Welcome to The Field Museum!

The Field Museum is an exciting place to explore and learn. It is home to a collection of over 25 million artifacts and specimens that represent over four billion years of history. The collections help us understand the origin and evolution of our planet, its life and cultures.

Taking a field trip to the Museum offers students and teachers an opportunity to interact with real objects. Field trips engage the senses, bring curriculum concepts to life, and inspire questions. With some planning, a field trip becomes a valuable extension of classroom learning.

This Field Trip Planning Guide is designed to help you plan a meaningful learning experience at The Field Museum and includes tips for meeting Next Generation Science Standards and Common Core State Standards. If you have any questions, contact us at educators@fieldmuseum.org.

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About Us

Did you know?

• The Field Museum was founded in 1893 to house the natural science and anthropology collections displayed at the World’s Columbian Exposition held in Chicago that year.

• In 1905 the Museum’s name was changed from the Field Columbian Museum to The Field Museum of Natural History. The name “Field” honors the Museum’s first major benefactor—Marshall Field.

• The Museum’s current building was completed in 1921, designed by architect Daniel Burnham who also planned Chicago’s beautiful lakefront.

• The Museum is more than just a place to see exhibitions and attend educational programs—it’s also a world-renowned research institution. Field Museum scientists and their colleagues from around the world continuously use and enrich the collection to explore the evolution of our planet, study the complexity of life on Earth, and question what this means for our future.

• Today, the Museum’s collection is comprised of over 25 million specimens and artifacts. Less than one percent of our collection is on display; the rest is preserved for scientific research!

• The Museum has three levels of public exhibitions. There are two additional floors beneath the ground level and two above the upper level that house our scientific collections, laboratories, and offices.
Top 10 Reasons to Take a Field Trip to The Field Museum

1. The Museum excites and motivates students to learn about the origin and evolution of our planet, its life and culture.

2. Immersion in the Museum environment engages all students in a multi-sensory learning experience.

3. Museum exhibitions are interdisciplinary—they can be used to enhance school-based learning across diverse subject areas.

4. Exposure to collections and exhibitions enables students to build and practice vocabulary.

5. At the Museum, students can engage in the process of inquiry: asking questions, collecting evidence, and constructing claims.


7. Field trip activities can support critical pedagogy by engaging students in reflection and evaluation using authentic resources.

8. A field trip to The Field Museum deepens students’ awareness of Chicago’s cultural institutions and understanding of the Museum as a place for lifelong learning.

9. The Museum offers students a unique experience that cannot be replicated in the classroom.

10. Field trips make learning FUN!
Plan for Success

Implementing a successful learning experience at The Field Museum requires preparation. To lead your group, you need to have a clear understanding of the Museum’s layout, available resources, and the day’s learning activities. Use our Field Trip Check List to ensure you are well prepared for your visit.

Field Trip Check List

At least three weeks before your field trip:

☐ Prepare to register. Visit fieldmuseum.org/schools to learn more.
  - Choose three potential field trip dates.
  - Decide which exhibitions you would like to visit.
  - Determine the total number of students and chaperones who will be visiting.
  - Identify your preferred lunch location.

☐ Complete the online field trip registration form at fieldmuseum.org/schools.
  Note: the registration form must be submitted 14 days prior to your visit.

☐ Complete necessary school paperwork (e.g. field trip application, student permission slips, etc.).

☐ Coordinate transportation.

☐ Choose a focus for the field trip. (See p. 7-10)

☐ Recruit chaperones.

☐ Prepare yourself. Visit the Museum prior to your field trip. General admission to the Museum is free for Illinois educators with a valid educator ID or pay stub.

☐ Borrow materials from the Harris Learning Collection, our lending library of Museum specimens and artifacts, so students can explore collections in the classroom before visiting the museum. harris.fieldmuseum.org
Plan for Success (continued)

At least one week before your field trip

- Prepare chaperones. (See p. 16)

- Create chaperone groups. Remember to follow our chaperone-student ratio. Grades PreK to 2: one adult per five students. Grades 3 to 12: one adult per ten students.

- Prepare itineraries for chaperones and gather materials for students.

- Complete pre-field trip activities in the classroom.

On the day of your field trip

- Provide identification for your group members. Give chaperones nametags. Use nametags, stickers, or matching shirts with your school’s name and contact information.

- Distribute maps and itineraries to chaperones. Highlight important meeting times and locations. (See p. 17-18)

- Bringing lunch? Organize lunches in labeled boxes or bags to speed up the check-in process. If you have a reservation for the Siragusa Center, you will drop off your lunches in the lunch center when you arrive.

