More Than a Zookeeper:

A self-guided tour of careers at the Phoenix Zoo

Thank you!

Thank you for using this Phoenix Zoo field trip resource! We hope it helps make your visit engaging, meaningful and memorable for your students. After your field trip, you'll recieve a follow-up email from our team with a short feedback survey. Your suggestions help us improve these resources and create even better experiences for future students and teachers.

Teacher Guide

Topic: Jobs in Zoos

Audience: Grades 9 –12 (ages 14 – 18)

Goals:

- Increase awareness and appreciation for the diversity of disciplines involved in running the Phoenix Zoo.
- Increase appreciation for Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) organizations.
- Connect careers to animal care and conservation.

Participants will discover a variety of employment opportunities in zoos.

Objectives:

At the end of the program, participants will:

- List three potential careers at the Phoenix Zoo.
- Explain how AZA-accredited institutions benefit conservation efforts.
- Name one career option not considered before the program.

After completing the program, we want the participants to:

- Feel inspired.
- Know that there are many job opportunities in zoos.
- Consider jobs at zoos.
- Share their new knowledge with others.

Theme: There are many career opportunities at zoos in addition to being a zookeeper.

Sub-themes: Conservation is a cornerstone for an AZA facility. There is an abundance of STEM fields in zoological settings.

Arizona State Curriculum Standards and Concept Focus

High School

- **HS.L2U3.18** Obtain, evaluate, and communicate about the positive and negative ethical, social, economic, and political implications of human activity on the biodiversity of an ecosystem.
- **HS.L2U1.19** Develop and use models that show how changes in the transfer of matter and energy within an ecosystem and interactions between species may affect organisms and their environment.
- **HS.L3U1.24** Construct an explanation of how the process of sexual reproduction contributes to genetic variation.
- **HS.L3U1.25** Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information about the causes and implications of DNA mutation.
- **HS.L3U3.26** Engage in argument from evidence regarding the ethical, social, economic, and/or political implications of a current genetic technology. See the optional Mini-Case Study: "Should Zoos Use Biotechnology?" Pre-visit activity.
- **HS.L4U1.27** Obtain, evaluate, and communicate evidence that describes how changes in frequency of inherited traits in a population can lead to biological diversity.

This activity also aligns with the Arizona CTE Standards.

Description

How many people does it take to run a zoo? There's a lot of work going on every day at the Phoenix Zoo that many never even notice. Throughout the More Than a Zookeeper activity, students will view the Zoo from a different perspective. Teachers and chaperones will lead the group in discussions and activities while exploring some of the jobs necessary to run a successful zoo and conservation program. Students will discover the importance of the Phoenix Zoo's role in conservation while uncovering STEM career opportunities along the way. There are several pre-visit activities meant to prepare students for the trip. They do not all have to be completed. However, they are meant to engage students, give them a deeper understanding of the jobs required to keep a zoo running, connect careers to conservation efforts and reveal what it takes to be an AZA-accredited institution.

Materials List

- Student pages for activities
- Pencils
- Clipboards

Suggested Vocabulary

Behavioral Enrichment	Psychology	Epidemiology
Horticulture	Nutrition	Botany
Zoology	Conservation	Biology
Toxicology	Physics	Genetics

Pre-Visit Activities

At School

Explore jobs at the zoo, what it means to be AZA accredited and connect careers to animal care and conservation. Not all have to be completed. Choose what works for your class, interests and curriculum.

Introduction: Sections to read to students are italicized and in quotes.

1. "*We will be taking a field trip to the Phoenix Zoo to explore what jobs and career options exist at a zoo. When you think of working at a zoo, what kind of jobs come to mind?*"
2. Allow students to share their ideas. Keep a visual list if you like on the board, poster paper or a document projected for students to see.
3. "*How many people do you think it takes to run a zoo? How many kinds of jobs are there?*"

Activity 1: Have each student take the More Than a Zookeeper Quiz.

