Santa Barbara Zoo Project Kit

Congratulations! You're going to the Santa Barbara Zoo! Use these project ideas to enrich your educational experience in the park. Read through them before you go to make sure you understand the terms and concepts, and to help you determine if you want to expand upon any of them. You'll find fun facts and printable worksheets at the end of this packet.

a- elementary level activity b- middle school level activity c- high school level activity

Language Arts

The art of language is the art of communication. All around the zoo are signs which communicate different things. How many different kinds of signs are there (informational, directive, etc)? How does the format of the signs differ? Do different types of signs use different types of text, fonts, images, and sizes, to communicate effectively?

a. Identify two different types of signs and what they are trying to communicate. Draw your own sign.
b. List all the types of signs you can find and what they communicate. Write a short paragraph for each one describing its purpose and design.
c. Take note of the different types of signs and what they communicate. Why are signs important? Write a short essay about the importance of signs and their specific designs in communication, including examples of other places we typically find signs and what they are used for.

Materials required: Notebook, pen/pencil
Submission: A copy of your writings/drawing, and any pictures/videos

Teaching or learning notes:

Applied Math

Animals need space to live. Zoos do they best they can to create enclosures for the animals that are safe and provide enough space for the animals to be happy. Zoo designers need to use math to create these spaces.

a. Take a closer look at one species' enclosure. How much space does it have? How many animals are in that space? Why do they have that much space? Draw a picture and/or write about what you found.
b. Compare two different species' and their enclosures. How many animals are in each? How big is each enclosure? Estimate actual area for each. How much space does each animal have in each enclosure? Record your calculations and write a short paragraph hypothesizing why the differences are the way they are.
c. Design your own enclosure for an animal of your choosing. Research the animal, its life history and behavioral patterns, so you can determine the amount of space you will need for the number of animals you have chosen to design the enclosure for. Include a drawing of your enclosure and an explanation of why it is designed the way it is, including one example of the math used to create it.

Materials required: Notebook, pen/pencil, calculator or smartphone (optional)
Submission: Your calculations, estimations, and conclusions, and any pictures/videos

Teaching or learning notes:

Science

Animals are awesome! Zoologists study animals. Every animal has a unique life history. A “life history” is the story of an animal’s life from birth (or fertilization) to adulthood (and death). How many different ways can an animal begin it’s life? Are some animals more independent as babies than others? Why do you think this is? What about their lives affect how vulnerable they are when they are born? What kinds of animals raise their babies, and what kinds don’t? How does this affect how many babies survive to adulthood?

a. Choose an animal to think about these questions for. Draw or write about your ideas.
b. Discuss and diagram the unique life history of one of the animals you see. Write a paragraph about your findings.
c. Discuss the life history of one of the animals at the park. Write a short essay on your findings. Then, explore zoology. What kinds of things does the zoo need to keep in mind about each animal's’ life history when it is designing its living space and their plan for taking care of it? Does the zoo have breeding programs for any of the animals? What are they working on currently? Ask a zookeeper.

Materials required: Notebook, pen/pencil
Submission: A copy of your drawings, diagrams, maps, or designs, and any pictures/videos

Teaching or learning notes:

Social Studies

We can learn a lot about the way people interact by watching animals interact. How do they talk to each other? How do they get along living in an enclosed space together? Are they naturally social or reclusive, and how do they handle those differences in personality?

a. Spend some time watching some of the animals interact, or watching a solitary animal. Discuss why they are behaving the way they are, alone or with others. Draw a picture or write a short paragraph about your findings.
b. Spend some time watching some of the animals interact, or watching a solitary animal. Write a short report on what you see and how those interactions are similar to and different than human interactions.
c. Spend some time watching some of the animals interact, or watching a solitary animal. Drawing comparisons to humans, discuss the importance of social structure and a respect for individuality. Write a short essay about social ethics and etiquette incorporating principles you observed with the animals.

Materials required: Notebook, pen/pencil
Submission: A copy of your writings/drawings, and any pictures/videos

Teaching or learning notes:

Fun Facts

- Before the Santa Barbara Zoo was created, the land once belonged to a massive estate called *Vega Mar*(Meadow by the Sea). Vega Mar became known as the Child's Estate, as through the Great Depression the owner of the estate – Mrs. Lillian Child – allowed small numbers of homeless and transient men to camp on a part of the estate that was set up especially for them called "Jungleville." This area is located where the entrance of the zoo is today!
- Lillian Child turned the Child Estate over to the Santa Barbara Foundation to use the property for the community after her death, so long as the 30 or so men in Jungleville would not be turned away onto the streets. After Lillian's death in 1951, the City of Santa Barbara honored her request and provided a utility building, laundry, and facility building for those men. The Jungleville community eventually shrank over time, and the last three members of the community went to rest homes in the late 1960's.
- If you take the train around the park, you'll notice two stone lions appear that flank the veterinary cells. These lions are original to the Child Estate, as are most of the other stone animals that you may see scattered throughout the rest of the zoo.
- Because of the beautiful views, the zoo is a popular place to host weddings in the Palm Gardens and on the Hilltop.
- There are over 500 animals and lush botanical gardens in the zoo on 30 acres!
- The Santa Barbara Zoo has **four** *Masai* giraffes. These are the largest giraffe species in the *world*!
- Since 1987, the California Condor is extinct in the wild and has only lived at certain special zoos. The Santa Barbara Zoo has a *living* exhibit where the condors are housed in a large and open aviary. California Condors have an incredible 9' wingspan that you can measure up against by the mural on the wall across from the Condor habitat!
- The Santa Barbara Zoo has recently introduced "Zoo Ranger," a self-guided multimedia tour device that allows the visitors a behind-the-scene s tour of the zoo for a small extra cost.
- The Santa Barbara Zoo has a special Humboldt Penguin named "Lucky" who was born with a broken foot and was unable to swim properly. The zoo created a special boot just for lucky. There is a special book about Lucky that you can buy at the zoo's gift shop.

Santa Barbara Zoo

1. Draw a picture of your favorite animal at the zoo.

2. Describe your favorite animal, something it did while you were there, and why you love it.

3. What is one thing you learned about carnivores at the zoo?

4. Draw or describe a bird that you saw at the zoo.

5. Describe or draw a monkey you saw at the zoo.

6. What are the differences between reptiles and amphibians?

BONUS:

Zoo Scavenger Hunt!

- ❑ Something with wings _____
- ❑ Something that hibernates _____
- ❑ Something that is bipedal _____
- ❑ Something that is blue _____
- ❑ Something with fangs _____
- ❑ Something that eats mice _____
- ❑ Something that eats vegetables _____
- ❑ Something that has talons _____
- ❑ Something that is diurnal _____
- ❑ Something that lives in the water _____
- ❑ Something that likes to hide _____