- Bringing coats? Coat check is available October through May for groups with lunch reservations in the Siragusa Center.

- Bring supplies for student work. Make sure everyone has a pencil, something to write on and the necessary field trip activity sheets.

After the Field Trip

- Complete post-field trip activities in the classroom. Encourage students to synthesize and reflect on their field trip learning.
Focus Student Learning

A fun and meaningful learning experience at The Field Museum requires focus. With 19.5 acres of exhibitions, The Field Museum has more treasures than anyone can see in one day.

To give your students enough time to explore a topic in-depth and meet specific learning objectives, focus your field trip on one or two relevant exhibitions or even a few galleries within one exhibition. Connecting a focused field trip experience to classroom learning provides students with the necessary background information and time to reflect, making the trip meaningful.

There are three main parts to a focused field trip:

1. Pre-field trip activities completed in the classroom
2. Field trip activities at The Field Museum
3. Post-field trip activities conducted back in the classroom

Trip Tip:
A visit to the Museum aligns with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts. Students can practice reading and comprehending informational texts in exhibitions. They can also integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media. After the trip, students can write informative/explanatory narratives based on their field trip experience.

Trip Tip:
At The Field Museum, students can engage in the Science and Engineering Practices of the Next Generation Science Standards. See page 9 for ideas.
Before the Field Trip

A successful field trip begins well before students board the bus.

Goals

- Students have realistic expectations about what they will see and do at the Museum.
- Students understand the goals for learning at the Museum.
- Students understand how the field trip fits into classroom learning.
- Students complete activities that prepare them for learning at the Museum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Strategies: Students can...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Prepare for the field trip experience  | • Read a book about natural history museums  
|                                        | • Examine a Museum map                                                                     |
|                                        | • Explore The Field Museum website                                                         |
|                                        | • Discuss students’ prior visits to The Field Museum or other museums                     |
|                                        | • Communicate behavior expectations and consequences                                       |
| Prepare for the field trip activities  | • Review or introduce relevant content and vocabulary                                      |
|                                        | • Distribute field trip activity sheets and review directions                              |
|                                        | • Model field trip activities                                                              |

Trip Tip:

Use a book to introduce elementary students to natural history museums.
We recommend:

- *The Field Mouse and a Dinosaur Named Sue* by Jan Wahl
- *How to Take Your Grandmother to the Museum* by Lois Wyse

Trip Tip:

Did you know that you can borrow Field Museum specimens and artifacts to use in your classroom? Check out the Harris Learning Collection at harris.fieldmuseum.org.
During the Field Trip

Goals

• Students thoughtfully engage with Museum resources through focused activities.
• Students meet the trip’s learning objectives.
• Students build on concepts and skills learned during pre-field trip activities.
• Students have fun learning!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Strategies: Students can...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Obtain, Evaluate and Communicate Information | • Play “I spy”
• Look for objects that relate to particular categories, themes, etc.
• Work in small groups to create a scavenger hunt in a small exhibition, then exchange and complete another group’s hunt
• Watch an exhibition video and then look for artifacts or specimens in the exhibition that relate to concepts in the video |
| Develop and Use Models | • Create detailed, scientific drawings of specimens and/or artifacts
• Take pictures or make sketches in preparation for creating a 3D model after the field trip |
| Plan and Carry Out Investigations | • Ask a question and gather evidence at the Museum to create an explanation (i.e. How are the homes of different cultures alike and different? How are the teeth of carnivores and herbivores alike and different?) |
| Practice Reading and Writing | • Create a comic strip to illustrate what happened before during and after the scene of a diorama
• Write a detailed description of a specific object
• Take notes to write a newspaper article reviewing an exhibition |

Trip Tip:

One exhibition can cover more than 27,000 square feet. To make these large spaces more manageable, break up an exhibition into smaller parts. Have small groups work in select galleries. Students can compile and share information when they return to school.

**NOTE:** See pages 12–15 of this guide for reproducible student activity sheets.
After the Field Trip

Encourage students to reflect on their Museum experience and synthesize learning after the trip.

