

POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

To the Teacher

The following post-visit activities are designed to help students synthesize their observations and experiences from pre-visit activities and the on-site visit to the Desert Museum. Students should be constructing their own understanding of the components and ecology of the Sonoran Desert and recognize the importance of museums.

ACTIVITIES

1. REVIEW ANSWERS TO THE EXPLORERS GUIDE

As a class, go over the answers students found to the *Explorer's Guide* and discuss the trip. Have students share the information they learned from a docent interpretation.

2. RE-EVALUATE THE CLASSROOM MUSEUM

If your class created a classroom museum (pre-visit activity,) have students re-evaluate their exhibits in light of what they saw at the Desert Museum. Have students make any desired changes.

3. CREATIVE WRITING AND PLAY

Have students write and illustrate stories based on field observations, research, and Desert Museum exhibits. Imagine experiencing a day in the life of a tarantula or saguaro, being a Palo Verde beetle undergoing metamorphosis or a kestrel searching for prey. Stories can evolve into desert ecology plays performed for younger children.

4. ANIMAL REPORTS

Students can choose from a variety of fascinating Sonoran Desert animals they saw at the Desert Museum on which to write a report. While researching, students should consider the following topics:

- Appearance: size, outstanding features, color, class of animal, life span
- Habitat: type of shelter or home, range and distribution
- Adaptations: to the desert environment, for defense, other
- Feeding habits: food type, methods of gathering and storing food
- Reproduction: gestation period, number of offspring, methods of raising young
- Protection status: protected, threatened or endangered
- Ecology: create a food web

Ask your librarian to gather and set aside related information for student use. While doing internet research, be sure to visit our web site at www.desertmuseum.org.

5. SCHOOL GROUNDS NATURAL HISTORY FIELD GUIDE

After a trip to the Desert Museum, have students put together a natural history field guide to their school grounds. This can include illustrations and text on a variety of animals, plants, geologic features and significant cultural sites in the area. For a complete guide, supplement observations with research.