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## Project ZOOTOPIA!

### **Background and Purpose:**

The Morris County Zoo has undergone major renovation. This change opens up an exciting opportunity for our school, but for this class especially! We have been given an opportunity to become involved with the zoo as diplomats of our school for the express purpose of showing off. That's right, showing off! We will volunteer our time with the zoo as a promotion crew. This will open up an opportunity to work behind the scenes and at the forefront of the zoo.

Working with the zoo to help promote the new renovations will give our class the opportunity to showcase our talents. Whether your talent lies in the visual arts, journalism, public speaking, or in another field, YOU will be showcased! This means you will be able to make contacts in a professional field, have your work shown to the public, and gain valuable personal experience in a workforce setting. This is also an opportunity for you, this class, and this school to promote the environment, help the community, and look good!

In completing this project, we will fulfill New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards of speaking (3.1), listening (3.2), writing (3.3), reading (3.4), and using non-textual information (3.5). Our project also fulfills NCTE (National Council for the English Language Arts) Standards for reading (1), application of strategies (3), communication styles (4), writing strategies (5), language (6), research (7), technology (8), social diversity (9), and variety of elements for communications

(12). Basically, to complete this project, we will be using many different techniques, medias, and processes.

**Learning Targets:**

1. Students, in groups, will demonstrate knowledge of assigned area through a group presentation to a diverse audience at the zoo. This activity will be assessed by an audience evaluation form, student evaluation form, and teacher evaluation form according to a provided rubric for each type of evaluation.
2. Students, in groups, will use the Internet, library, zoo-provided, and/or other research to produce a two pamphlets, one for adults/teenagers and one for younger children, that will be assessed according to the provided rubrics.
3. Students, in groups, will provide a creative visual, audio, written, or combination piece to be displayed at various sites throughout the year. A panel consisting of zoo staff, teaching staff, and student council members using a rubric will assess these products. These items will then be on permanent display in the resource center at the zoo.

**Audience:**

The audience for ZOOTOPIA! consists of a diverse population that includes an age range from of two to a hundred and two. Professionals, students, parents, and children will all be included. Therefore, students will have to have a diversity of projects for a wide audience. Basically, the students will produce and report to the general masses.

### **Task Description:**

1. Students, in groups, will produce two creative and informative pamphlets that showcase their assigned exhibit at the zoo. These pamphlets will be produced for two audiences. One will be a pamphlet that will help give information to younger children, but also entertain them. Examples would be an informative coloring book, activity sheet, or entertaining pamphlet/handout. The pamphlet designed for the general audience should inform the reader on general information on the diet, habitat, population, and interesting data on the assigned exhibit. This pamphlet should also showcase student creative pieces or other creative pieces. These pamphlets will be graded according to a rubric that will be provided.
2. Students, in groups, will present a short informative piece to zoo visitors at their assigned exhibit. These presentations will include information provided on the pamphlets and will expand this information. Questions will be taken from the audience and should be answered by the students. Students will need to know a broad range of information about the exhibits and the animals so that they can provide the audience with accurate and interesting information, but will also need to know when to defer to the experts, refer the questions to zoo staff, or when to give information where the answer could be found. These presentations will be assessed based on audience, teacher, and student evaluation forms, i.e. a checklist. The teacher reserves the right to disregard assessments that do not accurately reflect student work (positively or negatively). Audience participation in

this will be voluntary, but students must assess two presentations other than their own.

3. Students, in groups, will produce a creative piece that will be displayed at the school, elementary schools, town hall, and at the zoo. This piece will be a visual, audio, and/or written piece, or a combination piece. These pieces will be assessed according to the provided rubric. Examples: poetry piece, murals, composed piece, drawing, prints, matted work, sculpture, video documentary, pictures, children's books, etc.

**Directions:**

1. Students will be assigned to groups and each groups will be assigned and exhibit from the zoo.
2. Class will meet with zoo officials who will describe what is available (resources) at the zoo and will be given the name and contact information of the senior zookeeper in charge of their assigned exhibit.
3. Each group will conduct research on their own time. Research includes using the Internet and library to look up information, working with the senior zookeeper in charge of their exhibit (either in person, by telephone, or by email), and visiting the zoo (at no cost for the duration of the assignment).
4. Groups will keep a research journal and running bibliography of all sources used. These journals, along with group progress reports, will be turned in on Fridays.