4. "*We will take an aptitude test to see what kinds of jobs at zoos align with your interests. Answer each question honestly. There are NO wrong answers.*"
5. Pass out tests, pencils and clipboards. Have students answer the questions based on their personal preferences. There are NO wrong answers. At the end of the quiz the points will be tallied and their zoo career will be revealed!
6. Talk about their results:
    a. Mostly A's - Animal Diet Technician
    b. Mostly B's - Mechanic
    c. Mostly C's – Event Facilitator
    d. Mostly D's – Irrigation and Lawn Technician
    e. Mostly E's – IT/Tech Support
    f. Mostly F's – Education Specialist
7. "*Your quiz results do NOT mean that the corresponding job is the only career you would excel in or the only job you would enjoy. It is simply a tool to demonstrate that zoos have many jobs that do not involve being a zookeeper or even working closely with animals. However, these jobs are still necessary, play very important roles and can be just as fulfilling.*"
8. Read the text below to students, there are some examples of jobs that were listed in the aptitude test. In class and while at the Phoenix Zoo, talk about any jobs that you can find evidence of. You are not limited to only the jobs outlined in the aptitude test. This guide will help you point out and prompt students to notice how those jobs show up in the different exhibits at the Zoo.
9. "*For example, on the African Savanna at the Phoenix Zoo, there are several different species of animals that live there. That means that in the morning a* ***nutrition specialist*** *must prepare different animal diets for only one exhibit. It is also important to consider how many individual animals make up each population. A larger animal will require a larger amount of food. A young and growing animal, such as our baby giraffes, will require a different ratio of protein and fat than a fully mature adult."*

Activity 2: Explore Careers at the Phoenix Zoo.

1. Have students visit the Phoenix Zoo website career pages. Click on "View Open Positions."
2. Do any of the current job openings match the results of the aptitude quiz?
3. What jobs exist at a zoo that you didn't think about or expect?

Activity 3: Connect AZA Standards to Careers and Conservation

The Phoenix Zoo is an Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) accredited zoo. What does it mean to be an AZA accredited zoo? Here are the AZA standards. There are many. Students do not need to know all of them. The standards can be found on pages 11-70. The table of contents is clickable. Avoid giving the entire document to students if possible. The procedure below outlines a jigsaw method for having students investigate the standards and a role lens to look at them through. What jobs must exist to meet AZA standards?

Procedure:

1. Jigsaw AZA standards – Use AZA standards to show how jobs work together to support conservation.
2. Divide class into small groups.
3. There are 15 sections under Accreditation Standards in the Table of Contents.
4. Assign each group a section or part of section, one to three pages max. Print or share digital document. If sharing digital document, tell students to go to table of contents and click on the assigned section under "Accreditation Standards."
5. Students find the information for the guiding questions below.

   Guiding questions for exploring one section of the AZA standards:

   a. What is this section mostly about?
   b. What must a zoo DO to meet these standards?
   c. What kinds of jobs would be needed to make this happen?
   d. What skills would those jobs require?
   e. How does this section support conservation?

6. Students share findings. Have each group present the following to the class. These should be brief. *Here's what our section requires, and the jobs needed to make it happen.*
7. Have a whole class discussion. What patterns do you notice across all sections?
8. You want students to notice that:
   - Zoos are complex systems.
   - Conservation requires many roles.
   - Science, operations, education and conservation all connect.
   - Accreditation is important for animals and conservation.
   - The skills that are required for each job.

Activity 4: Mini-Case Study: "Should Zoos Use Biotechnology?"

Purpose

Zoos and conservation organizations are exploring biotechnology as a tool to help endangered species. But scientists, conservationists and organizations disagree on how and when it should be used.

Prompt:

Should zoos and conservation organizations use biotechnology to help save endangered species?

Activity:

1. Print or digitally share the four articles. Two of the articles support using biotechnology, two caution its use.
    a. Biotechnology Is a Powerful Tool for Conservation
    b. Using Genetics to Conserve Wildlife
    c. Should Genetic Engineering Be Used as a Tool for Conservation?
    d. Scientists are Modifying Wildlife DNA. Should These Species be Released into Nature?
2. Choose one of these options for assigning articles.
    a. Have students read all four articles and make their own decision. Share, discuss, debate as a class.
    b. Divide students into groups of four. Each students gets one article. Share and discuss findings from the article with the group. Fill in chart to analyze perspectives. Each student makes individual decision. Challenge group to come to consensus.
3. Students make a claim based on evidence from what they read and heard.
4. Connect to careers: Which zoo or conservation jobs would be involved making decisions about the use of biotechnology to help endangered species?
5. Complete reflection.
6. **Follow-up: Save for end or use if students ask.**
   What is the AZA's position on the use of biotechnology for conservation purposes?
   https://assets.speakcdn.com/assets/2332/2025-azabiotechnologystatementandpolicy_approved.pdf
7. Consider using a Socratic Seminar as an option for sharing student claims.

