

CORE COURSES
SELF GUIDE PROJECT

OUTCOME: After completing the Self Guide students will be better able to

- a. advocate for accessibility and accountability
- b. exercise informed choice

OUTPUT: Self Guide (SG) based on the Kenneth E. Behring Family Hall of Mammals Exhibit in the National Museum of Natural History

PROCEDURE:

A. Identify and embrace audience

The audience is comprised of a group of 20 women and 1 man ranging in age between 22 and 45. They have varied educational backgrounds with degrees in art history, education, history, engineering, music, religious studies, anthropology and sociology. They hail from 15 different locations in the country. Some have worked in the museum field before and others are just beginning their exploration into the field. The audience will be reviewing SGs as well as creating their own.

B. Identify and embrace resources/objects materials

The animals covered in this self guide include the following endangered species:

- **Giant Panda**- The giant panda can be found primarily in Southwest China. As a member of the bear family, they have the digestive system of a carnivore, but subsist mainly on a vegetarian diet consisting of bamboo. Pandas have a white coat with black fur around their eyes, ears, muzzle, legs and shoulders. They also have an enlarged wrist bone that acts as an opposable thumb which aids in crushing and eating bamboo. Pandas live mainly on the ground, but do have the ability to climb trees. While they do not hibernate, they do move to lower altitudes in the winter and spring. Giant pandas suffer from loss of habitat as well as the dangers of being poached for their unique coat. This animal is highly endangered with only an estimated 1,600 left in the wild. (World Wildlife Fund, 2007).
- **White Rhinoceros** –The white rhinoceros is the second largest species of land mammal in the world. It can be found in central and southern Africa, though its numbers are scarce due to poaching. The white rhinoceros is the most social of all the rhino species. Mother and calf pairs stay together for long periods, while seven or more juveniles form small herds. The white rhino has a massive body and large head, a short neck and broad chest. It is also easily identifiable due to its wide mouth that is used for grazing. (International Rhino Foundation, 2002).

- South American Tapir – The tapir is most closely related to rhinos and horses. The four species of tapirs have the following features: a separate hoof on each toe, a nose and upper lip combined to make a flexible snout, small eyes and ears, and teardrop shaped bodies. Tapirs are born with brown and beige stripes that serve as great camouflage when they are young. Tapirs graze in pairs or small groups. Their flexible snout can move in a one foot diameter circle without the tapir ever moving its head. Their snout can also be poked above the water and used as a snorkel when swimming. Tapirs are hunted for their meat and hides. They are also suffering from habitat loss as humans clear land for farming. Tourism could help the endangered tapir, as people could be employed in this field rather than in the farming and logging industries (San Diego Zoo, 2007).
- Giant Anteater- The giant anteater is the largest of the anteater family and can be found in Central and South America. Easily recognizable by its long snout, its diet consists mainly of ants and termites, which it can eat up to 30,000 in a day. It is related to both sloths and armadillos, though many mistake the tapir for being its relative. This species is active both during the day and night, wandering within its home range, which may be 10 miles or more depending on the availability of food. The giant anteater is threatened by habitat destruction due to deforestation and hunting. (The Online Anteater, 2001).
- Sea Otter – The sea otter is most closely related to the weasel or mustelid family. Animals from this family are grouped together because of their thick hair. The sea otter actually has the thickest fur of any mammal. They can be found along the western coast of North and South America, Japan, Russia and Alaska. They are often found in areas with an abundance of kelp, as they use this to anchor themselves down when sleeping. Sea otters are unique sea animals because they use tools when eating their food. Clam and abalone shells are used to help break open other shells to gain access to food. Sea otters are often hunted because of their fur and are also vulnerable to oil spills. Oil spills not only weaken the sea otters and cause them to catch a chill, but they also become poisoned from the fumes or from eating food exposed to the spill (The Marine Mammal Center, 2001).

C. Orchestrate the learning experience/encounter

▪ Entrance narrative: On the outside of the SG is brown paper covering both the front and back where the Entrance and Exit Narratives are written respectively. A phrase at the top reads: “Every day is a day filled with choices.” Below that is a picture of a globe. Underneath the picture reads: “What are two choices you made today?” There is space for the SG participants to write their two choices.

1. Advance organizer: A sheet of paper stapled to the outside of the envelope containing the SG. This includes directions for how to proceed from the African Voices (Cultures) gallery to the Kenneth E. Behring Family Hall of Mammals. There is also a Table of Contents within the SG magazine.

2. Hook: The magazine cover and tag lines leading to the stories inside

3. Body: After the Gallery Teaching Project, the 2008 MEP class will be split into two groups. Half of the group will complete the Conservation SG and the other half will complete the Rites of Passage SG.

The conservation SG is formatted to look like a mainstream pop culture magazine, such as *Cosmopolitan* or *Glamour*. It is packaged inside a manila envelope which contains the SG, a writing utensil and a participant evaluation sheet.

The magazine format is as follows:

- Cover - contains a photo mosaic of a giant panda and taglines for the material inside.
- Advertisement for the Hall of Mammals - includes a map and directions to the giant panda, white rhinoceros, South American tapir, giant anteater and sea otter.
- Letter from the Editors and Table of Contents – the letter from the editors introduces the theme of endangered species and animal conservation and contains pictures of the editors. The table of contents is complete with page references and pictures of a sea otter, tapir and giant panda.
- Giant Panda page - contains the article ““Panda” monium: Trouble in the Bedroom” containing information on why pandas are endangered as well as information on difficulty breeding them in captivity. The page also contains a book spotlight on the *Lady and the Panda* and information on how to visit the panda breeding site at the Wolong Nature Reserve in China.
- Tapir Pages with DRS - contains an advice column (“Tapir Talk”) and a DRS comparing the white rhinoceros and the giant anteater to the South American tapir. There is also a diagram outlining the physical features of the tapir, as well as a section containing information on volunteering with tapirs at a zoo in Costa Rica.
- Sea Otter Page - includes information on why the sea otter is endangered and a quiz that allows the audience to learn facts about the sea otter in an educational but creative way. There is also a fashion section and information on sea otter conservation (e.g “Adopt a Sea Otter”).
- 6 Things I Learned About Conservation page - summarizes information learned throughout the guide and provides more ways to engage in animal conservation. The suggestions include the areas of: donating money, recycling, volunteering, purchasing faux fur, trash disposal and government advocacy.

4. Conclusion – The conclusion includes the “6 Things I Learned About Conservation” page within the SG.

▪Exit narrative: The back side of the outside brown cover reads: “Every day is a day filled with choices.” Below is a picture of a globe. Underneath the globe picture reads: “What are two choices you will make tomorrow?” There is a space for the audience to write their two choices below.

D. Carry out review/reflective practice: Participate in class discussion and write self review. Review evaluations from completed self guides as well as additional peer and faculty reviews.

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