

EXPLORING CAREERS IN THE ZOOLOGICAL SCIENCES

APPLIED SCIENCES

Designed For Students:

Grades 9th-12th

Ages: 14-18

HELLO EDUCATOR!

Disney Youth Education Series is pleased to be able to provide you with this assessment to gauge your students' progress as they prepare for and complete their Disney Y.E.S. experience.

To encourage creative thinking, open-mindedness, and generate excitement, we suggest that you use the ideas on pages 2 - 4 to help your students prepare for **Exploring Careers in the Zoological Sciences**. Upon your return to school, you might find the ideas on page 5 useful to assess student learning.

These tools are sure to get your students moving in the right direction and help ensure a learning experience that is relevant, inspiring, and thought-provoking!

We look forward to hosting you at the **Walt Disney World®** Resort where iconic settings, imagination, and storytelling come together to create a unique learning environment and life-long memories. See you soon!

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1. Have students list a variety of careers needed to run a zoo:

- When you think about working in a zoo, what careers come to mind?
 - Name possible careers that involve animals.
 - For example: animal keeper, veterinarian, veterinary technician, etc.
 - Discuss how zoos have careers that do not involve animal interaction.
 - For example: accounting, food preparation, customer service, education, marketing, legal, engineering, etc.
 - Research the education and experience required for obtaining a position in a zoo.
- It's not all about animal care...
 - Discuss how zoos use the skills of designers and engineers to create animal exhibit areas that are engaging and welcoming for animals and visitors.
 - Discuss how lawyers play an important role in zoos.
 - For example: now that you are considering opening a zoo, do you have your legal team ready for handling all the laws involving exotic animals and obtaining your permit? How will your legal team help you?
 - Identify what goods and/or services visitors might need while visiting the zoo.
- Why are zoos important?
 - Describe how zoos have changed the way people treat and perceive wildlife.
 - What are some of the benefits of having zoos?
 - What are some of the challenges zoos experience?
 - If you were to develop your own zoo, how would you do it? What careers would be included and why?

2. Have students research the meaning of "conservation":

- Why is conservation important?
- What contributions to conservation can zoos provide?

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Activity: Design a Zoo

Materials:

- Poster size paper
- Felt tip markers
- Materials to build 3D models (e.g. clay or a computer with a graphics program)

Description:

- In this activity, students will learn how a zoo is built and operated. Assign 3-4 people per poster and have everyone sit in a circle around it. Have the students design a zoo using the following scenario:
- A development committee would like to build a zoo. Each group will create a model of a zoo and a business plan to present to the committee. To determine which zoo will receive the funds to be built, the committee will vote based on the following: solid financial plan, likely popularity with the community, and possible conservation work to be completed.

Things to consider:

- What animals will your zoo hold?
 - What is the climate like where your zoo is located and how will that affect your choice in animals for your collection?
 - How much space will each animal need?
 - How popular is the animal with the public? Will people come to the zoo to see it?
- How will you organize your business structure? What departments will you have?
 - Possible options: Animal Care, Education, Maintenance, Business, Science/Conservation
- Will it be an accredited zoo?
 - Visit www.aza.org to research zoo accreditation.
- What are the advantages to being accredited? What are the accreditation requirements?

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Things to consider (continued):

- What are some of the specific accreditation requirements for your chosen animal species?
- Will your zoo participate in conservation projects? If so, are the projects located within your community or in the native habitats of the animals in your collection?
 - Who will oversee this work?
 - How will you fund those projects?
 - Research how other zoos participate in conservation projects.
- What is your business plan?
 - What is your budget?
 - How will you finance your facility?
 - How will you encourage visitors to return?
- The groups should utilize their poster paper to create a “draft” of their zoo.
- Students should research how to write a business plan and create a written document for their zoo.
- Once the students have their plans on paper, have them build (to scale) a 3D model of their zoo. If a computer graphics program is not available, students could create a poster or map to illustrate their zoo.
- Either the class or a group of teachers/administrators should serve as the “development committee.” Each group should present their zoo and business plan to the committee, who will vote on which potential zoo should receive the funds to be built.

EXPLORING CAREERS IN THE ZOOLOGICAL SCIENCES

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At the conclusion of the Disney Youth Education Exploring Careers in the Zoological Sciences experience, have each student do the following:

1. Describe the role of a zoo in a community.
2. Explain why animal visibility is important in a zoo.
3. Articulate the link between animals in zoological settings and their counterparts in the wild.
4. Define animal enrichment and illustrate possible examples.
5. Identify the role research plays in the lives of both wild animals and those in human care.
6. Describe how an animal is trained using operant conditioning/positive reinforcement.
7. List what types of backgrounds (education and/or experience) are needed to work directly with animals.