At the Zoo Activity

At the Zoo

Find evidence of careers at the zoo.

Goals:

- Observe real-world evidence of jobs.
- Connect careers to animal care and conservation.
- Think like investigators.
- Find evidence of at least five different jobs.

Duration: Approximately one hour.

Locations:

- African Savanna
- Rhino
- Tiger
- Orangutan
- Conservation Science Center
- On your own

Procedure:

1. Print the student handouts for the activity at the Zoo.
2. Print the teacher and chaperone script for each chaperone. The script can be found at the end of this document.
3. Make sure students have appropriate supplies (worksheets, clipboards, pencils, etc.)
4. Students will visit five locations during the one-hour chaperone-guided activity.
5. You can visit the locations in any order however; the script is written for the sequence above.
6. Print a copy of the script for each teacher and chaperone attending the field trip.
7. Teachers and chaperones should use the script to guide students through the process of making observations and using those observations to infer the jobs required to make those things happen.
8. The script provides prompts and questions to get students to notice these things.
9. Students should complete the field prompts for three out of the five locations they visit.
10. Encourage students to talk to Zoo employees. If you find a Phoenix Zoo employee or volunteer, ask about the work they do here.

Field Prompts:

For each location:

Location: _____

What features do you see at this location? Really observe, not just the animal, but features of the habitat as well. _____

What jobs might be represented here? _____

What evidence supports your thinking? _____

Students must include at least one from each:

- Animal care (nutrition, vet, enrichment)
- Habitat design (horticulture, exhibit design)
- Operations (maintenance, IT, events)
- Conservation/science

How does this job help animals OR conservation?

Post-Visit Activity

Goal:

- Demonstrate awareness and appreciation for the diversity of disciplines involved in running the Phoenix Zoo.
- Demonstrate appreciation for AZA zoos and aquariums.
- Connect careers to animal care and conservation

Big Picture Question: How does an AZA-accredited zoo use different careers to support conservation? How do different careers at a zoo work together to make decisions about conservation?

Option A: Career Case Study – Present or small group discussion

Have students choose ONE zoo career and answer:

- What does this job do?
- What skills are needed?
- How does it help animals or conservation?
- Why is this job important in an AZA zoo?

Option B: "Build a Zoo Team"

Prompt students with: "If you were building a zoo, what five essential jobs would you need and why?"

Students must include different types of roles. Students must explain how their five chosen roles work together. How do their chosen roles support conservation and an AZA zoo?

Option C: Reflection

Students complete the reflection page of the Field Guide handout and have students share.

STUDENT PAGES BEGIN ON NEXT PAGE

More Than a Zookeeper Quiz

At School

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer the questions based on your personal preferences. There are NO wrong answers. At the end of the quiz the points will be tallied, and your zoo career will be revealed!

1. Which of these subjects do you enjoy most? (Try to only pick one. If you REALLY can't choose, you may select two)
   - A. Math
   - B. Wood shop/welding
   - C. Home economics/cooking
   - D. Agriculture science/botany
   - E. Computer science
   - F. I enjoy all or most subjects

2. Which of the following would you consider to be your greatest strength? (Pick one or two)
   - A. Attention to detail
   - B. Problem solving/puzzle solving
   - C. Social skills (ex. Ability to make friends, get along well with others)
   - D. Self-motivation (not a procrastinator)
   - E. Adapts well to technology
   - F. Fast learner

3. Do you prefer being outside or inside? Working with others or by yourself? (Pick one)
   - A. Inside with others
   - B. Outside with others
   - C. Inside – sometimes with others, sometimes by myself
   - D. Outside by myself
   - E. Inside by myself
   - F. Outside – Sometimes with others, sometimes by myself

4. Which of the following do you think you would enjoy the most? (Pick one or two)
   - A. Working in a prep kitchen (chef/line cook)
   - B. Working with my hands (DIY projects)
   - C. Organizing and planning events (party planning)
   - D. Maintaining landscapes (gardening)
   - E. Writing computer programs (coding)
   - F. Lesson planning (teaching)

5. Do you like to stick to a set routine or do you want every day to be different? (Pick one)
   - A. I like to stick to a routine every day
   - B. I have a routine, but sometimes I will stray away from it.
   - C. I have a routine, but rarely ever stick to it.
   - D. Sometimes I like a routine, sometimes I don't.
   - E. I usually don't have a routine.
   - F. I love when every day is different. A routine would become boring for me very quickly.

