



Getting the Most Out of Your Farm Field Trip

A Reference for Teachers

At the Fort Wayne Parks Department and Salomon Farm Park we strive to make every visit to the farm fun, educational, and tranquil whether you are coming for an event, program or field trip. Our goal is to provide students with a hands-on learning environment that corresponds with Indiana Academic Standards. While we do our best to provide a quality hands-on farm experience we believe that there are many ways to integrate the farm into your classroom before and after the trip. Below we have provided a list of activities to help spark ideas to use with your students before, after, and even during your trip.

Science

- ✓ Take soil samples from around the farm – in the field, around a forest, next to the pond or wetlands. Analyze and compare the soil from each location.
- ✓ Talk to students about insects on the farm. Which are beneficial? Which are harmful? What are the insects' life cycles? Go on an insect hunt on the farm and then analyze the insects.
- ✓ Before your trip teach students about the importance of composting. There are lots of composting activities that can be done in the classroom. Composting is a wonderful teaching tool because you can use it to explain the importance of death and decomposition, soil, recycling, resource management, garbage, landfills, and bio vs. non-biodegradable items.
- ✓ A lesson on pollinators. Ask them to identify pollinators as they tour the farm.

Social Studies

- ✓ Discuss how food gets from the farmer to the consumer. Identify people in the community involved in getting food to community members.
- ✓ Discuss roles of family members or workers on the farm. Does the farmers' entire family work on the farm? What role/task would the student want? Ask the Salomon staff member who works on the Salomon Farm and what are their roles?
- ✓ Discuss and explore historic planting and harvesting methods. Ask the Salomon staff if they follow any traditions and why.
- ✓ Research the histories of familiar plants – where they originated, who brought them to this country, the impact they have had on our diets, and how they original plants have been altered.

Mathematics

- ✓ Have students estimate lengths and heights of things on the farm. Bring along measurement tools to get actual numbers and compare to their predictions.
- ✓ Chart temperatures of things on the farm (the weather, pond water, creek water, puddles, compost pile)
- ✓ Measure wind speed, temperature, and humidity of different parts of the farm. How would these things impact what farmers grow or raise in different locations?
- ✓ Work with students to determine weight and volume of wet to dry soil samples from the farm.

- ✓ Have students ask Salomon staff how many eggs their chickens lay in a day. Then, ask students to calculate how many they lay in a week/one month.

English Language Arts

- ✓ Work with students to develop a list of questions they would like to ask the Salomon staff members. Add technology by adding video or photography components to the trip.
- ✓ Have students create a farm journal. In the journal include expectations, observations, ideas, stories, feelings, questions, thoughts, memories, drawings, etc.
- ✓ Study agricultural vocabulary before the trip. Identify them later on the farm. You can also use the terms as spelling words in the classroom.
- ✓ While on the field trip, teach students to use field guides to identify plants, animals, insects, etc.
- ✓ Go on a letter hunt on the field trip. What can students find that starts with A, B, C, etc.
- ✓ Take photographs of different things on the farm. Use the photos to put together a class newspaper or newsletter about the farm and the field trip.
- ✓ In the classroom, guide students on writing a report on something learned during the farm field trip and present it to the class.
- ✓ Read a children book that relates to the farm.

Healthy Living

- ✓ Introduce students to the food groups. Ask students to identify the food groups as they see them at the farm. Can the students find all the good groups at the farm?
- ✓ Discuss the importance of healthy eating and getting outside.

Visual Arts

- ✓ Make drawings, sketches, and paintings of things on the farm.
- ✓ Make leaf poundings.
- ✓ Design and create a scarecrow.
- ✓ Make rubbings using plant leaves and bark. Use the rubbings to make a collage, bookmark, or journal.
- ✓ Put together a photo essay of the farm.
- ✓ Create and use natural dyes made from plants, mud, etc.

Music and Theatre Arts

- ✓ Write farm/food poems and set them to music.
- ✓ Listen to the music of composers inspired by nature.
- ✓ Write parodies of well-known songs, turning them into farm songs.

References:

Green Mountain Farm School (2012). A Farm Field Trip Guide. <http://farmtoschool.cce.cornell.edu/files/2014/06/GMFTS-Farm-Field-Trip-Guide-20121-2jpsrpd.pdf>

Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (2016). The Hayride A Resource for Educational Farm Field Trips. <http://growing-minds.org/documents/the-hayride-a-resource-for-educational-farm-field-trips.pdf>