



NATIONAL
AQUARIUM®

Outreach Pre-Trip Prep Packet

The National Aquarium is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to inspire conservation of the world's aquatic treasures.



Dear Educator:

Thank you for scheduling a National Aquarium outreach program. We are so pleased that you have chosen one of our many education programs and look forward to visiting your school.

Within this packet, you will find information designed to help you to plan and enjoy your outreach program.

The following topics will be discussed in this packet:

OUTREACH PROGRAM LOGISTICS

Please review the program logistics found on the next page, including important information on outreach policies, parent volunteers and inclement weather plans.

EXPECTATIONS FOR PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Parent volunteers are an important asset to your outreach program experience. To help parents feel comfortable volunteering, we have included helpful tips and suggestions. Please make and distribute copies prior to your outreach program.

SCHEDULING YOUR DAY

We want the day of your outreach program to be successful and fun, so we have provided a sample schedule, plus suggestions for before- and after-event activities to get the most from your day.

TEACHER BOOKLET

National Aquarium staff have prepared teacher booklets that complement each of our programs. These booklets include background information on the programs, as well as pre- and post-visit activities for students. Additionally, this booklet offers detailed information to help you prepare and create a schedule for your outreach program. All activities are correlated with the Maryland Voluntary Curriculum. This booklet can be downloaded at aqua.org/learn/learning-tools. The National Aquarium offers a variety of onsite programs and teacher workshops in addition to outreach programs. Please, visit aqua.org/learn/teacher-programs to explore all of our educational opportunities.

Thank you for choosing National Aquarium Education Programs.

Outreach Program Logistics

On the day of your program, National Aquarium staff will arrive at your location at least 15 minutes before the scheduled start time listed on your contract. In the event of any unforeseen circumstances, including traffic or inclement weather, Aquarium staff will contact you directly.

Because the health of our animals is our top priority, we cannot guarantee specific live animals for any one program. Appropriate substitutions will be made.

CONTRACT AND PAYMENT

A contract will be mailed to your school after you have booked your program. Program payment is due in full 21 days before the program date. Programs can be canceled up to 21 days before the program date without penalty for a full refund. Programs canceled within 21 days of the program will forfeit all program fees. Any programs that have not been paid 21 days before the program date will be canceled.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, National Aquarium staff may need to cancel or reschedule your program and will contact you as soon as this determination has been made. If for any reason your school is delayed or closes on the day of your outreach program, please contact Aquarium staff immediately at 410-659-4279. If Baltimore City Public Schools are closed or delayed, Aquarium outreach staff will be unable to visit your school and will contact you to reschedule your outreach program.

SCHEDULING YOUR DAY

The National Aquarium education team will contact your school approximately two weeks before your scheduled program to review plans for the day. Further information on scheduling can be found in the “Scheduling Your Day” section of this packet. Please have a copy of the day’s schedule available for Aquarium staff upon arrival. If you would like Aquarium staff to review your schedule, please fax it to 410-659-0116, attn: Outreach.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Although only some of the National Aquarium’s outreach programs require parent volunteers, we encourage parents to take part in all programs. Please consult “Parent Volunteer Expectations” or “Scheduling Your Day” in this packet for more information. You may prefer to have two sets of parent Volunteers on hand—one set for morning sessions and one for afternoon sessions. Volunteer training will be provided on-site. Parent volunteers taking part in the outreach program should arrive 45 minutes prior to the start of the program to allow time for training.

GET THE MOST FROM THE OUTREACH PROGRAM

Your school will receive a teacher packet once program payment is received. Please review the material in the teacher packet, as it contains important scheduling information, room setup requirements and parent volunteer requirements for your program. Teacher booklets for programs can be downloaded from the Aquarium’s website at aqua.org/learn/learning-tools. The teacher booklet also contains pre- and post-visit activities that can be done with your students. These activities were created with education standards in mind and will help your students get the most out of your outreach program.

Parent Volunteer Expectations

Parent Volunteers play an important part in making outreach programs an educational success and a memorable experience for students. Being a parent volunteer is both challenging and very rewarding. As a volunteer, you may be responsible for helping to monitor the students during the program and interpreting a table of educational props.

We hope these suggestions will make your task easier and more enjoyable. Volunteers must arrive at the outreach program location at least 45 minutes prior to the session to receive training on artifacts and teaching materials.

TEACHING TIPS FOR PARENT VOLUNTEERS

During the outreach program, you can help your students learn about the program's theme. Here are some tried and true ways to focus the attention of your group.

Note: Please copy this information and distribute to all of the parent volunteers.

PARENT VOLUNTEER ROLES

You are responsible for the behavior of your group. Please make sure all students handle all of the Aquarium materials in an appropriate manner. Please make sure that the students in your group behave responsibly, are mindful of the Aquarium instructor and are respectful to their peers.

YOU HELP STUDENTS LEARN

Ask teachers and instructors about the educational goals for the outreach program. Find out what students have learned or will learn in their class that relates to the program. You will be responsible for guiding students through one station, actively engaging them with questions and fun facts.