6. Which of the following brings you the most joy? (Pick one or two)
   - A. Cooking for my family/friends
   - B. Helping someone fix a problem
   - C. Hosting a get together/social event
   - D. Spending time in nature/outside
   - E. Working with technology
   - F. Teaching others something you are passionate about

Based on my answers, my zoo career is _____!

Do you agree with your result? Why or why not?

What surprised you?

Your quiz results do NOT mean that the corresponding job is the only career you would excel in or the only job you would enjoy. It is simply a tool to demonstrate that zoos have many jobs that do not involve being a zookeeper or even working closely with animals. However, these jobs are still necessary, play very important roles, and can be just as fulfilling!

Careers and Conservation

At School

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Phoenix Zoo is an Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) accredited zoo. So, what does it mean to be an AZA accredited zoo?

Purpose: Explore how an AZA-accredited zoo operates and discover the many careers that support animal care and conservation.

Part 1: Quick Start (Before Reading)

What do you think are the three most important jobs at a zoo? Why?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Why do you think these are important?

_____

_____

_____

Part 2: AZA Standards Exploration (Group Work)

Your group will explore one section of the AZA standards.

Your section: _____

Step 1: What is this section about? Summarize in one to two sentences:

_____

_____

_____

Step 2: What must a zoo DO?

List three to five responsibilities or requirements from your section:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Step 3: What jobs are needed?

What kinds of jobs would be needed to make each responsibility or requirement happen?

_____

Step 4: Connect to Conservation

Choose ONE example and explain:

How does this job or task help animals or conservation?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Part 3: Class Share and Synthesis

As you listen to other groups, complete:

What patterns do you notice?

- Many zoo jobs involve

_____

- Different jobs work together to

_____

- Something that surprised me is

_____

_____

Part 4: Big Idea Reflection (Individual)

Complete the statement using evidence:

"An AZA-accredited zoo is more than just animal care because…"

_____

_____

_____

_____

Name: _____ Date: _____ At School

Mini-Case Study: "Should Zoos Use Biotechnology?"

Purpose:

Zoos and conservation organizations are exploring biotechnology as a tool to help endangered species. But scientists, conservationists and organizations disagree on how and when it should be used.

Prompt:

Should zoos and conservation organizations use biotechnology to help save endangered species?

Analyze the Perspectives:

1. You will examine FOUR perspectives. Do not decide yet.
   - **Perspective A - Biotechnology Is a Powerful Tool for Conservation**
   - **Perspective B - Using genetics to conserve wildlife**
   - **Perspective C - Should Genetic Engineering Be Used as a Tool for Conservation?**
   - **Perspective D - Scientists are Modifying Wildlife DNA. Should These Species be Released into nature?**
2. Read your assigned article(s).
3. Complete the chart titled "Analyze the Perspectives." State whether the article is expressing support for or caution against using biotechnology in conservation. Summarize the main idea of the article and benefits and concerns raised in the article. If you are splitting up the articles as a group, you will fill in this information as your peers present their findings to you.

Analyze the Perspective Chart

Perspective Support/ Caution	Main Idea	Benefits	Concerns
A			
B			
C			
D			

Make a Claim

4. Should zoos and conservation organizations use biotechnology to help save endangered species?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No
   - ☐ It depends

State Evidence

5. What evidence from the articles supports your claim?

Provide Reasoning

6. Explain why your evidence supports your claim.

Connect to Careers

7. Which zoo jobs would be involved in deciding about the use of biotechnology in conservation?

8. How would these jobs work together?

Final Reflection

9. What makes this decision difficult?

10. What additional information would you need to make a better decision?

Optional Follow-up: Save for end or use if students ask.

What is the AZA's position on the use of biotechnology for conservation purposes?

https://assets.speakcdn.com/assets/2332/2025-azabiotechnologystatementandpolicy_approved.pdf

Name: _____ Date: _____

Zoo Careers in Action – Field Investigation

Goals:

- Observe real-world evidence of jobs and careers at the zoo.
- Connect careers to animal care and conservation.
- Think like an investigator.
- Use evidence to support your ideas.

