interest in more depth.

We welcome and value your comments, suggestions and/or questions concerning this packet. The information and activities have been developed and revised based on teacher, chaperone, student and staff recommendations over a number of years. If you develop any lessons or activities related to desert ecology and a Museum visit that work well with your students, please send us a copy. We will give you credit for any materials we use.

Sincerely,
ASDM Education Department

Objectives

Through the use of these materials and a visit to the Museum, your students should:

- Become familiar with the diversity of life in the Sonoran Desert,
- Understand that all components of a desert ecosystem are important and interconnected,
- Describe plant and animal adaptations that help each survive and thrive here,
- Become aware of differences between the desert grasslands, mountain islands and riparian corridors within the Sonoran Desert Region,
- Describe environmental changes in this area over geologic time using fossil evidence,
- Become familiar with different groups of people who have pre-historically and historically lived in this region,
- Describe some effects humans have had on the Sonoran Desert Region,
- Develop an appreciation of the intrinsic value of the desert and list ways we can conserve it.

Arizona Academic Standards Correlation

The pre- and post-visit activities and the self-guided tour with the *Explorer's Guide* correlate to the Arizona Academic Standards listed below. See each activity for specific standards and performance objectives met.

SC01-S1C2-04, SC02-S4C2-03, SC03-S3C1-01, SC03-S3C1-02, SC03-S4C1-01, SC03-S4C2-02, SC03-S4C3-01, SC03-S4C3-04, SC03-S4C3-05, SC03-S4C4-01, SC03-S4C4-03, SC03-S6C1-04, SC04-S4C1-02, SC04-S6C2-06, SC05-S3C1-02, SS03-S1C1-02, SS03-S1C1-03, SS04-S1C2-02, SS03-S4C1-07, SS04-S4C1-07, SS04-S4C2-04, SS03-S4C5-02, SS04-S4C5-03*

Science Standards:

Strand 1: Inquiry Process

Concept 1: Observations, Questions, and Hypotheses

Concept 3: Analysis and Conclusions

Strand 3: Science in Personal and Social Perspectives

Concept 1: Changes in Environments

Concept 2: Science and Technology in Society

Strand 4: Life Science

Concept 1: Characteristics of Organisms

Concept 2: Life Cycles

Concept 3: Organisms and Environments, Populations of Organisms in an Ecosystems

Concept 4: Diversity, Adaptation and Behavior

Strand 6: Earth and Space Science

Concept 3: Changes in the Earth and Sky

Social Studies Standards:

Strand 1: American History

Concept 1: Research Skills for History

Concept 2: Early Civilizations

Strand 4: Geography

Concept 1: The World in Spatial Terms

Concept 2: Places and Regions

Concept 5: Environment and Society

*The shorthand for each standard is read this way:

