



Pond Life Class 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.
- ✓ Introduce ponds to your students through the Pond Life Pre-Trip Activity: *Macroinvertebrate Match-Up*. (The activity materials and teacher guide can be downloaded from ABNC's website.)
- ✓ You may study other topics related to ponds through activities like these:
 - Create student nametags for the field trip from the pre-trip activity cards. Have students color their nametags and review the information about the organisms. You may even have each student research the pond organism on his or her nametag.
 - Study food chains and webs. Draw or act out food chains you might find in a pond.
 - Study insect and/or amphibian life cycles and metamorphosis. You are likely to catch dragonfly nymphs and may also find tadpoles, mayfly nymphs, and other insect larvae in Armand Bayou Nature Center's ponds.



The day before the trip:

- ✓ Remind students to wear appropriate clothing and closed-toed 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 and prepare *Pond Animal Data Sheets* for your class. (Forms can be downloaded from ABNC's website.) We suggest printing one to three forms per group to avoid wasting paper. If you need to borrow clipboards and pencils, please call ahead and let the nature center know.
- ✓ If you plan to participate in an enrichment activity, make arrangements to use cameras, prepare journals, and/or brainstorm questions. (See "During the trip" for details.)
- ✓ Prepare a check for the remainder of the balance for your field trip.
- ✓ Review the ABNC website's field trip tips:
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.
- ✓ Assist students with keeping track of the pond animals they catch and see. (Use the *Pond Animal Data Sheets*.)
- ✓ 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 have students make extra notes on their *Pond Animal 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 they learned. Also, discuss any questions or concerns and revisit topics from pre-trip activities, as you see fit.
- ✓ Complete the post-trip activity: Making a pond mural. (Download the activity from ABNC's website.)
- ✓ Engage students in an extension activity such as one of the following:
 - Have students write about their 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 graphs based on students' pond critter observations, using the data sheets.
 - Look at samples of pond water under microscopes. Discuss how the organisms you see fit into pond food chains. (Some of the macroinvertebrates eat these micro-organisms.)
 - Study how macroinvertebrates can be used to evaluate the quality of an aquatic ecosystem. Macroinvertebrate species have different sensitivity to pollution. Some are very sensitive to poor conditions, whereas others are more tolerant. Some websites you may find useful are:
 - EPA: Invertebrates as Indicators - <http://www.epa.gov/bioindicators/html/invertebrate.html>
 - Macroinvertebrate Field Identification - http://www.ct.gov/dep/lib/dep/water/volunteer_monitoring/rbvcards.pdf
 - Water Quality Monitoring - <http://www.grci.org/Frames/Water%20Quality/WaterQualityMonitoring.htm>

Thanks for visiting Armand Bayou Nature Center!