Locations:

- African Savanna
- Rhino
- Tiger
- Orangutan
- Conservation Science Center
- On your own

Procedure:

1. Make sure you have appropriate supplies (worksheet, clipboard, pencil).
2. You will visit five locations with your group.
3. Your chaperone will guide you through the process of making observations and using observations to infer the jobs at the zoo required to make those things happen.
4. At each location:
   a. Observe carefully before writing.
   b. Look beyond the animal, focus on the environment and systems
5. Use your observations to infer what is happening and who is responsible.
6. Record your observations and ideas for three out of the five locations.
7. If you find a Phoenix Zoo employee walking around, feel free to ask about the work they do here.
8. You must include at least one from each:
   - Animal care (nutrition, vet, enrichment)
   - Habitat design (horticulture, exhibit design)
   - Operations (maintenance, IT, events)
   - Conservation/science
   - Others you notice

Location 1: _____

Observe - List at least three specific features you notice, not just the animal. Examples: shade structures, water systems, enrichment items, signage, barriers.

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

What is happening here? What is the Zoo trying to do at this location?

- ☐ Keep animals healthy
- ☐ Provide enrichment
- ☐ Design a natural habitat
- ☐ Educate guests
- ☐ Support conservation
- ☐ Other: _____

What jobs are involved? List at least two different jobs that might be represented here.

Evidence: What did you see that makes you think that?

Why does it matter? How do these jobs help animals or support conservation?

Location 2: _____

Observe - List at least three specific features you notice, not just the animal. Examples: shade structures, water systems, enrichment items, signage, barriers.

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

What is happening here? What is the Zoo trying to do at this location?

- ☐ Keep animals healthy
- ☐ Provide enrichment
- ☐ Design a natural habitat
- ☐ Educate guests
- ☐ Support conservation
- ☐ Other: _____

What jobs are involved? List at least two different jobs that might be represented here.

Evidence: What did you see that makes you think that?

Why does it matter? How do these jobs help animals or support conservation?

Location 3: _____

Observe - List at least three specific features you notice, not just the animal. Examples: shade structures, water systems, enrichment items, signage, barriers.

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

What is happening here? What is the Zoo trying to do at this location? ☐ Keep animals healthy ☐ Provide enrichment ☐ Design a natural habitat ☐ Educate guests ☐ Support conservation ☐ Other: _____	**What jobs are involved?** List at least two different jobs that might be represented here.
Evidence: What did you see that makes you think that?	**Why does it matter?** How do these jobs help animals or support conservation?

Notes from conversations with Phoenix Zoo staff:

Reflection:

1. Challenge: What is one job that is NOT visible but must exist. Explain how you know.

2. Compare two locations. What similarities or differences do you notice?

3. What is one job at the Phoenix Zoo that you didn't notice at first or surprised you, but now understand is important in an AZA zoo?

4. How did the Phoenix Zoo show conservation in action?

5. What role would you be interested in and why?

Teacher/Chaperone Script for Touring the Zoo

At the Zoo

The goal of our trip to the zoo today is to find examples of the different jobs that happen at the zoo. To do this we will need to use our skills of observation, inferencing, and questioning. While at the Zoo, we'll take a look at five habitats together and see what jobs are evident there. The guided part of our trip will take about one hour. If you find a Phoenix Zoo employee walking around today, we can stop to ask about the work they do here.

African Savanna Habitat (10 minutes)

Take a look at the Savanna. There are several different species of animals that live here. That means that in the morning a **nutrition specialist** must prepare different animal diets for only one habitat. It is also important to consider how many individual animals make up each population. A larger animal will require a larger amount of food. A young and growing animal, such as our baby giraffes, will require a different ratio of protein and fat than a fully mature adult.

Horticulture plays a large role as well. Every tree, bush and plant in the habitat needs to be safe for animal consumption. However, giraffes are very tall and have extremely long necks. It is not uncommon for the giraffes to reach over the fences and munch on the trees in the surrounding areas. So, these plants must be safe for animal consumption as well. Any potentially toxic plants must be pruned back out of reach of the animals, or, removed from the area entirely.

We are also at the station for the Safari Cruiser. The Zoo has a team of **mechanics** on-site to perform regularly scheduled maintenance as well as on-the-spot repairs if anything goes wrong during the workday.

As you venture through the Zoo, you may notice people wearing yellow shirts that say "Park Ranger" on them. **Park rangers** at the Phoenix Zoo are the security and guest service team that ensures the safety of visitors, employees and animals. They patrol the grounds, manage parking, enforce zoo rules, handle emergency responses and assist with crowd control for special events like ZooLights

Transition (2 minutes)

Now that we know about a few more jobs at the zoo, let's see if we can see some of these jobs in action. Feel free to point out any other jobs you see along the way.