Goals

- Students reflect on their field trip experience.
- Students share what they learned at the Museum.
- Students discuss and investigate questions that arose during the Museum visit.
- Students connect Museum experiences to learning at school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Strategies: Students can...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicate Information</td>
<td>• Create a class book that illustrates field trip learning</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Edit pictures or film to create a final presentation, public service announcement, or museum advertisement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Create a scientific poster to display evidence gathered at the Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and Use Models</td>
<td>• Create dioramas to represent a scene from the Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Work in groups to design a museum exhibition; students can serve as docents for guests or another classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Speaking and Writing</td>
<td>• Share field trip findings during a classroom discussion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Write a journal entry about your experience</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Present field trip observations and learning to another class or group of parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate Further</td>
<td>• Investigate museum-inspired questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Conduct experiments or investigations to learn more about what was explored at the Museum</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Trip Tip:

No one can possibly know the answer to every question that students ask while visiting The Field Museum! Encourage students to make further observations. Prompt students to think about possible explanations for their questions and generate ideas about how they might find the answers.
# Exhibitions at a Glance

Below is a list of the permanent exhibitions located on each level of the Museum. More information about our permanent and temporary exhibitions can be found at [fieldmuseum.org/happening/exhibits](http://fieldmuseum.org/happening/exhibits). Be sure to visit [fieldmuseum.org/schools](http://fieldmuseum.org/schools) for information about registration and ticketing policies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Museum Level</th>
<th>Exhibition</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Social Science</th>
<th>Great for Young Learners</th>
<th>Educator Guide Available*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ground</td>
<td>Crown Family PlayLab</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Underground Adventure</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Main</td>
<td>The Ancient Americas</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Northwest Coast and Arctic Peoples</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td>North American Indians</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pawnee Earth Lodge</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Inside Ancient Egypt</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mammals of Asia and Africa</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lions of Tsavo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nature Walk</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>World of Birds</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is an Animal?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bird Habitats, Reptiles and Amphibians</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Messages from the Wilderness</td>
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<td></td>
<td>World of Mammals</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>Evolving Planet</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fossil Preparatory Lab</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Earth Sciences Hall</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Plants of the World</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Hall of Jades</td>
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<td>Grainger Hall of Gems</td>
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<td>Traveling the Pacific</td>
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<td>Pacific Spirits</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>DNA Discovery Center</td>
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<td>Tibet</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Restoring Earth</td>
<td>X</td>
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* Visit [fieldmuseum.org/schools/educator-guides](http://fieldmuseum.org/schools/educator-guides) to download Educator Guide PDFs.
Field Trip Observation Guide

Part 1

- I visited the __________________________ exhibition.
- I observed ____________________________.
- Record your observations in the box below. Draw or write what you see.

Part 2

I learned that

________________________________________

________________________________________

Part 3

I have questions. My questions are:

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________
Field Trip Artifact Observation Guide

OBSERVE. WHAT DO YOU SEE?
What is it made of? What does it look like?

SKETCH THE ARTIFACT.
Draw arrows that point to features of the artifact that you find interesting. Next to the arrow, label what you found interesting and why.

INFER. WHAT DO YOU THINK?
Who used it? How and why did they use it? Explain.

REFLECT & CONNECT.
Why did you choose to study this artifact?
**An Investigation at The Field Museum**

**QUESTION:** Before the field trip, create a question to investigate at the Museum.

**EVIDENCE:** At the Museum, collect data (writing and drawing) that will help answer your question.

**CLAIM:** Back at school, review the evidence. Create and write an answer to your question.

**REASONING:** Back at school, use the evidence that you collected to explain the claim you wrote above.
Dear Field Trip Chaperone,

Thank you for joining us on our field trip to The Field Museum! Our visit is scheduled to take place on ___________ . Please meet us at ____________________________ at _____________. We will return to school by _____________.

During this field trip, the students will learn about ___________________________.

At The Field Museum, we will visit: _____________________________.

While visiting these exhibitions, students will _____________________________.

You will be assigned to lead a small group of students during the visit. Please make sure that students stay with you at all times and are on task. If you have questions or need help, please contact me or find a Museum staff member or volunteer. Security guards are also available to help; they are located at each Museum entrance.

Let me know if you have any questions before the trip. Again, thank you for sharing your time with us.

Sincerely,

__________________________
(teacher name)

__________________________
(contact information)
Group Leader/Teacher: ___________________________  Contact info: ________________

Number of Students in Your Group: ________________

**Itinerary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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**Remember:**

- Stay with your group at all times.
- Keep all food and drink in designated eating areas.
- Large group bathrooms are located on the Ground Level.
- Museum Stores are located on all levels of the Museum.
- Have a question? Ask one of the Museum staff members or volunteers wearing Museum shirts or go to a security officer at any of the Museum entrances.
Chaperones, ask students questions to keep them focused and on task...

What do you see?
How are these objects different? The same?
What does this object remind you of?
What is interesting about this object?