



**NATURAL HISTORY  
MUSEUM OF UTAH**

Rio Tinto Center | The University of Utah

# Exhibit Experts

<b>Field Trip</b>	<b>Enduring understanding:</b>	<b>Alignment to Utah Core Curriculum</b>
Grade Level: 3	Recording observations and communicating those ideas to others is engaging in the scientific process.	<b>Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO's):</b> 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collaboration</li><li>• Communication</li><li>• Observation</li></ul>		

## Field Trip in a Flash

Students will become experts on one exhibit at the Museum and then share their knowledge with another student.

## Before the Museum

### Do a Science Process Lesson

Do the “Igniting Inquiry” lesson found at the Natural History Museum of Utah’s website. Other supporting lessons are: Facts and Inferences, Wonder Why, and You Are a Scientist. These can be found at [www.nhmu.utah.edu/lessonplans](http://www.nhmu.utah.edu/lessonplans)

### Introduce the Field Trip Plan

**Explain** that you will be going to the Museum and that the students will become experts on a Museum gallery or an exhibit in a gallery. That means they are going to observe closely, gather information, ask questions, look for answers, and present what they think is interesting about the exhibit. They will need to record (write, draw, etc.) the things they think are the most interesting. Then, they will teach others about their exhibit.

### Select a Gallery

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

You can choose to explore the whole Museum or one gallery. When you arrive assign the gallery or exhibits in a gallery for students to become experts on- i.e. different dioramas in Life, a time period in Past Worlds, a case in First Peoples. You can visit the Museum before and record the different sections of the exhibit on papers and place them in a bag.

### **Logistics**

Divide your students into groups.

Prepare your chaperones:

- communicate the purpose of the field trip
- provide them with a chaperone sheet
- communicate the gallery/galleries you are going to do the activity in
- provide the chaperones with a bag to hold the students' field trip supplies

### **At the Museum**

Provide students with science notebooks or papers and pencils. Have someone from each group select one of the galleries/exhibits in a gallery from the bag.

Find the gallery. Communicate a meeting time and space to the students and chaperones. Allow 25 minutes for students to find their exhibit, gather information and return to the meeting place.

When all groups have returned to the meeting place, partner two groups together to make a new super group. Pair students from one group with students from the other group that they are joining. The new super group will have to visit both of the galleries or exhibits in the galleries so that everyone can have a chance to teach.

When the students are done teaching each other, all of the groups should explore the other exhibits in the Museum for the rest of the time allotted for the field trip.



## **After the Museum**

Have the students share about the interesting things they learned about an exhibit from their partner expert. They can do this in many ways, they can draw their exhibit, write a story about what was going in the exhibit, they could even create an exhibit in their classroom.