Let's look at another habitat and see what jobs are evident there. Take the group to lower rhinoceros OR the Conservation Center OR Sumatran tiger.

Greater One-Horned Rhinoceros Habitat (10 minutes)

Let students make some observations. Ask: Do they see any similarities between the rhinoceros exhibit and the exhibits they've seen previously?

This habitat looks like the junkyard of the Zoo, but everything in this yard is laid out very strategically and specifically. This is what is called behavioral enrichment, or BE. BE is anything that encourages an animal to behave the way they would in the wild or keeps them mentally and physically stimulated. In the wild a rhinoceros can walk around ten miles every day while they forage for food. The Zoo would need to be MUCH larger to meet that specific need. So, what do we do instead? The keepers design an obstacle course and hide food in different areas around the yard to encourage the rhinoceros to get their daily exercise.

But BE isn't always so easy. It is important to ensure that the BE given to the animals is appropriate. A rhinoceros will benefit greatly from a puzzle feeder filled with carrots or apples, but a cheetah will have no interest if the same enrichment is offered to them.

Any ideas for new enrichment must be presented for approval before they can be introduced to the animals. The **behavioral enrichment manager** is responsible for ensuring the BE is appropriate, safe and healthy for the animal it will be given to. This is an example of a job that not many people know about, but we see evidence of it in every exhibit.

Transition (1 minute)

Let's look at another habitat and see what other jobs are utilized. Do you think you will see some of the same careers involved?

Sumatran Tiger Habitat (10 minutes)

Let students make observations on either side of the viewing window. Do they see similarities between each habitat? Differences? Why do they think there are differences when these spaces house the same species of animal?

As an AZA-accredited facility, the Phoenix Zoo is held to very high standards in the field of animal care. This includes the animal's physical well-being and veterinary care, the diet the animal receives and the size and design of their habitat.

Notice that the tiger habitat is made of two different yards. Why do you think it was designed this way? Tigers are solitary animals by nature, only interacting briefly for mating purposes. The Phoenix Zoo wants to simulate the wild as best they can. The AZA provides the Zoo with the standards that habitats need to meet to maintain accreditation. This is based on the species of animal, the number of individuals and the habits and social structures they would normally exhibit in the wild. It takes a large group of experts in the fields of animal behavior and psychology to design the best possible habitat. **Animal behaviorists** study the way animals react and can provide zoos with needed information to enhance the care of the animals. This is an example of a job that directly impacts a zoo, even if the zoo may not directly employ these individuals.

The tigers at the Phoenix Zoo, Raja and Joanne, are part of the Species Survival Plan (SSP) for Sumatran tigers, and we hope they will eventually have a litter of cubs. Therefore, it is important that they are accustomed to seeing one another and are comfortable interacting from time to time. This means that while it is important for both tigers to have their own territory, it is equally important that the tigers can see, hear, smell and interact with each other in a controlled and comfortable way.

Transition (1 minute)

Let's look at another habitat and see what other jobs are utilized.

Orangutan Habitat (10 minutes)

(Outside of Bilik)

This habitat is not only home to some amazing animals, but it will also sometimes serve as an event venue. An **event facilitator** or **event coordinator** will often work with groups of people that would like the Zoo to host an event for them. This can be a wedding, corporate event or even an event put on by the Zoo for generous donors.

The best way to find out about how to have an event hosted by the Zoo is on the website! It takes a team of people to keep the website running and keep it engaging for guests. No one wants to use a website that is glitchy, unorganized or not well maintained. It is up to **social media experts, computer support specialists and IT technicians** to ensure that guests can use and navigate the website in an effective and productive way. Without the website, it would be very difficult for guests to find out about the programs that the zoo offers (school group tours, birthday parties, custom tours, camp programs, etc.).

If a guest would like to book an event, such as a wedding or a birthday party, an event facilitator will work closely with the interested party to make sure their needs and wants can be met. This involves a lot of advanced planning, but last-minute changes are common and flexibility is extremely important. It is up to the event coordinator to ensure events run smoothly.

(Inside of Bilik)

Take the students to one of the training windows.

