



## Connections Teacher Checklist

The excitement and adventure of an Armand Bayou Nature Center field trip begins with you! Several days before the scheduled event, please look over the checklist below. These important steps must be completed prior to our visit. We look forward to our visit with you!

### The week before your trip:

- ✓ Call to confirm the number of attending students and chaperones.
- ✓ Do the dragonfly pre-trip activity. (Download from ABNC's website.)
- ✓ You may wish to study topics related to the Connections field trip through activities like these:
  - Show students maps of Texas' natural regions. Locate Armand Bayou Nature Center on the maps. Use the information on the maps to write a description of what you expect to find there. (What kinds of soil, plants, weather, etc. do you expect the nature center to have?)  
Maps can be found on the following websites:  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department -  
[http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/maps/gis/map\\_downloads/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/maps/gis/map_downloads/)  
Enchanted Learning -  
<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/usa/states/texas/naturalfeatures/>  
Texas Natural History, Geography and Weather (links) –  
[http://www.teacheroz.com/Texas\\_Nature.htm](http://www.teacheroz.com/Texas_Nature.htm)
  - Brainstorm a list (and/or research) of animals and plants that live in the Houston area. Draw or act out food chains and food webs using these animals and plants. Which organisms do you expect to see at the nature center?
  - Study the water cycle and/or rock cycle (erosion, weathering, soil) and predict which processes you might see during your field trip.



### The day before the trip:

- ✓ Remind students to wear appropriate clothing and closed-toe shoes.
- ✓ Divide your class into groups of approximately 10-15 students. (When you call to confirm, our staff will let you know how many groups you should have in all.)
- ✓ Print data sheets for your students to use during the field trip. (Download from ABNC's website.) We suggest one sheet per group to eliminate paper waste and loss at the nature center.
- ✓ If you plan to participate in an enrichment activity, prepare cameras, journals and/or questions. (See "During the trip" for details.)
- ✓ Prepare a check for the remainder of the balance for your field trip.
- ✓ Review ABNC's field trip tips: <http://www.abnc.org/educational-programs/field-trip-planner.html>.



### **During the trip:**

- ✓ Remind your students to be good listeners, and encourage them to be engaged in the class. Please participate in the class, as well. Students and parents will follow your example.
- ✓ Fill out the Connections Data Sheets as you explore the nature center. If desired, you can also keep track of the pond organisms you catch using Pond Animals Data Sheet. (Connections and pond forms can be downloaded from the Connections webpage on ABNC's website. Please print your own data sheets before you arrive at the nature center. We will provide clipboards and pencils if you call and reserve them before your visit.) The data you record will be used for the Connections post-trip activity.
- ✓ To make your visit even more meaningful, you may wish to incorporate an enrichment activity into your field trip. Some ideas are:
  - Take pictures of the wildlife you see using digital cameras.
  - Write and draw about your observations. You can create your own journals or use the backs of the Connections Data Sheets.
  - Ask questions! Since students often forget their questions in the excitement of being away from school, it is often helpful to write their questions down before the trip. You might brainstorm a class question list or may have each student write a question on a note card.

### **After the trip:**

- ✓ Ask students to describe their favorite parts of the trip and to recall some facts and concepts they learned. Also, discuss any questions or concerns they might have.
- ✓ Use the Connections Data Sheets to complete the post-trip activity. (Download it from the ABNC website.)
- ✓ You may also engage students in an extension activity such as one of the following:
  - Revisit questions or topics from the pre-trip activities. (You will find that the pre-trip activities also work as post-trip activities.)
  - Write about your experiences at ABNC. If you took photos or journaled, use these as a basis for your writing. Nature is a great inspiration for descriptive writing and poem composition.
  - Make models or posters of the ecosystems you visited at ABNC (prairie, forest, and pond). Include biotic and abiotic factors. Explain how the various parts of the ecosystem can affect each other.
  - Investigate the life cycles of some of the insects or invertebrates you saw. Compare these creatures' lives with dragonfly life cycles.



***Thanks for visiting Armand Bayou Nature Center!***

