NATURAL HISTORY
MUSEUM OF UTAH
Rio Tinto Center | The University of Utah

Collection Detective

Field Trip	Enduring understanding:	Alignment to Utah Core Curriculum
Grade Level: 5	Recording accurately is important in order to communicate what you observe to others.	**Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO's):** 1. Use science process and thinking skills. 2. Manifest scientific attitudes and interests. 3. Understand science concepts and principles. 4. Communicate effectively using science language and reasoning.
Process Skills: • Observation • Recording • Communicating		

Field Trip in a Flash

Students will spend time observing and recording in detail about an object they find interesting at the Museum. They will then exchange their information with another student who has to use the information provided to find the described object in the exhibit.

Before the Museum

Do a Science Process Lesson

Do the "Recording Star" Lesson found at the Natural History Museum of Utah's website. Other lessons that would support this field trip are: Facts and Inferences, Igniting Inquiry, and Ready to Report. They can be found at www.nhmu.utah.edu/lessonplans

Introduce the Field Trip Plan

Explain that you will be going to the Museum and the students will be working as detectives. They will find an object that they are really interested in. Then they will record everything they can about it. It needs to be as accurate as possible so that another student can use the "clues" to find the object.

Select a Gallery or Galleries

You can select a gallery you would like your students to focus on, or you can allow groups to select the galleries they are most interested in.

Discuss the galleries at the Museum, introduce their names and their content.

The permanent galleries are:

First Peoples- The story of Great Basin's prehistoric peoples is told while putting visitors in the shoes of archaeologists who use science to interpret the past. Explore Median Village, a reconstruction of an actual archaeological dig site excavated in the 1960s in Sevier County, Utah. Stop in the Dry Caves Learning Lab to learn more about what makes Utah so spectacular for preserving archaeological evidence.

Gems and Minerals- Rough mineral forms are juxtaposed with elegant cut gemstones, all in brilliant colors. Peer in to see minerals that fluoresce and take in 12 vertical feet of minerals suspended before you.

Lake- The compelling narrative of the Great Salt Lake, a remnant of ancient Lake Bonneville is brought to life through hands-on interactives, sounds, smells, and a spectacular view of the Lake itself. Take a "walk around" this large terminal body of water in the midst of a vast inland desert. Get an up-close view of some of the lake's smaller inhabitants.

Land- A journey through three distinct physiographic regions formed over millions of years, the Land showcases Utah's Middle Rocky Mountains, Basin and Range, and Colorado Plateau. While navigating the switchbacks, touch real rock specimens and explore interactive exhibits on earthquakes, plate tectonics, erosion and much more. Be sure to venture out onto the outdoor terrace for an up-close look at the foothills of Utah's Middle Rocky Mountain region.

Life-The web of life is illustrated in a series of exhibits exploring complexity from DNA to Ecosystems, with a focus on Utah's extraordinary biological diversity. This exhibition is rich with images, sounds of the landscape, hands-on experiences, live animals, and research stories.

Native Voices- The traditions of Utah's five native nations—Shoshone, Goshute, Paiute, Ute, and Navajo—are featured in this circular gallery nestled in the hillside at the top of the building. Designed in consultation with Utah's Indian community, this exhibition depicts Native American art and culture and interprets the deep memory and contemporary presence of Utah's indigenous people. Visit the Storytelling circle where you can listen to stories of origin and connection to the land.

Past Worlds- A sequence of snapshots in time spanning 500 million years depicts a range of Utah's ancient environments and their changing life forms. Utah's Late Cretaceous and Eocene are brought to life in displays that capture plant and animal diversity, sights, sounds and smells of the time. Participate in the Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry mystery by "casting your vote" on the theory you agree with most, be a paleontologist for a day in our dinosaur dig, and be a guest at an Ice Age dinner party. In this gallery there are over 30 skeletal reconstructions on display, including a Gryposaurus (duck-billed) dinosaur made of original fossil material, and the world's only display of 14 Ceratopsian (horned) dinosaur skulls.

Sky- Weather, climate, astronomy, and the sun are interpreted in this gallery with its adjacent rooftop terrace. Check out the views of the Salt Lake Valley and learn about some of the Museum's "green building" features from the Sky terrace.

Utah Futures- This thought-provoking environment—the Museum's crystal ball—is a place to explore pressing contemporary issues with local and global implications for the future. You are encouraged to participate in an engaging interactive game where you can see the results of your everyday individual choices play out and learn more about how they might affect Utah on a broad scale.

Logistics

Gather your field trip supplies- students will need paper, notecards, or journals, and tools to write and draw with.

Divide your students into groups in any way that seems to make sense for your class- it could be based on interest expressed about galleries, it could be by self-selection, or it could be assigned by you based on your desired outcomes.

Prepare your chaperones:

- communicate the purpose of the field trip to them
- provide them with a chaperone sheet with the names of the students in their groups
- provide the chaperones with a bag that can hold all of the students' field trip supplies

At the Museum

Make sure students have science notebooks, papers or notecards, writing tools and their chaperones.

Determine a meeting time and location and communicate that clearly to the groups.

The groups can then head out to the gallery/galleries they are most excited to visit. Give students time to find an object of interest, observe it closely and record information about it. Explain to them they may want to be tricky about where they stand or where they look to make it harder for their classmates. After sometime is spent observing, recording, and wandering around a gallery, have the students pair up and exchange notes and drawings. They will take turns being the detective, reading each others notes, studying each others drawings, and using those "clues" to locate the object.

You can do this more than once if the students would like, and it can be done in multiple galleries. When the students are done, just enjoy walking around and engaging with the Museum.

After the Museum

Have the students use all the information they collected about an object to write a poem. You can create a class book, or you can send the poems to the Museum where they will be hung on our Poet Tree in the Naturalist Lab.