Keepers will use these training windows to interact with the orangutans and ask them to participate in different husbandry behaviors. Training an animal to do certain behaviors allows the staff to check the health of an animal without having to put the animal under anesthesia. This acts as the first line of veterinary care given to the animals. If the keepers notice anything concerning (a cut, visual limp, discharge from eyes, nose, or mouth, etc.) they can contact the **veterinary staff** to schedule a more comprehensive exam. This can include such procedures as radiographs, ultrasounds or bloodwork.

The keepers also use these training windows to build a trusting relationship with the animals. Without trust it is very hard to work with animals in any capacity. When the orangutans trust their keepers they are more likely to participate in their husbandry training, which then allows the keepers and veterinary staff to provide them with a higher level of care.

Transition: Walk to Arthur L. & Elaine V. Johnson Conservation Science Center (7 minutes)

By now you should hopefully have an idea of how many people it takes to make the zoo run smoothly daily. As we walk, try to find evidence of other jobs that are important to help the Zoo work as a well-oiled machine. *This time could be used to talk to a Zoo staff member and ask how they help keep the Zoo running.*

Arthur L. & Elaine V. Johnson Conservation Science Center (12 minutes)

Have students explore the area. Ask why the words on the wall are listed there: involvement, commitment, action, preservation, conservation and protection.

What do they think goes on in the center? What careers are employed in the center? (*Biologist, geneticist, nutritionist, epidemiologist, conservation scientist, etc.*)

Arizona is home to a wide diversity of habitats and species, some of which are under threat. Working with their conservation partners, the Phoenix Zoo looks for opportunities to use their unique skills and experience to help them. Phoenix Zoo conservation scientists raise and breed species at the Zoo's Arthur L. and Elaine V. Johnson Conservation Center for release to the wild and/or to help understand their biology and reproduction. They also conduct research and participate in field work as part of broader recovery efforts with our partners. Why is it important for the conservation team to understand genetics? Genetic diversity avoids inbreeding, promotes healthy features and increases species resilience to environmental pressures.

The Phoenix Zoo conservation team works with Arizona Game and Fish and U.S Fish and Wildlife Services. The Phoenix Zoo is involved in conservation efforts for 10 different native Arizona species:

- Black-footed ferret
- Chiricahua leopard frog
- Mount Graham red squirrel
- Desert pupfish
- Narrow-headed garter snake
- Huachuca water umbel
- Gila topminnow
- Cactus ferriginous pygmy-owl
- Multiple species of springsnail

What steps are involved in monitoring and tagging wildlife? Some of the species at the center are tagged, released and monitored. For example: Narrow-headed garter snakes are tagged with a tracker that is duct taped to them. It is a one-time use tool because once the snake sheds its skin; the tracker is no longer attached to the snake. Release sites are further north and in a higher elevation. Black-footed ferrets are microchipped (each has a unique number), and if they are determined fit enough to survive in the wild, they are released into specific sites across the southwest to the Midwest. Around October, **biologists** and **volunteers** go back to the active sites and catch whatever ferrets they can. All caught ferrets are then scanned for a microchip. The chip will tell them where they are from, or if there is not a microchip, they know that it is a wild born ferret and that the population is thriving.

The goal of the Phoenix Zoo's conservation program is to help preserve the diversity of life in nature. The Zoo works in both husbandry and research on behalf of both wildlife and their natural habitats. In addition, they collaborate with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums Species Survival Plan®, a cooperative population management program that aims to maintain a healthy and self-sustaining managed population of selected species. What does that mean? Prevention of extinction through genetic diversity and producing animals that can survive when released back into the wild. What jobs are needed to accomplish that goal? (Answers can include ***biologist, geneticist, conservationist, experts in habitat restoration, many branches of technology, computer scientists, field researchers, conservation psychologists***, etc.)

Conclusion/Closure (2 minutes)

We discovered today that the Phoenix Zoo requires multiple people in a wide variety of roles, and that there are many science disciplines found throughout the Zoo. Is anyone surprised by some of the careers zoos support?

The way guests experience the Zoo and nature helps the Zoo understand what motivates guests to change attitudes and behaviors, increasing the Zoo's positive impact. And the way that guests experience the Zoo relies directly on the employees who make the Zoo run smoothly.

As you walk through the rest of the Zoo today, think about additional jobs represented throughout other exhibits and the basic operations of all aspects of the Zoo. Also think about what may be found behind the scenes.

If you find a Phoenix Zoo employee walking around today, feel free to ask about the work they do here.