

TITLE: PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

FIELD TRIP TO THE FOSSIL AND PRAIRIE PARK PRESERVE IN ROCKFORD IOWA

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CLASS: GEOLOGY OF IOWA FOR TEACHERS

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- A. Description: My project is to plan a field trip to the Fossil and Prairie Park Preserve in Rockford, IA. This will be a field trip for Jr. High age students in a general science class. It will be done early in the semester.
- B. Objectives/ Goals: This field trip will help the students start to think about how Life Science and Earth Science are related. The students will start by observing life in the native prairie environment, the wetland mitigation environment and the river environment. Then they will collect fossils from the fossil quarry to see how living plants from long ago make up the rocks of today. This will help them start to think of how the living environment of today will affect the geology of the earth both now and in the future and make some ties between life science and earth science.
- C. Implementation: I will use this field trip at the beginning of the semester (before the weather gets cold☺) to help introduce the general science students to both Life Science and Earth Science and show them how closely the two are interrelated. Before the field trip day I will use the fossils I collected and the information on prairies and water organisms I received this week to give the students some background on what they need to be looking for on the day of the field trip. After spending 30 minutes in the visitors' center at the Fossils and Prairie Park Preserve, orienting them to the preserve, the students will first go to the native prairie environment, the wetland mitigation environment, and the river environment where they will record their observations and draw sketches in their lab books of the living organisms they observe. Then we will proceed to the quarry where the students will collect fossils from the Devonian Period and keep a collection of them to take back to the class room. Back at the classroom they will do research and write a paper on one of the living organisms they sketched and observed as well as one of the fossils they collected. The research paper should include a description of the organism and a description of the environment that that organism lives or lived in and how that organism might affect its environment while it is living and after it has died.
- D. Evaluation: The student will be graded on the effort they put into recording about their observations of living organisms in their lab books and the fossils they collected as well as the accuracy of the research on the living organism and the fossil they included in their research paper.