OUTREACH PROGRAM	NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS
Rain Forest Theme Day	4-8*
Ocean Theme Day	4-8*
Chesapeake Bay Theme Day	4-8*
Life in the Tropical Rain Forest	4
Bountiful Biomes	4

* Indicates that four volunteers will be needed for the morning session and four volunteers for the afternoon session. If only a half day is booked, only four volunteers will be needed. Additional volunteers are always welcome.

ASK THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS

Make use of the pictures and information provided by Aquarium staff to inspire ideas and thought-provoking questions. Finding the correct answer is often not as important as thinking creatively about the question. It is always useful to ask "Why?" and "How?" questions.

POINT OUT OBJECTS, ARTIFACTS AND GRAPHICS

Make sure that students have seen most of the materials on the table. Point out objects that they may have missed. If any one student is monopolizing an artifact or graphic, ask them to share the object with other students. It is helpful to prompt

students to compare and contrast artifacts on the table, and to point out possible reasons for any differences they observe.

INVOLVE ALL OF THE STUDENTS IN YOUR GROUP

Wait for answers. Do not worry if some students take what seems like a long time to respond. Do not let one or two especially eager students monopolize the group discussion.

RELY UPON THE NATIONAL AQUARIUM STAFF

Every outreach program will have at least one Aquarium instructor present. If you have any questions about the program or the materials, ask an Aquarium instructor. They will be happy to assist you.

Scheduling Your Day

BEFORE YOUR PROGRAM

Teacher booklets for all outreach programs may be downloaded from the Aquarium's website at aqua.org/learn/learning-tools. Booklets contain background information on your program as well as pre- and post-visit classroom activities. We recommend conducting the pre-visit activities with your students the day before the program in order to prepare for the program and allow students to get the most out of your Aquarium outreach program.

DAY OF THE PROGRAM

Please have a copy of the day's schedule available for National Aquarium staff upon arrival. If you would like Aquarium education staff to review your schedule, please fax it to 410-659-0116, attn: Outreach.

We request a one-hour break midday for our staff to eat lunch and for the animals to rest. The afternoon team of parent volunteers can also receive training during this time. All students participating in a National Aquarium program should arrive five minutes prior to the start of the program to allow the program to begin on time.

Make sure the requisite number of parent volunteers is in attendance. Parent volunteer information can be found on the "Parent Volunteer Expectations" page and in your program booklet. Volunteers should arrive 45 minutes prior to the start of the program to allow time for training.

Because of animal health issues, we cannot guarantee specific live animals for any one program. Appropriate substitutions will be made at the discretion of Aquarium staff.

AFTER THE PROGRAM

Your teacher booklet also contains post-visit activities that allow students to apply what they learned during the Aquarium outreach program. Within one month of your outreach program, your school will receive a link to an online survey. This survey provides us with valuable feedback to improve our outreach programs. Please take a minute to fill out the survey, and feel free to forward it to any other teachers involved in the program.

Sample Schedules

SAMPLE THEME DAY SCHEDULE

This is a sample schedule. Times for your specific outreach program should reflect your program needs, start times and number of programs scheduled through your contract.

National Aquarium outreach staff prefer to set up in a dedicated classroom that can be used throughout the day. However, many of our programs can be moved between classrooms if necessary. Unfortunately, Life in the Tropical Rain Forest and Bountiful

TIME	TEACHER	CLASSROOM
10:00 AM	Ms. Teacher 1	Classroom 001
11:05 AM	Mr. Teacher 2	Classroom 001
12:10 PM	Mrs. Teacher 3	Classroom 001

Biomes require substantial setup and therefore need to be conducted in a dedicated space.

Theme day programs require two spaces, as space is needed for two large-group programs. These programs

can accommodate up to 250 students at a time. Space is also needed for the discovery labs which require considerable setup and require a dedicated space that can be used all day.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR CLASSROOM AND PRE-K PROGRAMS

This is a sample schedule. Times for your specific outreach program should reflect your program needs, start times and number of programs scheduled through your contract.

AUDITORIUM PROGRAMS	
TIME	PROGRAM
9:00 - 10:00 AM	K - 2
10:00 - 11:00 AM	3 - 5

DISCOVERY LABS	
TIME	PROGRAM
9:00 - 9:30 AM	Aquarium staff set up lab
9:30 - 10:00 AM	Train morning set of parent volunteers
10:00 - 10:20 AM	1st grade
10:25 - 10:45 AM	1st grade
10:50 - 11:10 AM	2nd grade
11:15 - 11:35 AM	2nd grade
11:40 AM - 12:00 PM	3rd grade
12:00 - 1:00 PM	Lunch, animals rest, train afternoon volunteers
1:00 - 1:20 PM	3rd grade
1:25 - 1:45 PM	4th grade
1:50 - 2:10 PM	4th grade
2:15 - 2:35 PM	5th grade
2:40 - 3:00 PM	5th grade