5. The research gathered will be used to prepare two pamphlets and short presentation. The pamphlet will be published and kept at the exhibit, as well as being passed out at the presentation. One pamphlet should be creatively informative for the general public, and one should be educational and engaging for younger children (3-6 years old). A rubric will be used to grade these pieces for both creativity and information. If you use copyrighted work (drawings, quotes, etc.) in these pamphlets, make sure you get permission from the creator.
6. On Friday, November 21st, all classes will take part in a volunteer day at the zoo. Elementary students, along with the public, will be at the zoo. Each group will make several presentations at assigned times throughout the day to the public. Remember, these presentations are partly graded by the public, so they must be informative and interesting. Presentation should take no more than 10-15 minutes, with time at the end for questions. When not presenting or getting ready to do your presentation, each group will visit other presentations to help out and to assess. Groups will also greet zoo visitors and help to pass out maps and general information.
7. Each group will make a creative piece that showcases your talents. These pieces will be displayed on campus, at town hall, and at the elementary schools. Eventually, they will be on display at the zoo's resource center. Each piece should make people want to come to your exhibit. Research papers are not accepted. Invited members of the staff,

- student council, and school board members will assess these pieces on November 15<sup>th</sup> in our school auditorium.
8. The class will also design a map of the zoo that will be passed out to zoo visitors along with schedules of presentations.
  9. Each group is responsible for conducting their own research, working on their own time, and designing creative pieces. However, some time will be given each Friday during the next five weeks to work on progress reports, meet with your group, and ask questions.

**Teacher Responsibilities:**

1. Visit with zoo officials to see which exhibits should be showcased and to work out details for students to volunteer with the zookeepers to conduct research. Get contact information for the students and zookeepers.
2. Set up dates, times, and waiver of admission fees from the zoo. Two dates must be set: one for meeting with the class and one for presentation day.
3. Find the money or sponsors to buy material for the pamphlets and for the printing of the pamphlets (Staples, OfficeMax, Zoo Sponsors, publishing houses, environmental groups, school board or fundraisers, etc.).
4. Make arrangements with the school board, staff, and student council to assess the creative pieces.
5. Gather examples of pamphlets, activity books, and creative pieces to show students.
6. Coordinate presentation day with local elementary staff.

7. Get permission forms approved by principals, school boards, zoo staff, and parents.
8. Make transportation arrangements for presentation day.
9. Create rubrics and checklists for assessments.
10. Create heterogeneous groups (learning styles and multiple intelligences).
11. Assign exhibits to groups.
12. Look over progress reports weekly and give advice/direction.
13. Coordinate publishing timelines, dates, and shipment for pamphlets.
14. Assign presentation times to groups to allow groups to present, assess, and help out.
15. Coordinate classroom designed map of zoo.
16. Monitor groups, progress, and make final judgment calls on assessments.

**Materials Needed:**

Zoo

Library

Internet

Zoo resource center

Publishing software

Computers

Various materials as per group (VCRs, camcorder, cameras, art supplies, frames, matting material, sculpture material, heavy paper, etc.)

Examples of pamphlets, artwork, etc.

Research journals

Progress report forms

Elementary classes

Materials for pamphlets

**Assessment Procedures:**

1. Group work grades will be taken on progress reports and research journals using a checklist.

2. The presentations will be assessed using a rubric (provided) by the public, peers, and by the teacher. The grades will be weighted as public: 25%, peer: 25%, and teacher: 50%. Averages will be taken of the scores from each type of assessment (public and peer) weighted, and then added to the teacher assessment. Assessments that are biased either negatively or positively will be disregarded.
3. The pamphlets will be assessed with rubrics and weighted as general public pamphlet 60% and children's pamphlet/activity pack as 40% because of the depth of information to be included in the general public pamphlet.
4. The creative piece will be graded, using a rubric, with equal weight by school board members, staff members, and members of the student council. Assessments that are biased either negatively or positively will be disregarded.

The final grade will count as 30% of your six-weeks grade. The final grade will be on a 100-point scale with 30 points from the pamphlets; 30 points from the presentation, 30 points from the creative piece, and 10 points from the progress reports and research journals.

**Rubrics/Assessment List:**

Progress Reports/Research Journals (average of five taken, 10 points total):

2 pts. for full completion, 1 pt. for partial completion, 0 pts. for no completion

- \_\_\_ Timeline/due dates were met for the week
- \_\_\_ Progress is being made
- \_\_\_ Written and signed statement from group turned in on what was done
- \_\_\_ Research Journal has at least 2 entries per week per student

\_\_\_ Research Journal has brief explanation of what all entries are

\_\_\_\_\_ Total ( of 10 points possible)

Presentation Rubric (30 Pts. total):

Please fill out the following information honestly and objectively. The rating scale is as follows:

4-5 Excellent / fantastic

2-3 Good / very well done

0-1 Poor / needs improvement

Please remember, the students need honest evaluation so they can have a good learning experience.

\_\_\_ Presenters are dressed appropriately and neatly. If costumes are worn, add too, not distract from, the presentation

\_\_\_ Presentation is structured, organized, and flows well

\_\_\_ Presentation is informative and engaging (interesting)

\_\_\_ Presenters seem to know their information

\_\_\_ Presentation is appropriate to the audience and multi-leveled

\_\_\_ Overall impression of the presentation

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score (#/30 points possible)

**Pamphlet Rubrics (30 pts total): Children's Pamphlet/Activity Book (12 pts total)**

|   |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Product is neat, organized and error –free (2 pts)                    | Information is appropriate to young children (3 pts)                                     | Product is visually appealing too children. (2 pts.) | Product can stand alone without oral explanation (2 pts) | Product contains original, creative ideas (3 pts)                |
| Product has a few errors, but is otherwise neat and organized (1 pt.) | Some information is too hard or easy, but most is suited for the young audience (2 pts.) | Product could use some visual enhancements (1 pt.)   | Product needs a few explanations (1 pts)                 | Product is creative, but used copied some other sources (2 pts.) |
| Unorganized, messy, or contains many errors (0 pt.)                   | Information is too easy or too hard, or not appropriate (1 pt.)                          | Product is visually boring (1 pt.)                   | Product is confusing without oral instructions (0 pt.)   | Product is not original or creative (1 pt.)                      |

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Pts. for Children's Pamphlet (#/12)

**General Public Pamphlet (18 pts total)**

|  |  |  |   |   |  |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| Product is neat, organized and error –free (3 pts.)                    | Information is appropriate to the audience (3 pts.)                | Information presented is important (3 pts.)              | Product is visually appealing and creative (3 pts.)             | Product gives reference to specific and general creative pieces on display (3 pts.) | Product can stand alone without oral explanation (3 pts.)    |
| Product has a few errors, but is otherwise neat and organized (2 pts.) | Information is somewhat too easy or hard for the audience (2 pts.) | Information is contains a few trivial facts (2 pts.)     | Product needs a little more visual appeal and creative (2 pts.) | Product gives only general information on creative pieces on display (2 pts.)       | Product needs a few explanations (2 pts.)                    |
| Unorganized, messy, or contains many errors (1 or 0 pts.)              | Information is not appropriate. (1 or 0 pts.)                      | Information is not important or is trivial (1 or 0 pts.) | Product is boring (1 or 0 pts.)                                 | No reference is made to the creative pieces (1 or 0 pts.)                           | Product is confusing without oral instructions (1 or 0 pts.) |

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Pts for General Pamphlet (#/18)

**Creative Piece Rubric (30 Pts. total):**

Please fill out the following information honestly and objectively. The rating scale is as follows:

- 4-6 Excellent / fantastic
- 2-4 Good / very well done
- 0-2 Poor / needs improvement

Please remember, the students need honest evaluation so they can have a god learning experience. These creative pieces should not be judged against each

other, but should stand-alone. Each piece is different and has different elements to be judged.

\_\_\_ The creative piece is visually, audiotorally and/or intellectually engaging.

\_\_\_ The creative piece has intellectual or emotional impact about the zoo.

\_\_\_ The creative piece organized in a way that does not need explanation other than the note card/instructions provided.

\_\_\_ the creative piece showcases the talents of the students.

\_\_\_ the creative piece imparts interest about the zoo and the exhibit.